

Occupational Therapy and Homelessness: Connecting International Research, Practice and Practitioners

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Homelessness is a growing issue in economically developed nations, despite a multitude of efforts to address this trend. This is an ironic social condition in nations characterized by wealth and opportunity. Occupational therapy has an important role in serving the needs of homeless persons both during and following homelessness, yet this research body is in the early stages of development. This workshop will begin by briefly identifying the state of homelessness and occupational therapy in Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Ireland & New Zealand. An overview of research conducted by a panel of occupational therapy researchers represented by each of these nations will be presented. Attendees will be engaged to explore areas for future research in occupational therapy and occupational science, with the express goal of identifying themes common to the diverse settings of all attendees. The potential for collaborative efforts, including possibility of an international network will be explored.

Learning Objectives:

Attendees will

1. Gain an understanding of the state of homelessness in developed nations
2. Be provided with an overview of recent occupational therapy and occupational science research related to homelessness including the time use of homeless persons, the transition from homeless to housed, family homelessness and practice initiatives
3. Consider possible opportunities for future research and practice developments and collaborations in occupational therapy and occupational science as they relate to homelessness