

Promoting functional independence and occupational justice among hospitalized older patients in Northern Brazil: sharing professional experiences of an Occupational Therapy Service at a Northern Brazil's hospital

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Introduction: Diabetes Mellitus is a health condition caused by hyperglycemia which leads to sequelae that negatively interferes in older adults' daily routines especially when they go through limb amputation. As a consequence, occupational areas are altered, especially functional mobility, self-care activities and social participation. There are limitations to social participation when there is not supportive urban structure on streets which is the case for some neighborhoods in Belem, Pará State's capital city, due to disorganized city growth without adoption of universal design principles. This hinders people from getting engaged in their significant occupations.

Objective: To present the opositive outcomes of Occupational Therapy (OT) treatment on hospitalized diabetic older adults in the Northern Region of Brazil through several professional practice techniques (training of locomotion techniques with assistive technology devices, for example) and promotion of occupational justice (e.g. educating patients about their civil rights and how they may be supported by public and non-governmental agencies social support programs).

Method or Approach: Cases reports on OT hospital sessions developed to attend the in-hospital and return-to-home needs of diabetic older adults who have gone through limb amputation.

Results: After re-evaluation process, it was concluded that hospitalized diabetic older adults who were assisted learned more about their health care status, the importance of controlling diabetes, their rights on receiving treatment and prosthetics training as well as occupational and social empowerment.

Conclusion: OT may have a key beneficial influence on improvement of functional independence and occupational empowerment among diabetic older adults and on their community dwelling.