

Use of the Person-Environment-Occupational Model to Work with Clients from Culturally Diverse Backgrounds in Melbourne, Australia.

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Introduction: Australia is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. In Victoria, almost one quarter of the population were born overseas and 20% speak a language other than English at home (State Government of Victoria, Australia, 2009). Occupational Therapists working within Melbourne have the unique opportunity of providing high quality services to clients from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Many Occupational Therapists have found utilising the Person-Environment-Occupation model (PEO model) (Law et al, 1996) can assist with ensuring that Occupational Therapy services for culturally diverse clients are client-centred and based on collaborative goals. **Objective:** This study aims to demonstrate unique case studies outlining how Occupational Therapists in Melbourne, Australia apply the PEO model to working with clients from culturally diverse backgrounds, to ensure the development of a client-centred, holistic and collaborative approach to Occupational Therapy intervention. **Description:** These case studies explore how the PEO model was utilised to acknowledge cultural influences for both the client and the therapist throughout the therapeutic relationship and how this impacted on intervention and outcomes. **Discussion:** The model advocates that 'occupational performance is the product of the dynamic relationship among persons, their occupations and roles and the environments in which they live (Law et al, 1996)' allowing therapists to contemplate the impact of culture from a varied of viewpoints. The PEO model assists with the complex challenge of recognising a range of cultures, identifying how culture influences the client and the therapist, and acknowledging how these aspects are interlinked with individualized Occupational Therapy intervention. **Conclusion / Contribution to Practice:** The need to be aware of culture's impact on occupational performance is essential for all Occupational Therapists, perhaps more so for those exposed to a greater array of cultures such as in Melbourne, Australia. The case studies highlight that the PEO model can be a valuable method of systematically reviewing Occupational Therapy practice to ensure that we are meeting the needs of occupational therapy consumers from a variety of cultural backgrounds.