

Why does therapy cost so much?



TOPIC:

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WHAT:

Therapy is expensive! Depending on your child's needs and who you see for how long, it can add up.

Therapy is defined as "treatment to relieve or heal a disorder". When we talk about therapy at LHA we are referring to Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, Psychology, Physiotherapy and other allied health services.

When considering 'Disorders' we are thinking about any defined set of problems, which result in causing significant difficulty, distress, impairment and/or suffering in a person's daily life.

The key point is '**impact on a person's daily life**'. If it is not impacting on your child's/ your families daily life then

its not a challenge or problem for your family.

WHY:

Allied health professionals, such as Occupational Therapists, Psychologists, Speech Language Pathologists, Physiotherapists and many others, complete significant training. They complete university degrees, normally 4 to 7 years in duration (sometimes more). Some professionals complete Masters or Doctoral Degrees, for example Advanced Therapists and Clinical Psychologists.

After completing their studies they have to (depending on their regulatory bodies) complete minimum training (normally 30 hours per year). This is ongoing for the rest of their careers to keep up to date with current knowledge. This is normally partly at their own cost, and partly at the cost of their employer.

Often, therapists have their own professional indemnity insurance, which is for the duration of their career.

In most countries, titles such as "Occupational Therapist" are known as protected titles – meaning that not just anyone can call themselves an "Occupational Therapist". Further, they are registered with a regulatory body which is an annual membership, which depending on the profession can be up to more than \$1000 (per year).

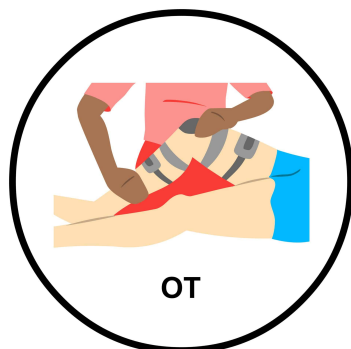
In addition to all of the above, most therapists have a collection of their own personal resources that they have either made in their own time or have purchased themselves. Depending on where they work, they may or may not have access to high quality resources.

Of course this doesn't include any costs of having a building, if the therapist practices privately.

HOW:

How can I make therapy more affordable?

- In Australia, there are various Medicare options that you may be eligible for including Primary Care Plans (5 visits per year per person), Mental Health Plans (up to 10 visits per person per year) as well as others.
- Talk to your GP about what you may be eligible for, as well as what your local allied health provides, as some may bulk bill or there may be gap fees.
- Talk to your private health insurance as some cover allied health therapy – depending on what is needed and how long for.
- There is also a range of funding available including NDIS, HCWA and Better Start. Talk to your GP or Allied health professional for more information.



KEY TIPS:

Therapy is expensive, however when accessing Evidenced Based therapy there is a high likelihood that there will be some improvement. This does depend on your child, the frequency you are accessing and the type of therapy you are accessing.

Remember – therapists study for years to be able to have the skills to help your child and family. They then have significant ongoing costs including registration, training and resources.

FURTHER INFO:

Take a look at the NDIS website which has a pricing guideline. Please note this is only relevant for NDIS providers and is added as a guide only.

NDIS Website

Also take a look at our blog post – When to ask for help? if you are unsure if you need to access therapy.