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Rehabilitation

Current Awareness Bulletin

September 2025

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Book a session today at https://forms.office.com/e/HyiSXfDaYV (these sessions will be held on a monthly basis)

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1. **Muscle oxygenation regulation in physical therapy and rehabilitation**

Authors: Jan, Yih-Kuen and Cheung, W. C.

Publication Date: 2026

Journal: Medical Gas Research

Abstract: Skeletal muscle oxygenation reflects the balance between oxygen delivery from the microcirculation and oxygen consumption of the muscle cells. Oxygenation in the muscle tissue is an essential factor in muscle contractions for performing activities of daily living and exercise as well as muscle tissue viability. It is until the development of near-infrared spectroscopy for providing a noninvasive, continuous monitoring of muscle oxygenation. The principle of near-infrared spectroscopy is to use light property to assess oxygenation based on the appearance of oxygenated blood in red and deoxygenated blood in darker red to black. To date, there is no comprehensive review focusing on muscle oxygenation regulation and its applications in physical therapy and rehabilitation. The objectives of this comprehensive review are to: 1) highlight the recent technical advances in near-infrared spectroscopytechnology for rehabilitation researchers, 2) present the advances in pathophysiological research in muscle oxygenation, and 3) evaluate findings and evidence of recent physical therapy and rehabilitation studies on improving muscle oxygenation. The review also evaluates findings and evidence of aerobic exercise, resistance exercise, contrast bath therapy, wound healing, cupping therapy, stretching, and electrical stimulation on muscle oxygen in healthy adults and patients with cardiovascular diseases. The use of near-infrared spectroscopy allows the

assessment of muscle oxidative metabolism for personalized rehabilitation and exercise training. (Copyright © 2025 Medical Gas Research.)

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2. **Adherence to prehabilitation in adult surgical patients: a systematic review, meta-analysis, meta-regression, and qualitative synthesis**

Authors: Berrio-Valencia, Marta;Al-Bayati, Mariam;Baxi, Adir;Branje, Karina;Chitiva-Martinez, Ingrid;Hladkowicz, Emily;Kidd, Gurlavine;Hutton, Brian;Wolfe, Dianna M.;Lalu, Manoj;Boet, Sylvain;Gillis, Chelsia and McIsaac, Daniel I.

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: BJA: The British Journal of Anaesthesia

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3. **Physiotherapists' beliefs of the working mechanisms of manual therapeutic techniques for spinal pain relief: a quantitative content analysis**

Authors: Hendriks, J. P.;Reezigt, R. R. and Reneman, M. F.

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Musculoskeletal Science & Practice

Abstract: Competing Interests: Declaration of competing interest The authors declare that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript. (A2) works part-time as ambassador for the NVMT. The outcomes of this work will not have an impact the on authors' relationship with NVMT.; Background: Manual therapeutic techniques (MTTs), including high velocity thrust manipulation (HVT) and spinal mobilization (MOB), are used to reduce spinal pain. Physiotherapists' beliefs on their working mechanisms to relieve pain are unknown.; Objectives: To explore the prevalence of physiotherapists' beliefs regarding the working mechanisms of MTTs on pain relief and their associated factors.; Design: Quantitative content analysis.; Method: The results of the verbal and online survey were analyzed based on a theory-driven coding framework (categories and depth). Ordinal, linear, and nominal regression analyses were used to analyze the secondary aim.; Results: A total of 541 physiotherapists were included (survey, n = 383, 70.8 %; verbal surveys, n = 158, 29.2 %), resulting in 759 HVT and 713 MOB responses. Six categories were present: biomechanical (39.3 % HVT, 50.9 % MOB), neurophysiological (39.4 % HVT, 31.4 % MOB), immunological (2.0 % HVT, 1.1 % MOB), non-specific (13.4 % HVT, 14.2 % MOB), unknown (4.3 % HVT, 1.3 % MOB), and not categorizable (1.6 % HVT, 1.1 % MOB). Levels of depth were low (65.1 % HVT, 64.1 % MOB), moderate (17.3 % HVT, 19.0 % MOB), and high (17.4 % HVT, 16.8 % MOB). Having a Master degree, network participation and work experience were associated with the category of working mechanism, level of depth and number of working mechanisms.; Conclusion: The beliefs of physiotherapists in the Netherlands regarding the working mechanisms of MTTs for spinal-related pain reduction are mainly biomechanical and neurophysiological. The working mechanisms were dominantly explained in an unifactorial manner and with a low level of depth. Having a Master of Science degree was strongly associated with more evidence-consistent beliefs and deeper understanding. (Copyright © 2025 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd.. All rights reserved.)

4. **Occupational Therapy in the Treatment of Early Psychosis: a Scoping Review**

Authors: Kramer, Ilyse;Zagorac, Sarah;Hefron, Nuriya;Walker, Lauren;Taylor, Caitlyn;Thomas, Elizabeth C. and Read, Halley

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Community Mental Health Journal

Abstract: Competing Interests: Declarations. Conflict of interest: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.; Extensive literature documents the benefits of intervening early for psychosis and for using interventions to support individuals experiencing a first episode of psychosis. Occupational therapy (OT) is used in the treatment of early psychosis, yet the specific role of OT within these multidisciplinary teams remains underexplored. By mapping existing evidence, this scoping review aims to present the evidence related to the inclusion of OT in early intervention for psychosis. A comprehensive literature search was conducted in November 2020. Three authors independently screened titles, abstracts, and full texts to extract data, adhering to predetermined eligibility criteria. The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) level of evidence scale was applied to assess study quality. Six studies met inclusion criteria. Publication dates ranged from 1980 to 2011. Studies were predominantly conducted in outpatient settings (n = 6) across urban locations (n = 4). Results included one non-randomized quasi-experimental study, one analytical observational study with a retrospective cohort design, and four descriptive observational studies, including two case reports and two expert opinions on Early Intervention for Psychosis (EIP) programs, with evidence levels varying across the included studies. Despite OT's documented efficacy in mental health care, reviews specifically exploring OT's role in early psychosis are lacking. This scoping review identified six relevant studies, highlighting significant variability in interventions, outcomes, and study designs. Rigorous research is needed to establish evidence of OT's effectiveness and potential contribution to the treatment of early psychosis to address current gaps in care provision. (© 2025. The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature.)

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5. **Comparing the Use of Physiotherapy, Shockwave Therapy, Prolotherapy, and Platelet-Rich Plasma for Chronic Lateral Epicondylosis: A Prospective, Randomized Controlled Trial With 2-Year Follow-up**

Authors: Lhee, Sang-Hoon;Ryeol Lee, Kwang and Young Lee, Do

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: American Journal of Sports Medicine

Abstract: Background: Lateral epicondylosis is a degenerative condition affecting 1% to 3% of adults annually. Concerns over the sustained efficacy of corticosteroids have increased interest in regenerative treatments like platelet-rich plasma (PRP), prolotherapy, and extracorporeal shockwave therapy (ESWT), but comparative data remain limited. Purpose: To evaluate whether PRP, prolotherapy, and ESWT provide superior clinical outcomes at 24 months compared with physiotherapy alone in patients with chronic lateral epicondylosis. Study Design: Randomized controlled trial; Level of evidence, 2. Methods: Adults older than 35 years with lateral elbow pain lasting >6 months, diagnosed via physical examination and ultrasound, and refractory to at least 3 months of nonoperative treatment, were included. Exclusion criteria included recent corticosteroid or botulinum toxin injections and complete

extensor tendon rupture. Patients were randomized into 4 treatment groups: physiotherapy, ESWT, prolotherapy, or PRP. The primary outcome was the Disabilities of the Arm, Shoulder and Hand (DASH) score, and the secondary outcome was the Subjective Satisfaction Score (SSS). Patients were followed for 2 years to assess the treatment efficacy. Results: A total of 231 patients were enrolled, with 202 completing the study. Baseline DASH scores were comparable across the groups (P =.526). At 24 months, PRP significantly reduced DASH scores by 31.18 points compared with physiotherapy (18.70 points) and ESWT (17.62 points) (P <.01). Prolotherapy (21.02 points) also showed greater improvement than physiotherapy at 18 months (15.61 points) (P <.01). PRP yielded the highest SSS (4.60 ± 0.9), outperforming physiotherapy (3.00 ± 1.9) and ESWT (3.43 ± 1.7) (P <.01). Prolotherapy also yielded higher SSS (4.24 ± 1.2) compared with physiotherapy (P <.01) and ESWT (P <.01) at 24 months. At 24 months, all groups demonstrated DASH score reductions exceeding the minimal clinically important difference of 10 points, indicating clinically meaningful improvement: PRP (31.18), prolotherapy (20.70), ESWT (17.62), and physiotherapy (18.70). Conclusion: PRP and prolotherapy yielded better clinical and functional outcomes than ESWT and physiotherapy in chronic lateral epicondylosis over a 2-year follow-up. The findings support the potential of these therapies as effective nonsurgical options for long-standing cases.

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6. **Technology-Based Physical Rehabilitation for Balance in Patients With Multiple Sclerosis: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis**

Authors: Lirio-Romero, Cristina;Reina-Gutiérrez, Sara;López-Muñoz, Purificación;Bravo-Esteban, Elisabeth;Torres-Costoso, Ana and Guzmán-Pavón, María José

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Archives of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Abstract: To synthesize the current evidence on technology-based physical rehabilitation for balance in people with multiple sclerosis and to compare its effectiveness with that of conventional physical therapy. A comprehensive search of databases including CENTRAL Scopus, CINAHL, PsycINFO, PubMed, and PEDro was conducted up to March 2024. Studies were selected based on predefined inclusion criteria. Data extraction and quality assessment were performed independently by 2 reviewers. Statistical analyses were conducted using a random effects model. A total of 24 studies involving 985 participants were included. The meta-analysis revealed that compared with conventional physical therapy, technology-based physical rehabilitation significantly improved balance outcomes by 0.16 (95% CI, 0.04- 0.29; P =.027) with moderate heterogeneity (I^2=39.1%). Subgroup analyses were performed by intervention modality (robotic assistive gait training, exergaming, and telerehabilitation), and only exergaming interventions had a medium effect on balance in this population of 0.29 (95% CI, 0.08-0.251; P =.03). Among technology-based physical rehabilitation approaches, exergaming interventions have shown promising effectiveness in improving balance in people with multiple sclerosis. Despite the moderate heterogeneity, the findings support the use of exergaming as a viable option. Further high-quality randomized controlled trials are needed to confirm these results.

7. **An Occupational Therapy Programme for a Psychiatric Day Hospital: Voice of Occupational Therapy Practitioners and Patients**

Authors: Masango, July;van der Merwe, Tania Rauch;Casteleijn, Daleen;Adams, Fasloen and Pacitti, Francesca

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Mental Illness

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8. **Voices from the clinic: a qualitative analysis of physiotherapy strategies in musculoskeletal care for knee osteoarthritis patients**

Authors: Nguyen, Jennifer;Naylor, Justine M.;Dennis, Sarah;Livings, Rebecca;Mills, Kathryn;Schabrun, Siobhan M. and Thom, Jeanette M.

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders

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9. **What components and formats of rehabilitation interventions are more effective to reduce pain in patients with cervical radiculopathy? A Systematic review and component network meta-analysis**

Authors: Núñez de Arenas-Arroyo, Sergio;Mavridis, Dimitris;Martínez-Vizcaíno, Vicente;Torres-Costoso, Ana;Reina-Gutiérrez, Sara;Rodríguez-Gutiérrez, Eva;Cavero-Redondo, Iv and Sequí-Domínguez, Irene

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Clinical Rehabilitation

Abstract: Competing Interests: Declaration of conflicting interestsThe authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.; ObjectivesTo estimate the comparative efficacy of rehabilitation interventions for pain reduction in cervical radiculopathy and evaluate the individual components of combined treatments to support clinical decision-making.Data sourcesA systematic search was conducted across the Cochrane, PubMed, Scopus, WOS, and PEDro databases up to 1 July 2025, for randomized controlled trials comparing rehabilitation interventions against no intervention or other rehabilitation approaches for cervical radiculopathy-related pain.Review methodsWe conducted a frequentist random effects network meta-analysis and a component network meta-analysis to isolate the effects of individual treatment components. We used CINeMA software to assess the confidence in our estimates.ResultsWe included 36 trials comparing 25 interventions composed by eight active components. The components associated with a decrease in pain were neurodynamic techniques (SMD = -1.45; 95%CI: -1.88 to -1.02), cervical traction(SMD = -0.66; 95%CI: -1.08 to -0.25), articular treatment (SMD = -0.72; 95%CI:-1.29 to -0.15), and dry needling(SMD = -3.40; 95%CI: -5.40 to -1.39). The most promising interventions for reducing pain in cervical radiculopathy patients were a combination of the above components (except dry needling) with analgesic electrotherapy and strengthening exercises with a moderate confidence rating.ConclusionsA combination of articular treatment, analgesic electrotherapy neurodynamic techniques strengthening exercises and cervical traction appears to offer the most effective pain relief for patients with

cervical radiculopathy, with a moderate confidence rating. Individually, neurodynamic techniques, cervical traction, and articular treatment were the components associated with a significant reduction in pain. Although dry needling showed encouraging results, its limited presence in the network prevents drawing firm conclusions about its effectiveness.

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10. **Intuition in Occupational Therapists' Clinical Reasoning: A Scoping Review**

Authors: P, Vermeulen;P, Lavoie;E, Moreau and A, Rochette

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: OTJR : Occupation, Participation and Health

Abstract: Competing Interests: Declaration of Conflicting InterestsThe author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.; This scoping review aimed to map the various facets of intuition in occupational therapy (OT), from its definitions, theoretical frameworks, epistemological paradigms to practical applications, highlighting its role in decision-making. Following the Joanna Briggs Institute methodology, a systematic search of five databases from 1990 to August 2023 identified 337 records related to OT and intuition. After removing duplicates and applying eligibility criteria, 22 studies were included. Two independent reviewers conducted the title/abstract and full-text screening. Thematic analysis synthesized descriptions of intuitive reasoning, and the studies' epistemologies were interpreted based on stated methodologies and knowledge conceptions. Key themes depicted OT's intuition as personalized knowledge developed through practice. Constructivist paradigms recognizing subjective meaning-making predominated (63.6%), while postpositivists related to self-reported intuition to decision outcomes quantitatively (22.7%). Despite increasing interdisciplinary attention, occupational therapists' intuition remains understudied. Integrating analytical and intuitive practice through reflection is crucial for client-centered expertise.

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11. **Occupational Therapy Research Publications From 2001 to 2020 in PubMed: Trends and Comparative Analysis with Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation**

Authors: Shepherd, Heather A.;Jesus, Tiago S.;Nalder, Emily;Dabbagh, Armaghan and Colquhoun, Heather

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: OTJR : Occupation, Participation and Health

Abstract: Competing Interests: Declaration of Conflicting InterestsThe author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.; A limited understanding of trends in occupational therapy (OT) research publications exists. This study aimed to evaluate trends in OT research publications, in PubMed (2001-2020), compared to physiotherapy and rehabilitation. A method of secondary analysis of publication trends in the PubMed database was used. Medical subject headings for OT, physiotherapy, and rehabilitation were combined with search filters (e.g., population age, study design, and OT practice area). Linear regressions were computed to analyze changes in yearly growth. OT research publications increased by 5.86 per year and comprised less than 2.5% of rehabilitation research publications yearly. Knowledge synthesis was the predominant OT study design (2.94% yearly increase; $p < .001$). Intellectual/cognitive conditions and emergent practice areas in OT research publications increased over time (both $p = .007$). OT

research publications were relatively evenly distributed across population age. OT research publications are increasing over time but lag relative to physiotherapy and rehabilitation broadly. Our findings may inform future OT research priorities.

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12. **Investigating changes in quality-of-life after high-dose high-intensity upper limb rehabilitation in chronic stroke survivors: A mixed-methods analysis of the Queen Square Programme**

Authors: Strawson, Amanda;Francis, Jill J.;Brander, Fran;Kelly, Kate;Haddad, Mark and Ward, Nick S.

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Clinical Rehabilitation

Abstract: Competing Interests: Declaration of conflicting interestsThe authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.; ObjectiveTo evaluate changes in quality-of-life and explore psychosocial influences on social participation and recovery in chronic stroke survivors following intensive upper limb neurorehabilitation.DesignMixed-methods design with quantitative (pre-post design with follow-up) and qualitative (semi-structured interview) phases.SettingThree-week Queen Square upper limb neurorehabilitation programme.Participants65 stroke survivors who participated in the programme from July 2016 to March 2018.Main measuresStroke Impact Scale (3.0) (SIS) and Action Research Arm Test, collected on admission, discharge, 6-week and 6-month follow-up (n = 65). Beliefs and psychosocial factors influencing quality-of-life were investigated through thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews in two subgroups, based whether the SIS-participation domain change from admission to follow-up was high (> 20, n = 5) or low (<-24, n = 5).ResultsSeven out of eight SIS domains, overall self-rated recovery ($p < 0.001$) and Action Research Arm Test ($p < 0.001$) improved from admission to discharge. The emotion domain improved from admission to discharge ($p < 0.001$) and reduced from discharge to 6-month follow-up ($p < 0.001$). Interviews highlighted four key psychosocial themes with contrasting positive and negative perspectives between higher change and lower change groups; themes 'hidden negative effects' and 'loneliness' were evident in the lower change group and 'getting on with my life' in the higher change group.ConclusionThe Queen Square upper limb neurorehabilitation programme led to measurable therapeutic benefits on physical and non-physical quality-of-life outcomes. However, the lack of sustained improvement in self-reported emotion contrasts with the clear benefits in other domains. This indicates a need for ongoing psychosocial support for some stroke survivors, supported by the qualitative findings.

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13. **Perceived barriers and facilitators to high-intensity gait training in stroke rehabilitation: A Delphi study**

Authors: Tapp, Annie;Griswold, David;Bent, Jennifer and Linder, Susan

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Clinical Rehabilitation

Abstract: Competing Interests: Declaration of conflicting interestsThe author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.; ObjectiveTo identify common barriers and facilitators among physical therapists to implementing high-intensity gait training for patients post-stroke during inpatient

rehabilitation.DesignA three-round Delphi study using free text responses and five-point Likert scales for agreement.Participants60 physical therapists with expertise treating patients with stroke in inpatient rehabilitation were invited. 33 participants completed all three rounds of surveys.Main MeasuresRound 1 consisted of two free text questions. Qualitative responses from round one were coded using the Theoretical Domains Framework and used to generate Likert scale survey items for rounds two and three. Consensus was defined a priori as ≥75% agreement. Response stability was evaluated with the Wilcoxon rank sum test.ResultsAnalysis identified 24 themes (12 facilitators, 12 barriers). Seven facilitators reached consensus: access to equipment (84.9%), built environment (78.8%), administrative support (78.8%), peer support (75.8%), team commitment to evidence-based practice (75.8%), high-intensity gait training-specific training (75.8%), and observable patient improvement (75.8%). Only one barrier reached consensus: treatment time interruptions (97.9%), including delays from toileting, hygiene, and medication administration. Other themes ranged from 18.2% to 57.6% agreement. No significant change in responses was found between rounds ($p > 0.05$).ConclusionsMore facilitators than barriers reached consensus, with treatment time interruptions as the primary agreed-upon barrier. Despite knowledge of high-intensity gait training and supportive factors, fewer than half of participants reported daily use. Targeted implementation strategies addressing time and workflow disruptions are needed to increase high-intensity gait training adoption in inpatient rehabilitation.

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14. **Effectiveness of an active behavioural physiotherapy intervention (ABPI) for chronic non-specific neck pain: an internal pilot cluster-randomised double-blind clinical trial**

Authors: Wiangkham, Taweewat;Uthaikhup, Sureeporn and Rushton, Alison

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Musculoskeletal Science & Practice

Abstract: Competing Interests: Declaration of competing interest No competing interests.; Background: Chronic non-specific neck pain (CNSNP) causes pain and disability, contributing to a serious public health problem. An active behavioural physiotherapy intervention (ABPI) may be an effective intervention to manage patients with CNSNP based on our previous trial data. To date, a CNSNP population has not been investigated with an ABPI.; Objectives: To preliminarily evaluate the potential effectiveness and feasibility of the ABPI for the management of patients with CNSNP.; Design: An internal pilot cluster-randomised double-blind, parallel 2-arm (ABPI vs standard physiotherapy intervention: SPI) clinical trial across 4 Thai public hospitals.; Methods: Forty participants (20 each arm) were recruited and face-to-face assessed at baseline and 3-month follow-up post baseline using the neck disability index (NDI), numerical pain rating scale (NPRS), cervical range of motion, fear-avoidance beliefs questionnaire, central sensitisation inventory (CSI) and short form-36.; Results: The mean (standard deviation) age of participants was 38.1 (7.8) years. The ABPI demonstrated significant within group improvement in all outcome measures and the NDI, NPRS and CSI illustrated significant improvement for the SPI ($p \leq 0.05$). For the comparison between groups, all outcome measures were significantly better in the ABPI arm compared to the SPI ($p \leq 0.05$), except the CSI. Finally, the number of fully recovered participants (considering the NDI ≤ 4/50) was greater for the ABPI (15/20 participants, 75 %) than the SPI (7/20 participants, 35 %).; Conclusion: These promising findings from an internal pilot study support continued data collection to conduct the definitive phase III trial (n = 120) to evaluate the effectiveness of the ABPI for the CNSNP management.

15**. A profession under pressure: speech and language therapy retention and waiting times**

Author: Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)

Publication Date: 2025

Results from a survey of over 1000 SLTs shows significant time pressures and feeling of burnout across the profession.

16**. Outcomes of specialist physiotherapy for functional motor disorder: the Physio4FMD RCT**

Authors: Nielsen G.

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Health Technology Assessment

Functional motor disorder often causes persistent disabling symptoms that are associated with high healthcare costs. In recent years, specialist physiotherapy, informed by an understanding of functional motor disorder, has emerged as a promising treatment, but there is an absence of evidence of its effectiveness from large randomised controlled trials.

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17. **Effectiveness of physiotherapist-led tele-rehabilitation for older adults with chronic conditions: a systematic review and meta-analysis [with consumer summary]**

Author: Edward H.

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: Disability & Rehabilitation

Older adults live with chronic conditions worldwide. The aim of this systematic review was to determine the effectiveness of physiotherapist-led (PT-led) tele-rehabilitation on various health outcomes

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18. **Examination of occupational therapists' encounters with violence**

Author: Öksüz Ç

Publication Date: 2025

Journal: British Journal of Occupational Therapy

We aimed to investigate whether occupational therapists are exposed to violence in their professional lives and to identify the types of violence they encounter.

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