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# The untapped potential of occupational therapy: Making a difference for women and their partners during early breast cancer survivorship

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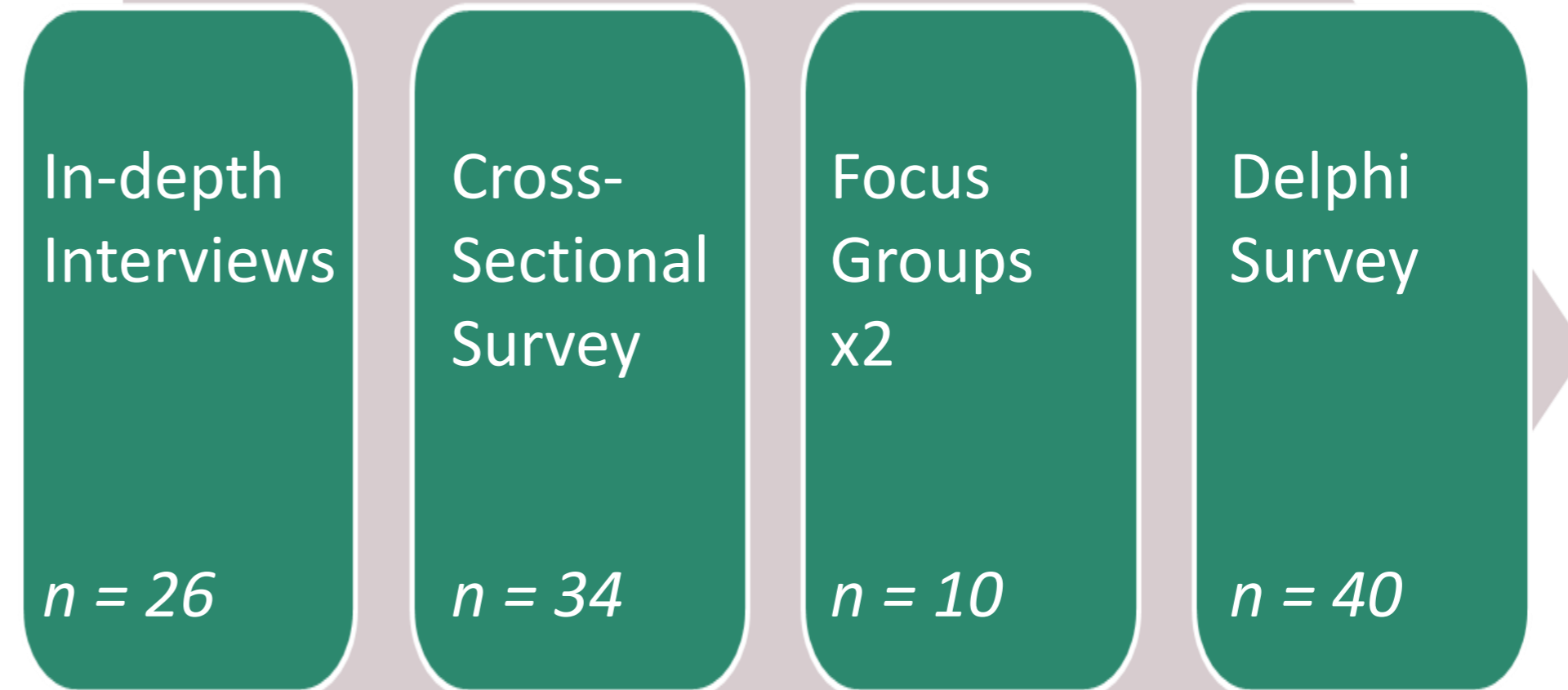
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# Aims and method





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# Findings

- **The competing expectations of survivorship**
- **Activity disengagement and role disruption for women and their partners**
- **Occupational disruption**

*“Occupational disruption is a temporary state, characterised by a significant disruption of identity associated with changes in the quantity and/or quality of one’s occupations subsequent to a significant life event, transition, illness or injury. It has the potential to affect multiple areas of functioning, including social and emotional functioning”*

**Nizzero, Cote and Cramm (2017, p. 125)**

# Findings

*'We just had a few friends. They were all there in the beginning but not now ... I became very reclusive, I was very cautious. I didn't let people see me when I was having a bad day, I didn't want to carry on friendships at that point so I just had probably two really close friends that know me very well and know what I need when I needed it'. (Danielle)*

*'I used to say to say to Gary , he was in a club building a hot-rod at the time, and I knew when the hammer got louder he was taking his anger out and the guys would turn up and say 'what do you want a hand with?' I thought they'd be down the shed and they'd be saying 'how're you going?' (Glenda)*  
*Gary interjects: 'blokes don't talk to blokes like that... I mean you see these sheds they've got if your depressed, but blokes don't talk To blokes like that...'*

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*'People are telling the positive story and obviously that's good but I feel like there's another story to be told ... yes I'm through it and I'm incredibly grateful but I'm now living with a different set of circumstances which are actually really difficult. I think that's the general population's view as well ... you should just get on with it ... but it's like grief, it doesn't go away'. (Glenda)*



*'It's like somebody's just given you permission for delayed shock and grief and trauma ... that really took me by surprise and I don't know what that means and I don't know what resources are available and I was blown out of the water a year after, not at the time'. (Lester)*

# Findings



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- **Comprehensive and coordinated care is required, including rehabilitation and a formal plan**
- **Occupational therapy has the potential to play a significant role**

# Practice implications for occupational therapy



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- Diversification of the framework of care: biopsychosocial model to ensure activity and role engagement
- Rehabilitation opportunities and access to multidisciplinary health care professionals, use of a survivorship care plan
- Partners must be included
- **OCCUPATION FOCUSED CARE**

# References

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