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## **An exploration of barriers to Worship as an Activity of Daily Living**

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### **Introduction**

Recent professional debate concerning spirituality has recognized worship as important in many people's lives however the significance of worship as an activity of daily living has largely been neglected in the wider debate (Johnson and Mayers 2005).

### **Objectives**

In the UK the 2001 census (ONS 2001) indicated over 77% of the population identified with a religious group and Tearfund research (Ashworth 2007) suggested that 7.6 million adults attended church regularly in the UK. This paper is based on research into barriers to worship practice for people with impairments from a multi-faith perspective.

### **Methods**

Following ethical approval, a case study design was used to investigate the accessibility of a church, a mosque and a synagogue from an inclusive design perspective. The built environments were audited and qualitative data concerning the expectations and attitudes of building users was sought.

### **Results**

Buildings used for worship are subject to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995) in the UK and all of those studied had made access adaptations, but with an emphasis on wheelchair accessibility, limited consideration of the broader and multiple impairment issues of a large number of disabled people and, with disability awareness training seen as unnecessary.

### **Conclusion**

A more in-depth investigation, with broader debate concerning worship practice for people with disabilities is needed in the UK. Contributions from the international experience of OT colleagues working in different cultures and with different worship groups/faiths would be a great advantage.

### **Contribution to future practice**

It is hoped this presentation will promote an international dialogue concerning worship as an activity of daily living and in addition contribute to the developing role of the OT as an advisor in the area of inclusive design and in particular the challenges of addressing the needs of a community of building users from both a multi-cultural and multi-faith perspective.

### **References**

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