

Identifying Research Priorities for Occupational Therapy in the UK: A James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnership

Watson et al. (2021)

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For which topic were research priorities identified?

occupational therapy

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

Europe - United Kingdom

Why was it conducted at all?

As the scope and nature of practice evolves in an ever-changing health and social care landscape, it is imperative the profession continues to expand the evidence base underpinning interventions. The need to update the existing research priorities. The need to update the existing research priorities.

What was the objective?

to identify unanswered questions about occupational therapy from the shared perspectives of people with experience of accessing services, their carers and families, occupational therapists and others working alongside them in the health and social care environment, and then prioritize those unanswered questions that these groups agree were the most important for research to address

What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 10 research questions

How long did the research prioritization take?

August 2019 - July 2020

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

JLA method

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: setting up PSP: forming steering group, identifying partner organizations. Step 2: collecting research uncertainties: survey, participants were asked: What questions do you have about occupational therapy that you haven't been able to find the answer to? What questions do you have about the difference that occupational therapy makes to people's lives?, 2193 questions were submitted. Step 3: data analysis: out of scope questions were removed, 1255 questions were in scope, in scope questions were analyzed thematically and checked against evidence, 66 overarching summary questions were formulated. Step 4: interim ranking: via survey, to prioritize the longlist of 66 summary questions, participants were asked to choose up to 10 questions that they thought were most important for researchers to answer, responses from the different stakeholder groups were analyzed separately, the steering group deemed it appropriate that the ten most highly ranked questions from each group be presented for consideration at the final prioritisation workshop, the two lists overlapped to a limited degree, 18 summary questions were shortlisted. Step 5: prioritization workshop: 18 summary questions shortlisted were presented for prioritization by consensus, 10 priorities were identified

Which stakeholders took part?

Survey: 927 participants: 654 occupational therapists and occupational therapy students, 328 people accessing occupational therapy services and their carers and/or family, 105 people other than occupational therapists working in the health and care environment, or with a different interest in occupational therapy. Interim ranking: 1140 participants: 883 occupational therapists, 101 occupational therapy students, 105 people who access occupational therapy services and/or their carers or families. Workshop: 19 participants: 9 with lived experience, 10 from the occupational therapy profession.

How were stakeholders recruited?

Partner organizations helped to disseminate the survey.

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders not only participated but were also actively involved in the research prioritization process: They were part of a steering group. The steering group consisted of 20 members; five of whom offered lived experience of accessing occupational therapy services. The members provided broad and varied insights pertinent to the scope of occupational therapy practice.