

# Advocacy and Workplace Fatigue

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Increasing the fatigue-related occupational health and safety knowledge base of regulated occupational therapists in Alberta, Society of Alberta Occupational Therapists in partnership with Alberta Human Services, Occupational Health and Safety Program, Government of Alberta  
2015



### Case Study – Workplace Advocacy

Judy is exhausted, feels de-valued, has become cynical about her work, and doubts her patients are benefiting from occupational therapy as they deserve to. In fact, she has reached a point where she feels that either something must change in her workplace or she will need to leave for her own well-being!

In considering these choices, Judy decides that she is willing to give it one more try. Searching for a place to begin Judy studies

the SAOT developed website on Workplace fatigue (<http://www.otfatiqesaot.info/>) and especially the section on advocacy and discovers some helpful strategies. As recommended, she analyzes her situation as objectively as possible and identifies the following factors that prevent her from providing competent and ethical occupational therapy:

- Difficulty prioritizing demand
- Feeling less control over quality of work
- Inability to search for best evidence to guide practice
- Feeling overwhelmed by seemingly unending demand
- Feelings of guilt & anxiety over providing only basic, sub-optimal intervention

Judy realizes that she can't address these issues without additional information and input from other stakeholders– after all she has been doing her best to deal with them on her own for months.

Recognizing that by advocating for herself she is in fact advocating for her patients Judy commits to:

- Changing her mindset to 'glass half-full' and focusing her energy on contributing to a better worklife
- Approach her human resources department to see what occupational health and safety initiatives they have relevant to workplace fatigue.
- Download key resources from the Fatigue in the OT Workplace website <http://www.otfatiqesaot.info/> to provide evidence and resources when she talks to others
- Through her daily acts and conversations, developing constructive relationships and communicating with her manager and colleagues about her needs and concerns, and checking and clarifying their assumptions about her work
- Together with her manager, and as appropriate her colleagues, establishing an OT prioritizing protocol based on her organization's mission
- Continuously sharing what is working well – thus helping others understand her contributions
- Generously sharing her knowledge about OT whenever the opportunity arises
- Remembering that she is a consultant to the organization about her own work and how it is best accomplished.