Position: Occupational Therapist (OTR) / Director of Therapeutic Services
Reports to: Executive Director
Status: Full-time, Exempt
Location: Brentwood, Missouri
Salary: $85,000 - $100,000 annually

Organization Overview

Gateway Down Syndrome Association (GDSA) is a nationally recognized nonprofit dedicated to serving, supporting, and celebrating the lives of individuals with Down syndrome and their families through every stage of life. Guided by the core values of integrity, equity, inclusion, respect, and excellence, GDSA serves more than 2,300 individuals and families across a 150-mile radius and envisions a community where people with Down syndrome can reach their full potential. The GDSA has a 10-year strategic vision of developing a Center of Excellence for the Down syndrome community

Position Summary

The Occupational Therapist (OT) / Director of Therapeutic Services will oversee the development of the GDSA's first ever therapeutic services department. This professional will act as the clinical leader of GDSA's Occupational and Expressive Therapy Program, a grant-funded initiative designed to improve independence, communication, emotional regulation, and quality of life for children and adolescents with Down syndrome ages birth through 18 while setting the groundwork for potential growth of therapeutic services at the GDSA.

This position combines direct occupational therapy services with program development, interdisciplinary collaboration, family engagement, outcomes measurement, grant compliance, and supervision of contracted expressive arts therapists. The Director of Therapeutic Services will establish and oversee an evidence-based therapeutic services program that integrates occupational therapy, music therapy, and art therapy to reduce challenging behaviors, strengthen adaptive skills, and improve participation and interpersonal relationships in everyday life.

The Director of Therapeutic Services will also have the opportunity to collaborate across the organization to strengthen research-informed programming for teens and adults with Down syndrome.

Essential Responsibilities

Program Leadership

- Develop, implement, and continuously improve GDSA's new Occupational and Expressive Therapy Program in line with the requirements of our major grant funder – The St. Louis County Children's Service Fund (CSF)
- Design evidence-based group curricula based on current research and best practices.
- Ensure services are developmentally appropriate and family-centered.
- Coordinate participant intake, scheduling, and service delivery.
- Coordinate contracted music and art therapists.
- Assist in developing scopes of work for qualified subcontractors and OT students.
- Ensure contracted providers align with program goals, quality standards, and grant requirements.

Clinical Services & Family Engagement

- Conduct comprehensive occupational therapy evaluations using standardized assessments and family-centered interviewing.
- Develop individualized treatment plans aligned with participant and family goals.
- Provide one-on-one occupational therapy services in participant homes, GDSA offices, and community settings.
- Facilitate therapeutic group occupational therapy programs for up to six participants and / or oversee OT students leading group programming.
- Deliver evidence-based interventions addressing topics such as:
    - Activities of daily living
    - Sensory processing and sensory integration
    - Emotional regulation
    - Executive functioning
    - Toilet training
    - Personal safety
    - Social participation
    - Behavior management
    - Self-care and hygiene
- Educate and coach parents and caregivers to reinforce therapy goals outside of sessions.
- Maintain consistent communication regarding participant progress.
- Provide education, resources, and home strategies for caregivers.

Outcomes Measurement & Quality Improvement

- Administer assessments pre- and post-program
- Monitor participant progress using evidence-based outcome measures.
- Analyze program data and prepare reports for leadership and grant funders.
- Participate in continuous quality improvement initiatives.

Grant Compliance & Documentation

- Maintain timely, accurate, and complete clinical documentation.
- Ensure all required county contract documentation and enrollment information is completed.
- Work closely with the Bookkeeping and Billing Specialist to submit required documentation for reimbursement and grant reporting.
- Maintain compliance with all funding requirements, documentation standards, HIPAA regulations, and professional practice guidelines.

Cross-Program Collaboration

- Collaborate with GDSA program staff to integrate occupational therapy principles throughout the organization.
- Provide consultation to staff regarding behavior supports, adaptive strategies, sensory needs, and inclusive programming.
- Participate in interdisciplinary planning meetings.
- Build relationships with schools and OT student groups, healthcare providers, community agencies, and referral partners.

Qualifications

Required

- Master's or Doctorate degree in Occupational Therapy from an accredited program.
- Current Missouri Occupational Therapist license in good standing.
- National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) certification.
- Minimum three years of pediatric occupational therapy experience.
- Experience working with children with developmental disabilities or intellectual disabilities.
- Experience developing individualized treatment plans.
- Knowledge of evidence-based pediatric occupational therapy interventions.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong organizational and project management abilities.
- Ability to work independently while collaborating across multidisciplinary teams.

Preferred

- Experience working with individuals with Down syndrome.
- Experience with sensory integration approaches.
- Experience in behavioral intervention and emotional regulation.
- Experience leading therapy groups.
- Experience supervising therapists or contracted providers.
- Experience collecting and reporting program outcome data.

What Success Looks Like

During your first year, you will:

- High family satisfaction with therapy services.
- Timely completion of evaluations, treatment plans, and documentation.
- Achievement of grant performance measures.
- Successful implementation of individual and group occupational therapy services.
- Effective coordination of contracted expressive arts therapists and OT students.
- Strong collaboration across GDSA programs.
- Compliance with grant, billing, and documentation requirements.
- Contribution to the development of evidence-informed programming across the organization.

The impact you will make…

For nearly 50 years, Gateway Down Syndrome Association has empowered individuals with Down syndrome and their families through advocacy, education, connection, and life-changing programs. Every sponsorship you secure, every volunteer you inspire, and every fundraising dollar you help generate directly supports opportunities for more than 2,300 individuals and families each year. Your work will create moments of belonging, expand critical resources, and ensure that individuals with Down syndrome can continue to thrive in a community where they are valued, included, and celebrated.

Why You'll Love Working Here

At GDSA, you'll join a passionate team united by purpose and driven by impact. GDSA is dedicated to maintaining a compassionate, inclusive, and high-performing culture in which all staff and volunteers are valued, respected, and empowered. We foster teamwork, trust, accountability, and open communication while holding ourselves to the highest standards in order to reach our vision.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

GDSA is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and organization's achievement as well. We embrace our employees' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

Please submit resume and brief cover letter to Executive Director, Erin Suelmann, at erin@gatewaydsa.org

GDSA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or veteran status.