



# Occupational Therapy

March 2026

The aim of this current awareness bulletin is to provide a digest of recent guidelines, reports, research and best practice in Occupational Therapy. Part of this bulletin draws on content created by Manchester University NHS FT and University Hospitals Dorset NHS Trust

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## Evidence Summary and Systematic Reviews

### 1. Fall Risk Assessments for Individuals with Visual Impairment: A Scoping Review of Questionnaire-Based Tools

Item Type: Journal Article

Authors: Arogbokun, Sunkanmi;Owusu, Sandra;Wheeler, Lauren and Barstow, Beth

Publication Date: 2026

Journal: Occupational Therapy in Health Care , pp. 1–25

Abstract: Individuals with visual impairment are at high risk of falls due to sensory, functional, and environmental challenges. Existing fall risk assessment tools rarely address vision-related challenges. This scoping review identified and summarized questionnaire-based tools used to assess fall risk in individuals with visual impairment to map the literature, highlight research gaps, and inform preventive strategies. Adhering to Joanna Briggs Institute Scoping Review methodology and PRISMA-ScR guidelines, 19 studies met inclusion criteria, yielding 11 vision-specific questionnaires. Findings highlight gaps in evidence and indicate the need for future research examining measurement properties and developing approaches.

Access or request full text: <https://libkey.io/10.1080/07380577.2026.2623233>

URL: <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=6eed0aca-0513-3af4-8f71-f3abd833c100>



## 2. Occupational therapy assessments and interventions for patients with ankylosing spondylitis: a scoping review protocol

Item Type: Journal Article

Authors: Rider, John V.;LaVerdure, Abigail E. and De Armond, Megan

Publication Date: 2024

Journal: JBI Evidence Synthesis 22(10), pp. 2148–2155

**Abstract:** Objective: The proposed scoping review aims to explore the literature on the occupational therapy (OT) scope of practice for patients with ankylosing spondylitis, including assessment methods and intervention approaches used by OT practitioners, areas of impairment addressed, and practice settings where OT practitioners provide services. Introduction: Ankylosing spondylitis is a type of spondyloarthritis primarily involving inflammation of the spine. Studies have begun to examine the role of OT in addressing pain, function, and disability among patients with ankylosing spondylitis. Given the increased recognition of OT services for this population, a comprehensive understanding of the assessment methods and intervention approaches used by OT practitioners when working with ankylosing spondylitis would benefit clinicians, providers, and patients and support future research efforts. Inclusion criteria: The review will consider studies that include participants of any age diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis and any form of OT assessment and intervention. All relevant published and unpublished studies will be considered, without date or language limitations, including all primary studies, gray literature, textual evidence papers, and clinical guidelines. Methods: The review will follow the JBI methodology for scoping reviews. Searches will be conducted in MEDLINE (PubMed), Embase, CINAHL (EBSCOhost), Scopus, PsycINFO (EBSCOhost), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, SportDiscus (EBSCOhost), OTDBase, OTSeeker, and Google Scholar. Two reviewers will independently extract data from selected papers using a standardized tool modified for the review. The results will be presented using frequency tables and will be accompanied by a narrative summary.

Access or request full text: <https://libkey.io/10.11124/JBIES-23-00393>

URL: <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=46d1d2ac-c8b7-38dd-90b3-02e984f513f5>

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## Published Research

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<https://www.nhslincslibrary.uk/page/journal-article-request/>

1. **Exploring the alignment between occupational therapy using Ayres Sensory Integration with children and occupation-centred practice: An observational study**

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Acuña, Carolina;Gallegos-Berrios, Sebastian;Barfoot, Jacqui;Meredith, Pamela and Hill, Jessica

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** Australian Occupational Therapy Journal 73(1), pp. e70076  
**Source:** <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1440-1630.70076>

2. **Optimizing Outpatient Total Shoulder Arthroplasty: The Role of Physical and Occupational Therapy While in the Hospital**

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Burcke, Andrew;Stefanski, Amber;Bruner, Ryan E.;Bijanki, Vinieth;Israel, Heidi;Sweeney, Patrick;Otto, Randall and Kaar, Scott G.

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** Seminars in Arthroplasty: JSES

**Abstract:** Hypothesis and Background The rise of value-based care models, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has driven a shift toward outpatient total shoulder arthroplasty (TSA). As outpatient TSA becomes more prevalent, the role of in-hospital physical and occupational therapy (PT/OT) in this setting remains unclear. This study aimed to evaluate the clinical and economic impact of in-hospital PT and OT for patients discharged within 24 hours following TSA. We hypothesized that initiating in-hospital therapy would not significantly influence 90-day readmission rates or 6-month functional outcomes, but would incur additional costs on the healthcare system. Methods A retrospective review was conducted across multiple institutions within a single health system for patients that underwent primary anatomic or reverse



TSA between 2020 and 2022. Inclusion criteria encompassed adult patients with a hospital length of stay <24 hours and diagnoses including rotator cuff arthropathy, osteoarthritis, proximal humerus fracture, avascular necrosis, and nonunion. Exclusion criteria included age Results A total of 480 patients met inclusion criteria. Of these, 88 (18%) received PT, 135 (28%) received OT, and 163 (34%) received either PT or OT during their hospital stay. Seventeen patients (3.67%) were readmitted within 90 days, with higher rates of anemia, COPD, diabetes, and in-hospital OT. In-hospital OT was associated with a significantly smaller improvement in 6-month ASES scores (30.3 vs. 48.5,  $p = 0.006$ ) and a lower likelihood of achieving the minimal clinically important difference (MCID) in ASES scores ( $p = 0.038$ ). Estimated Medicare reimbursement totaled \$8,330 for PT and \$13,258 for OT, with a combined total reimbursement of \$21,588. Discussion and Conclusion In-hospital OT following outpatient TSA was associated with increased 90-day readmissions, lower ASES improvement at 6 months, and a reduced likelihood of achieving ASES MCID, all while incurring added healthcare costs. These counterintuitive findings likely reflect selection bias, as patients receiving OT may have greater baseline disability or medical complexity. Nevertheless, the routine use of in-hospital OT for outpatient TSA should be critically evaluated. Additional research is warranted to better understand the rationale behind therapy referrals in this population, the impact of in-hospital therapy on early postoperative functional outcomes and range of motion, and the overall cost-effectiveness of these interventions.

**Access or request full text:** <https://libkey.io/10.1016/j.sart.2026.151567>

**URL:** <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=14301dcb-91e3-34c3-acbd-da9da86129a9>

### 3. Evaluation of the effectiveness of night splints and occupational therapy in carpal tunnel syndrome

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Castán Gasquet, Raquel;Pardo Sanz, María Pilar;Casas Lázaro, Joaquina;Estallo Bernadós, Vanessa and Roman Cosculluela, Natalia

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** Cadernos Brasileiros De Terapia Ocupacional 34, pp. e4081

**Source:** <https://www.scielo.br/j/cadbto/a/zVwyzTbB7FNjyJwRLQKLZnc/?format=pdf&lang=en>

### 4. A Frame of Reference for Trauma-Informed Occupational Therapy



**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Cerny, Shana

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** Occupational Therapy in Mental Health , pp. 1–26

**Abstract:** Abstract This paper presents a trauma-informed occupational therapy frame of reference that integrates trauma science into occupation-based practice and conceptualizes how life experiences, environments, and biobehavioral adaptations influence occupational engagement. This theory-driven approach provides guidelines for evaluation and intervention for clients who have experienced trauma, laying the foundation for research to advance trauma-responsive systems of care.

**Access or request full**

**text:** <https://libkey.io/10.1080/0164212x.2026.2617632>

**URL:** <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=89968105-920c-3243-bd6a-1807f79bd28b>

**5. Investigating the effect of augmented reality-based virtual patient training on occupational therapy students' clinical decision-making: A quasi-experimental study**

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Chahartangi, Farshid; Zarifsanaiey, Nahid; Mehrabi, Manoosh; Ghoochani, Bahareh Zeynalzadeh and Sharifzadeh, Nahid

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** PLoS ONE 21(2), pp. e0340759

**Abstract:** Technology-enhanced education is an essential element of modern universities, improving clinical decision-making, and student performance. This study aimed to design and evaluate an augmented reality-based virtual patient (VPAR) educational model to enhance clinical decision-making in upper limb nerves among occupational therapy students. This quasi-experimental study conducted from January to April 2025 with 44 occupational therapy students from Shiraz and Arak Universities of Medical Sciences. Classes were assigned by pre-existing cluster allocation to the intervention group (VPAR, n = 24) or the control group (traditional education, n



= 20). Clinical decision-making skills were assessed before and one month after a three-week VPAR program using a researcher-developed questionnaire. Data were analyzed using R software (version 4.3.3) and the Generalized Estimating Equations (GEE) model to determine the effect of the intervention. The post-test probability of a correct response was 7.34 times greater than the pre-test ( $p = 0.0684$ ), indicating improved performance likely due to the intervention ( $p = 0.0018$ ). Additionally, the intervention group had a 3.75 times higher likelihood of correct responses compared to the control group ( $p = 0.0004$ ), demonstrating the intervention's positive impact. In conclusion, the VPAR is an effective tool for enhancing clinical decision-making among occupational therapy students.

**Access or request full text:** <https://libkey.io/10.1371/journal.pone.0340759>

**URL:** <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=fb256ad4-a075-35e2-a19d-dc3ae4ccc545>

## 6. Exploring Canadian Occupational Therapists' Perceptions on Health Disparities: An Interpretative Descriptive Study

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Dass, Ronessa;Begin, Deedee;Di Pelino, Stephanie;Packham, Tara;Macedo, Luciana;Vanderkaay, Sandra;Turkstra, Lyn;Mior, Silvano;Carlesso, Lisa and MacDermid, Joy

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy , pp. 00084174261417370

**Source:** <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00084174261417370>

## 7. Challenges in accessing and implementing innovative interventions in occupational therapy

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Erarslan, İbrahim;Erilli, Selin Efsa;Gedikli, Erman and Bahadır, Zeynep

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** BMC Health Services Research



**Source:** [https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1186/s12913-026-14151-8\\_reference.pdf](https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1186/s12913-026-14151-8_reference.pdf)

**8. A descriptive study identifying occupational priorities and perceptions of motherhood**

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Friedman, Zahava L.;Kenny, Sabrina;Simon, Gianna;Lee, John;Giordano, Keri;Nealon, Kate and Latawiec, Jessica

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** Journal of Occupational Science , pp. 1–16

**Source:** <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14427591.2025.2600022>

**9. Effects of Maternal Role Preparation Training and Awareness-Centered Occupational Therapy Interventions on Psychosocial Parameters and Quality of Life in Pregnant Women: A Randomized Controlled Trial With Postpartum Follow-Up**

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Karakus, Aysenur and Akyurek, Gokcen

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** The American Journal of Occupational Therapy 80(2), pp. 8002205140

**Source:** <https://research.aota.org/ajot/article-abstract/80/2/8002205140/28554/Effects-of-Maternal-Role-Preparation-Training-and?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

**10. Future trends and challenges in occupational therapy: Insights from a Delphi study**

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Önal, Gözde and Özdemir, Turan Emre

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** British Journal of Occupational Therapy 89(2), pp. 102–115

**Abstract:** Introduction: Occupational therapy is evolving rapidly due to



technological advances and demographic and sociocultural changes. Recognizing emerging trends is fundamental to developing responsive educational programs, evidence-based practices, and adaptive health policies. This study explores expert perspectives across five themes: (1) Future Technologies, (2) Neuroscience and Biotechnology Integration, (3) Technology-Based Therapy Approaches, (4) Sociocultural and Demographic Impacts, and (5) Innovative Educational Methods. Method: A three-round Delphi study was conducted with 36 occupational therapy professionals. The sample included 12 academicians (mean age (M) = 34.5, 67% female), 12 clinicians (M = 31.2, 75% female), and 12 final-year interns (M = 23.1, 92% female). The mean professional experience was 6.0 years for academicians and 5.8 years for clinicians. Thematic analysis and Kendall's W were used to evaluate consensus. Results: Participants emphasized the importance of integrating virtual reality/augmented reality interventions, artificial intelligence-supported assessments, and telehealth into occupational therapy practice. Neuroplasticity-based interventions and simulation-based learning were highlighted for future competence. Ethical concerns regarding artificial intelligence, as well as cost and digital literacy barriers, were also noted. Conclusion: To meet future challenges, occupational therapists should enhance digital competencies, ensure accessibility, and develop inclusive, culturally responsive practices. Findings inform clinical, educational, and policy strategies in occupational therapy.

**Access or request full text:** <https://libkey.io/10.1177/03080226251368235>

**URL:** <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=4626cb1d-e551-319c-a067-c25bfa16cf39>

### 11. Effects of the Color Narrative Preventive Intervention Using Occupational Storytelling: A Randomized Controlled Trial

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Takashima, Risa;Sawamura, Daisuke;Yoshida, Yuko;Yun, Shan;Walder, Kim and Sakaue, Mari

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** The American Journal of Occupational Therapy 80(2), pp. 8002205010

**Source:** <https://research.aota.org/ajot/article-pdf/80/2/8002205010/100019/8002205010.pdf>



**12. 3676 Evaluation of the role and impact of ward based occupational therapists for older people with hip fractures**

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Wasmuth, T.

**Publication Date:** 2026

**Journal:** Age and Ageing 55(Supplement\_1), pp. afaf368. 015

**Source:** [https://academic.oup.com/ageing/article-abstract/55/Supplement\\_1/afaf368.015/8457300](https://academic.oup.com/ageing/article-abstract/55/Supplement_1/afaf368.015/8457300)

**13. Empowering Mothers: Addressing Postpartum Depression in the NICU Through Occupational Therapy**

**Item Type:** Journal Article

**Authors:** Cloyd, Maggie

**Publication Date:** 2025

**Source:** <https://encompass.eku.edu/otd-capstone-posters/25/>

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**Professional Development/ Reports/News**

Kay, N. (2026) What could promote autonomy more than giving someone a voice? Royal College of Occupational Therapists, 16 February. Available at: <https://www.rcot.co.uk/latest-news/what-could-promote-autonomy-more-giving-someone-voice> (Accessed: 18 February 2026).

Royal College of Occupational Therapists (2026) *Care Act 2014 guidance*. RCOT, 5 February. Available at: <https://www.rcot.co.uk/explore-resources/social-care/care-act-2014-guidance> (Accessed: 18 February 2026).