

Work transition following serious hand injury: current occupational therapy practice

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Introduction: Serious hand injuries cause disruption in an individual's ability to carry out their daily occupations, including work. The process of return to work after a serious hand injury is highly complex, yet there is a paucity of evidence related to work transitions in this population.

Objective: To delineate current occupational therapy practice with regard to work transitions after serious hand injury as a starting point for subsequent studies.

Methods: The study was a naturalistic inquiry employing a qualitative descriptive design. Maximum variation sampling was used to recruit occupational therapists specialising in hand injuries or return to work in the Western Cape of South Africa. Individual semi-structured interviews were used to capture therapists' perspectives about current practice. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the data. Rigour was addressed through triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking and an audit trail.

Results: Findings will be presented as a full description to capture all the elements involved in current practice.

Conclusion: The findings provide a deeper understanding of current practice from a middle-income country perspective and will be used to inform further exploration of how current practice may be strengthened to achieve positive return to work outcomes in people with serious hand injuries.