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## **Occupational Therapy and Transgender Populations: Perspectives and Recommendations**

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Transgender and gender non-conforming populations remain an underserved population. They often experience barriers that affect mental and physical health, and limit participation and engagement in meaningful daily activities within the community. Transitioning from one gender to another requires the learning of new occupational skills related to self-care, community integration, socialization and ways of being.

Objectives of this presentation include improving awareness of the occupational needs of the transgender and gender non-conforming populations; and enhancing the skill sets for OT practitioners to provide effective and unique services to these populations by providing useful terminology, common transitioning processes and sequences, and occupation challenges.

Focus groups with persons from the transgender and gender non-conforming populations, and occupational therapists are in progress. A completed focus group with persons from the transgender and gender non-conforming population has preliminary data analysis. Thus far, analysis from this group elicited recommendations to meet the needs of this population and suggestions for practitioners.

While occupational therapists remain client-centered and compassionate, when providing care, there are unique needs of the transgender and gender non-conforming populations along with provision of traditional occupational therapy. Occupational therapists need to understand the unique language, activities of daily living and community integration needs of this population.

Occupational therapists have distinct training to assess and intervene for the individual within his/her human and nonhuman contexts making them a potential future expert in provision of services to the transgender and gender non-conforming populations.