

ORTHOTIC AND PROSTHETIC SERVICES IN THE FREE STATE

health



The issuing of orthotic devices to patients, serve to provide multiple purposes of health care needs (interventions), with focus on either **PREVENTION, PROTECTION, CORRECTION, STABILITY or SUPPORT** to an affected human body part.



health
Department of
Health
FREE STATE PROVINCE

1. MEDICAL ORTHOTICS AND PROSTHETICS SERVICE

Medical Orthotics and Prosthetics (MOP or O&P as it is generally known) is part of the Allied Health Professions. It is a career based on a scientific background. O&P is a specialised profession that forms a pivotal part of Medical Rehabilitation Services.

2. WHAT IS ORTHOTICS?

This is the medical field that involves the evaluation of patients, measuring for medical device(s), manufacturing and fitting of such appliances to patients.

The purpose of these appliances is to correct deformities and for the assisted growth of an affected body part, for example by means of splinting in the corrected position.

There are also the therapeutic devices (e.g. orthotic braces), which are provided for injuries caused in sports or by accident. In this case a brace is used to protect the affected area or provide correct alignment to the ailing/damaged tissues including muscles and bones during the healing process.



For example a neck injury needs a brace to stabilise the neck. Protection is also needed after surgery when a procedure (fixation or re-uniting of the bone) has been done.

The protection is needed to keep the area stable to allow proper healing, control swelling and maintain a good position to restore optimum function of the patient's body part.

Support is also provided by means of an Orthosis in the form of corsets, knee braces and wrist braces. Foot orthoses are also provided to give support to areas such as arches. Surgical shoes are made for congenital foot deformities.

Prevention of a pathological condition such as thrombosis, which might be a blood clot that usually leads to surgical intervention, can be managed by issuing the patient with elastic stockings dispensed by a Medical Orthotist.

3. WHAT IS PROSTHETICS?

This is the medical field that also involves the evaluation of patients, measuring for medical appliance(s), manufacturing and fitting of such devices.

Unlike Orthosis, the prosthesis is an artificial appliance that replaces the missing body part. This practice involves the artificial replacement of a human body part, a limb or extremity lost due to congenital deformities, amputation following the diseases or accidents.

An artificial limb (prosthesis) is manufactured and provided to restore function and regain a better life style, which the affected person was familiar with before.

Prosthesis is made for many different types and amputations and for different levels of amputations. For examples some are above knee amputations and some are below knee. Prosthetic devices are further divided into two segments namely; for the upper extremity (which largely include organs such as arms) and the lower extremity (which are legs). Our endeavours as Medical Prosthetist is always to produce a prosthesis which will:

- fit well
- be as light-weight as possible
- be cosmetically acceptable
- assist the user to regain a good function

- be easily managed by the user and be able to put it on and remove it independently.
- promote self reliance of the user and assist with the return to work or even providing a chance for future employment; and
- enable a normal return to society as a rehabilitated person.



4. WHO IS THE MEDICAL ORTHOTIST/PROSTHETIST?

This person is one of the specialised professional within the allied health care system, who treats patients/clients in need of specialised service such as **Spinal Bracing** and is expected to work in cooperation with all other members of the multidisciplinary team.

The core function of a Medical O&P is to assess patients, develop treatment plans, design and manufacture, fit orthoses and prostheses and at the end of it all to educate the patient in the use thereof.

5. WHAT DOES A MEDICAL ORTHOTIST/PROSTHETIST DO?

The work is interesting and is constantly provides various challenges. The Medical Orthotist / Prosthetist is concerned with a patient as a human being and is expected to take care of their emotional needs.

A person in this profession also works in close co-operation with the medical practitioners to evaluate and assess the patient(s) to determine appropriate prescription for a specific assistive device.



The surgeons and/or other members of the rehabilitation team consult on various cases with the Medical Orthotist/Prosthetist to determine best treatment care for their common patient(s) or those who are referred.

A range of assistive devices are designed, manufactured and fitted at the Medical Orthotic / Prosthetic Centres with the help of an Orthopaedic Footwear Technicians and Medical Orthotic / Prosthetic Assistants.



6. WHERE DOES A MEDICAL ORTHOTIST/PROSTHETIST WORK?

The Medical Orthotist / Prosthetist can be employed in the Public Sector (Government Services) or easily find employment in the Private Sector. Orthotics Prosthetics Services are also available in the Military Services as well as the Mining Sector.

7. WHO CAN BE TREATED?

The treatment and healthcare of Orthotics & Prosthetics is rendered to:

1. Patients of all age groups in the hospital or health care institution, either as in-patients or as;
2. Out-patients such as people with physical disabilities or a deformity, who need assistive devices to improve their mobility or other human body functions.





Follow up treatment may be designed when it is necessary for a constant re-evaluation of the patient. Remember the ultimate goal here is to achieve the optimal rehabilitation.

8. WHICH ATTRIBUTES ARE EXPECTED OF A MEDICAL ORTHOTIST / PROSTHETIST?

The Medical Orthotist / Prosthetist is a friendly and spontaneous person with outstanding qualities namely:

1. Enjoy working with people.
2. Ability to get along with people of all ages.
3. Desire to help others.
4. Strong sense of responsibility.
5. Leadership qualities.
6. Patience and desire to be involved with the disabled.
7. Good team worker.
8. Innovative and practical.
9. Enjoy working with his / her hands.

9. WHERE ARE MEDICAL ORTHOTISTS / PROSTHETISTS TRAINED?

Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) is currently the only Training Institution in that provides O&P studies in South Africa.

The National Diploma in Medical Orthotics and Prosthetics is obtained after successful completion of three years of study at TUT.

Training is comprised of 24 months Theoretical training and 12 months Practical work.

Practical training is offered by practicing centres. Only the centres that are accredited by the Health Professional Council of South Africa (HPCSA), both in the public and private sector, are registered. The registered centres are permitted to provide experiential training to any Medical Orthotics and Prosthetics: Assistants, Students and Internships.

Graduates are only allowed to practice after a successful completion of internship training with an approved institution. This compulsory training takes another 12 months and only thereafter can the candidate apply for registration with the HPCSA (This is a compulsory pre-requisite to practice).

The highest qualification that can be obtained in South Africa at present is a B- Tech. degree, but in the near future a Masters and Doctorate will be obtainable as well.

10. SOME OF THE PRODUCTS PROVIDED BY O&P SERVICES

Orthoses manufactured and issued.

All upper extremity orthoses

Shoulder splints

Above – elbow splints

Full – arm orthoses

Below – elbow splints

Wrist splints

Hand splints

Finger splints

Immobilizing Slings



Lower extremity orthose

Hip orthoses

Pavlik Harness

Knee- Ankle- Foot-orthoses

Hip abduction splint

Cervical support

Soft collar

Eso – static collar

Cervi brace

SOMI brace

Head Halter



Back Supports

Lumbar Sacral belt

Lumbar Dorsal support

Elastic back support

Abdominal corset

CASH Hyperextension Brace

Chairback Brace

TLSO Brace

Milwaukee Brace

Pelvic Traction belts

Knee orthoses:

Knee guard

Knee Brace Elastic Hinged

Knee Ranger

Foot orthoses:

Orthopaedic Boots

- Surgical Boots
- Arcopaedical Shoes
- Tarso Pronator Boots
- Arch Supports
- Insoles
- Heelcups
- Sole Wedges
- Built – up Shoes
- Metatarsal Pads



Walking Aids:

- Wooden Crutches
- Elbow Crutches
- Gutter Crutches
- Quadruped Walking Sticks
- Pulpit Walker
- Walking Sticks

Miscellaneous

- Para – care Cushions
- Wheelchair Inserts
- Elastic Stockings
- Moulded Helmets
- Pelvic Traction belts

Prostheses:

- All upper Extremity Prostheses
- Above-elbow Prostheses
- Through – Elbow Prostheses
- Below-elbow Prostheses
- Lower Extremity Prostheses

- Hip disarticulation prostheses
- Above-knee Prostheses
- Through-knee Prostheses
- Below-knee Prostheses
- Syme Prostheses
- Breast Prostheses

11. WHERE ARE THE ORTHOTICS PROSTHETICS SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE PROVINCE:

(a) Thabo Mofutsanyana District

Phekolong Hospital:

Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 16:00

Clinics:

Dihlabeng Hospital - Every Thursday from 12:00 - 14:00

Manapo Hospital - Every 2nd Wednesday from 09:00 to 15:00

Harrismith Hospital - Every 2nd Thursday from 09:00 – 14:00

(b) Lejweleputswa & Fezile Dabi District

Kopano - Every Day from 07:30 – 16:00

Clinics:

Bongani Hospital - As per call

Boitumelo Hospital (Kroonstad) - Every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month
from 09:00 -12:30

Parys Hospital - Every 1st Wednesday of the month
from 08:00 – 13:00

Bothaville Hospital - Every 2nd Wednesday of the month
from 09:00 – 12:00

(c) Motheo & Xhariep Districts

Pelonomi Hospital - Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 16:00

National Hospital - Monday to Friday from 10:00 to 14:00

Universitas Hospital - Monday to Friday from 14:00 to 15:30

Clinics:

Free State Psychiatry Complex - As per call

Botshabelo Hospital - 1st Thursday of the month
from 13:00 to 15:00

Moroka Hospital (Thaba Nchu) - 1st Thursday of the months
from 09:00 to 12:30

Ladybrand Hospital - 1st Tuesday of the month
from 09:30 to 13:00

Community Health Centre (Petrusburg) - Every 3rd Tuesday of the month
from 09:00 to 13:00

Stoffel Coetzee Hospital (Smithfield) - Every 2nd Tuesday of the month
from 13:15 to 14:30

Embekweni Hospital (Zastron) - Every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 09:30 to 12:30

12. CONTACT PERSONS IN THE ORTHOTIC PROSTHETIC SERVICES OF THE FREE STATE PROVINCE:

1. Motheo and Xhariep Districts

The Head of Centre

Pelonomi Hospital

Bloemfontein

Phone: 051 – 432 2018

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2. Lejweleputswa and Fezile Dabi Districts

The Head of Centre
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Welkom
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3. Thabo Mofutsanyana District

The Head of Centre
Phekolong Hospital,
Bethlehem
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4. Head Office

Provincial Service Co-ordinator
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Bloemfontein
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5. Contact Information for TUT:

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