



October 20, 2025

Dear Minister Nolan Quinn and Assistant Deputy Minister Jeff Butler,

On behalf of the Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists ([OSOT](#)), we write in support of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists' ([CAOT](#)) [call to expand the Canada Student Loan forgiveness program to include occupational therapists](#).

As the provincial association representing over 5,000 occupational therapy professionals in Ontario, OSOT believes that including occupational therapists (OTs) in the Canada Student Loan forgiveness program would be a meaningful step forward. This support would not only benefit incoming students but also [help attract them to practice in rural and remote communities that are underserved](#) (p.122) and in critical need of comprehensive care. Enabling access to occupational therapy in these areas allows communities to thrive and ensure equitable health outcomes across the province.

Occupational therapists, with education (Master of Science in Occupational Therapy) comparable to social workers, physiotherapists, and psychologists, are **essential** to interprofessional healthcare teams in rural and remote communities. While the 2024 federal budget aims to address workforce shortages and attract health human resources in rural and remote communities, the recent addition of physiotherapists to the list of eligible professionals is a positive step. However, the **continued exclusion of occupational therapists undermines this goal and risks reversing progress in healthcare delivery**. OTs provide person-centered care that promotes independence, system efficiency, and mental health support—making their inclusion necessary.

Nationally, less than 2% of occupational therapists work in [rural and remote areas](#), and Ontario has the second [lowest per capita ratio of OTs in Canada](#). With Ontario OT programs operating at capacity with a strong interest in applying into these programs, federal incentives are critical to attract graduates to underserved regions. Federal policy must align with provincial efforts to recruit and retain occupational therapists where they are most needed.

We support CAOT's recommendation to include occupational therapists in the loan forgiveness program, which aligns with other eligible professionals and supports equitable access to care. We urge you to advocate for this issue with the Canadian Ministry of Finance to ensure Ontarians have timely access to the care they need when and where they need it. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marnie Lofsky", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Marnie Lofsky, OT Reg. (Ont.), MA (Leadership)
Executive Director
Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists