



2026 ILOTA Annual Conference

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Friday Afternoon Poster Session (1.25 hours)

Time: 4:15pm – 5:30pm

Location: 161 A/B

P01 - What strengths and/or barriers do occupational therapy practitioners perceive when providing services to immigrant families and their children?

Presenter(s): Elizabeth Wanka, DrOT, OTR/L; Ian Cura, OTS; Meredith Saucedo, OTS; Elise Kim, OTD; Christian Terronez, OTS

Contributing Author(s): Deyanira Navarro, OTS

Content Areas: Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Pediatrics - includes: Early Intervention, School-Based Practice, Sensory Integration

Target Audience: Entry-level

Course Description: Despite increased awareness and improved diagnosis of disabilities, children especially those from diverse backgrounds continue to face significant barriers to equitable access, participation, and well-being. This study uses photovoice to explore occupational therapy practitioners' perspectives on how environmental, institutional, and systemic factors influence service delivery and outcomes in school settings.

P02 - Facilitating Continuity of Care: Supporting the Entrance into Early Intervention

Presenter(s): Lauren Dimayuga, OTD

Contributing Author(s): Dr. Ashley Stoffel, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA, FNAP; Dr. Kelly Giuliano, OTD, OTR/L

Content Areas: Pediatrics - includes Early Intervention, School-Based Practice, Sensory Integration; Administration & Management

Target Audience: Entry-level, Intermediate-level

Course Description: Recently, Illinois enacted Public Act 104-0294 (2025) to strengthen entry into Early Intervention (EI) for infants discharged from the NICU by requiring hospital staff to initiate written referrals for families whose children are automatically eligible for services. This highlights the need for structured, coordinated EI referral processes and accessible resources that support families and providers. This poster explores a capstone project addressing the needs and barriers at two Chicago sites.

P03 - The Relationship Between Occupational Engagement and Ecological Momentary Assessment in Young Adults with Major Depressive Disorder

Presenter(s): Jianna Termini, MOT, OTR/L

Contributing Author(s): Frank Czuba, DrOT, OTR/L; Caren Schranz, DrOT, MS, OTR/L

Content Areas: Mental Health; General

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level, Intermediate-level, Advanced-level

Course Description: This study examines real-time relationships between perceived stress and occupational engagement in young adults with major depressive disorder using ecological momentary assessment (EMA). MDD disrupts motivation, routines, and participation, yet stress and engagement fluctuate across daily contexts. EMA captures these momentary experiences, addressing limitations of retrospective measures and informing contextually grounded, occupation-centered OT assessment and intervention.

P04 - Understanding and Applying Multi-Sensory Strategies: Stakeholder Perspective in Adult Day Setting with Occupational Therapy Support

Presenter(s): Dustin Hogan, OTR/L; Jillian Rancatore, DrOT, MOT, OTR/L; Mia Barton, OTS; Zahria Edwards, OTS; Brent Fitzgerald, OTS; Jady Powell-Cork, OTS; Sandra Sowa, OTS

Content Areas: Developmental Disabilities; Mental Health

Target Audience: Entry-level

Course Description: Let's discover how multi-sensory environments (MSEs) can empower adults with ID/DD to enhance engagement and participation in adult day centers. This session highlights stakeholder strengths, identifies practical barriers, and showcases the vital role of occupational therapy in building confidence, collaboration, and sustainable sensory-informed practice.

P05 - Exploring Sleep Quality and Satisfaction with Engagement in Social Roles and Daily Activities

Presenter(s): Lia Gonzalez, OTD; Susan Charnley, DrOT, OTR/L, CHT; Lydia Royeen, PhD, OTR/L

Contributing Author(s): Hannah Simons-Jones, OTD; Jacqueline Grabill, OTD; Leigh Reisberg, OTD

Content Areas: Home & Community Health; General

Target Audience: Entry-level

Course Description: This exploratory mixed methods pilot study examines how sleep quality influences occupational satisfaction and engagement among adults in primary care using the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), Patient-Rated Outcomes Information System Satisfaction with Social Roles and Activities Short

Form (PROMIS) and open-ended survey responses to inform occupational therapy practice.

P06 - Enhancing Lives at Home: A Qualitative Study on the Impacts of Home Modifications on Adults with Disabilities

Presenter(s): Mounira Nkouengam, OTD; Ryan Durkin, OTD, MBA, OTR/L EDHM

Contributing Author(s): Ryan Durkin, OTD, MBA, OTR/L, ECHM

Content Areas: Home & Community Health; Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Target Audience: Intermediate-level

Course Description: This presentation examines the lived experiences of adults with disabilities who received home modifications through a municipal program in Chicago. Through qualitative findings, attendees will explore how environmental modifications improved safety, independence, emotional well-being, and daily participation while also identifying ongoing barriers to access and opportunities for occupational therapy advocacy and program improvement.

P07 - Reclaiming Independence: A Group Intervention for Intimate Partner Violence Survivors in Supportive Housing

Presenter(s): Brianna Burke, OTD

Contributing Author(s): Ryan Durkin, OTD, MBA, OTR/L, ECHM

Target Audience: Intermediate-level

Course Description: This presentation explores the role of occupational therapy in supporting intimate partner violence (IPV) survivors residing in supportive housing through a 5-week group intervention focused on IADLs, mental health, and social participation. Attendees will learn about program development, implementation challenges, participant feedback, and opportunities for expanding survivor-centered occupational therapy services within community-based settings.

P08 - Increasing Occupational Engagement Through Functional Cognition Groups in Assisted Living

Presenter(s): Anneliese Wojciechowski, OTD

Contributing Author(s): Emily Edwards, MOT OTR/L; Glen Cotton, OTD, OTR/L, HPCS

Content Areas: Productive Aging; General

Target Audience: Intermediate-level

Course Description: This capstone project focused on increasing occupational engagement through providing education and implementation of functional cognition enhancement, environmental, and task modifications for the activity department in collaboration with the Occupational therapist. The target population

included those in assisted living experiencing disruptions due to MCI and mild-moderate dementia.

P09 - Health Care Graduate Students' Perceptions of University Resources and Strategies to Support Stress Management and Well-Being

Presenter(s): Rebecca Kvasnicka, DrOT, MOT, OTR/L; Jessica Brizuela, OTS; Taylor Brown, OTS; Ciara Golden, OTS; Diana Guzman, OTS; Lauren Kelly, OTS

Content Areas: Academic Education / Fieldwork; Mental Health

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level, Intermediate-level

Course Description: Graduate healthcare students face significant stressors that impact their well-being and academic performance. This poster explores student perceptions of university resources, coping strategies, and gaps in support using mixed-methods survey data. Findings highlight the need for accessible, holistic, and student-centered wellness initiatives to better support stress management and overall well-being.

P10 - The Experiences of Professional Quality of Life of Occupational Therapy Practitioners in Upper Extremity Rehabilitation

Presenter(s): Lia Gonzalez, OTD

Contributing Author(s): Emily Simpson, PhD, OTR/L; Katelyn Madrid, MPH

Content Areas: Physical Disabilities - including: Neurorehabilitation, Orthopedic; Mental Health

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level

Course Description: This research demonstrates that upper extremity (UE) occupational therapists experience complex barriers to professional quality of life (Pro-WOL), including burnout. This topic advances practice by identifying supports to enhance Pro-QOL for UE OTs.

P11 - Mindful Connections: An Online Parent Training to Support Self-Efficacy and Knowledge of Mindfulness for Children with Sensory Processing Differences

Presenter(s): Isabel Pencyla, OTD, OTR

Contributing Author(s): Mara Levin, MS, OTR/L; Evguenia Popova, MS, PHD, OTR/L; Nicole Kovalevsky, OTD, OTR/L

Content Areas: Mental Health; Pediatrics - includes: Early Intervention, School-Based Practice, Sensory Integration

Target Audience: Entry-level, Intermediate-level

Course Description: Online mindfulness training programs for parents can promote parents' knowledge of mindfulness strategies for themselves and their children while also improving parental self-efficacy. This case report offers increased insights into the practicality of implementing self-paced mindfulness-based parent

training programs for caregivers of children with sensory processing differences, providing another avenue to promote mindful parenting and support a child's emotional regulation.

P12 – Brain Health Influences Self-Regulation

Presenter(s): Dr. Belinda Anderson-Shelton, DrOT, M.Ed., M.S., OTR/L

Content Areas: Pediatrics - includes Early Intervention, School-Based Practice, Sensory Integration; Mental Health

Target Audience: Intermediate-level, Advanced-level

Course Description: Discover what parts of the brain and their functions have an impact on the way one thinks, reacts, and interacts with their environment, relationships, and emotional control, Sensory Processing, roles, occupations, social/emotional abilities, and learning. Find out why having poorly developed brains will negatively affect one's capabilities to interact with others and how using neurological stimulation and activities and tasks enhance one's self-regulation, to participate in the world.

P13 - More Than Exercise: How Meaningful Movement Supports Occupational Balance and Professional Well-Being

Presenter(s): Renee Keny, MOTR/L

Content Areas: General; Mental Health

Target Audience: Entry-level, Intermediate-level

Course Description: Occupational therapists often support clients in engaging in meaningful occupations that promote health and well-being, but less attention is given to applying these principles to ourselves. This poster explores how school-based occupational therapists and related service professionals use meaningful movement and restorative occupations to support occupational balance, self-awareness, and participation in valued roles using the Model of Human Occupation (MOHO).

P14 - Playing to Learn: A Quality Improvement Review of Community-Engaged Learning Integration in Occupational Therapy Coursework Through a Children's Museum Collaboration Project

Presenter(s): Juliet Perez, MOT, OTR/L; Lauren Stone Kelly, OTD, OTR/L; Jaclyn Cinotte, OTS; Marissa Madl, OTS

Contributing Author(s): Erin Luy, MSOT, OTR/L

Content Areas: Pediatrics - includes Early Intervention, School-Based Practice, Sensory Integration; Academic Education / Fieldwork

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level, Intermediate-level, Advanced-level

Course Description: Community collaboration is a critical component of occupational therapy practice and occupational therapy student education. Partnering with a local children's museum, occupational therapy students, with the assistance of faculty, implemented a community-based event for children. Student and visitor feedback was collected to review quality improvement indicators, outlining potential areas for improvement to enhance the course's integration of community-engaged learning.

P18 - Investigating Best Practices in Diagnostic Reasoning and Differential Diagnosis: Implications for Occupational Therapy

Presenter(s): Frank Czuba, DrOT, OTR/L; Laila Atra-Yassin, OTS; Cassidy Green, cgreen8@govst.edu; Shaylynn Krause, OTS; Stephanie Petersen, OTS; Alisia Robinson, OTS

Content Areas: Administration & Management; General

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level, Intermediate-level, Advanced-level

Course Description: Diagnostic reasoning and differential diagnosis (DD) are increasingly important in occupational therapy (OT) as direct access expands roles. A national survey found OTPs understand DD but report lower confidence due to training gaps, role ambiguity, and limited support. OTPs identify red flags and collaborate effectively, but they seek structured training and clearer guidelines to integrate diagnostic reasoning into practice fully.

Saturday Afternoon Poster Session (1 hour)

Time: 3:15pm – 4:15pm

Location: 161 A/B

P15 - Primitive Reflex Integration and Child Development: A Review of Current Evidence

Presenter(s): Beverly Menninger, OTD, OTR/L

Content Areas: Pediatrics - includes Early Intervention, School-Based Practice, Sensory Integration; Mental Health

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level, Intermediate-level, Advanced-level

Course Description: Primitive reflex retention in children has been linked to motor, sensory, visual, and academic challenges that directly affect occupational performance. This poster reviews 16 studies on the relationship between retained primitive reflexes and developmental outcomes and presents emerging evidence on reflex integration interventions. These findings are relevant to occupational therapists seeking evidence-informed approaches to primitive reflex retention in pediatric practice.

P16 - Bridging the Gap: Facilitating communication with people with Dementia

Presenter(s): Elizabeth Levine, OTD, OTR/L, CLT; Alexis Martin, OTS; Autumn Boeing, OTS; Rebeca Prodan, OTS; Grace Hiller, OTS; Lauren Tesch, OTS

Contributing Author(s): Ann Wise, CDP

Content Areas: Productive Aging; Home & Community Health

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level, Intermediate-level, Advanced-level

Course Description: This study seeks to determine whether exposure to photographs and accompanying narratives created by a loved one with dementia significantly changes care partners' self-reported empathy, understanding of the dementia experience, and perceived communication effectiveness, as measured by pre and post-showcase surveys.

P17 - Graduate Students' Perceptions of Generative AI's Impact on Critical Thinking Development

Presenter(s): Erin Simpson, DrOT, MOT, OTR/L; Chloe Berns, OTS; Grace Foley, OTS; Nicole Hill, OTS; Samantha Mantoan, OTS; Kevin Murney, OTS

Content Areas: Academic Education / Fieldwork; Academic Education / Fieldwork

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level, Intermediate-level

Course Description: Explore how graduate students are using generative AI and how it may be shaping their critical thinking skills. Drawing on survey data from students across multiple disciplines, we highlight both the perceived benefits of AI,

such as efficiency and idea generation, and concerns related to dependency and reduced independent thinking.

P19 - Current Occupational Therapy Practices in Home Health: A Scoping Review

Presenter(s): Laura Vanpuymbrouck, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA; Ana Medina, OTS; Keelan Parlier, OTS; Catherine Williard, OTS; Kaylee Winkler, OTS

Contributing Author(s): Jennifer Westrick, MSLIS, MSc, AHIP

Content Areas: Home & Community Health; Productive Aging

Target Audience: Intermediate-level

Course Description: This scoping review explored commonly used assessments, interventions, and outcomes in home health occupational therapy for older adults. Findings from 14 studies suggest that home health OT can improve safety, independence, and participation in daily activities; however, more rigorous research with larger and more diverse samples is needed to strengthen the evidence base to support wider use in practice and highlight the distinct value of OT in home health settings.

P20 - Returning Home Occupational Therapy: Client Perspectives on Occupational Therapy During the Transition From Homelessness to Housing

Presenter(s): Laura Vanpuymbrouck, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA; Kayla De Cicco, OTS; Juliette Giorgio, OTS; Mycah Reiland, OTS; Zahria Woodard, OTS

Content Areas: Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Home & Community Health

Target Audience: Intermediate-level

Course Description: This presentation will highlight qualitative findings that illuminate the unique role of occupational therapy in supporting adults transitioning into stable housing following homeless experiences. It will describe the key themes identified through participant perspectives and examine the specific OT supports and processes perceived as contributing to successful housing transitions.

P21 - Nature-Based Therapy: Embracing the Outdoors and the Impacts on Self-Regulation and Occupational Participation in Children

Presenter(s): Jillian Carroll, OTS

Content Areas: Pediatrics - includes Early Intervention, School-Based Practice, Sensory Integration; Developmental Disabilities

Target Audience: Entry-level

Course Description: While traditional pediatric occupational therapy (OT) takes place indoors, a fast-growing body of research suggests that the child-nature relationship plays a critical role in early childhood development. This presentation analyzes literature exploring how utilizing nature-based therapy (NBT) as an adjunct to traditional indoor OT has the potential to enhance self-regulation, occupational

participation, and overall engagement for the pediatric population through sensory rich child-led sessions.

P22 - Unlocking Healing Potential: A National Survey of Trauma-Informed Care Practices in Acute Care Rehabilitation

Presenter(s): Ana Cinch, OTD; Ashley Burks, OTD, OTR/L

Contributing Author(s): Kia Ashley Burks, OTD, OTR/L; Melissa "Missy" Dappen, MS, OTR/L

Content Areas: Physical Disabilities - including: Neurorehabilitation, Orthopedic; General

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level, Intermediate-level, Advanced-level

Course Description: Trauma-informed care (TIC) is increasingly recognized as an essential component of acute care rehabilitation, yet many providers report limited preparation to implement TIC effectively. This presentation will examine acute care rehabilitation providers' self-efficacy, implementation practices, and perceived barriers related to TIC, highlighting gaps in training and organizational support. Implications for rehabilitation practice, education, and patient-centered acute care will be discussed.

P23 - The Impact of Multisensory Stimulation on Arousal and Responsiveness as an Occupational Therapy Intervention Post-Traumatic Brain Injury

Presenter(s): Ella Bittner, OTS

Contributing Author(s): Jennifer Lim, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy, MOT, OTR/L, PMH-C

Content Areas: Physical Disabilities - including: Neurorehabilitation, Orthopedic; General

Target Audience: Entry-level

Course Description: For patients who have experienced a traumatic brain injury (TBI) resulting in a disorder of consciousness (DoC), such as a coma, occupational therapy plays a crucial role in their functional recovery and outcomes. This presentation examines the research supporting multisensory stimulation, which has been demonstrated as an effective therapy intervention approach in increasing responsiveness and arousal of patients with TBI early in their rehabilitation.

P25 - Healthy Conversations: Advocating for Men's Health

Presenter(s): Stephanie Bonk, OTD, OTR/L; Sabrina Moore, OTD, OTR/L

Contributing Author(s): Michael McKinnis, PhD, MOT, OTR; Stephanie Bonk

Content Areas: Mental Health; General

Target Audience: Entry-level

Course Description: This presentation explores "Healthy Conversations," a community-based capstone project addressing health stigma and promoting destigmatization of engaging in healthy behaviors through six conversations on various health topics. Continued advocacy work is needed to promote health for all communities and populations.

P26 - An Occupational Therapy Intervention on Housing Management for Young People in an Emergency Shelter

Presenter(s): Ose Eichie, OTS; Gabriela Jaimon, OTS; Victor Suarez, OTS

Contributing Author(s): Emily Simpson, PhD, OTR/L; Amber Reynolds, OTD; Mary Vestal, OTD

Content Areas: Home & Community Health; Mental Health

Target Audience: Entry-level

Course Description: Young people experiencing homelessness (YPEH) are at higher risk for poor mental health and disrupted life skill development. There is limited research on OT life skills interventions for YPEH, specifically in emergency shelters. This poster explores the impact of an OT housing management skills intervention on YPEH at an emergency shelter, and the intervention's effect on their self-efficacy, ability to set and meet self-identified goals, and readiness to make changes toward being housed.

P27 - Community-Based Occupational Therapy Education for Older Adult Health Promotion

Presenter(s): Theresa Christopher, OTD, OTR/L, CAPS; Natasha-Rose Araneta, OTDS

Content Areas: Productive Aging; Academic Education / Fieldwork

Target Audience: Student, Entry-level

Course Description: This poster highlights a community partnership between an occupational therapy professor, students, and a local senior center to develop and deliver health education for older adults. It explores the benefits of community-engaged learning by providing students with opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings while supporting the health, safety, and well-being of community-dwelling older adults.

P28 - The Impact of Education on Paraprofessionals' Self-Perceived Knowledge and Confidence in Identifying Dysregulation and Implementing Sensory-Based Strategies to Support Student Regulation and Participation in School-Based Occupations

Presenter(s): Isis Martin, MOT, OTR/L, Doctor of Occupational Therapy Student

Contributing Author(s): Erin Simpson, DrOT, MOT, OTR/L (Faculty, Primary Research Advisor); Caren Schranz, DrOT, MS, OTR/L (Faculty, Secondary Research Advisor)

Content Areas: Pediatrics - includes Early Intervention, School-Based Practice, Sensory Integration; Developmental Disabilities

Target Audience: Entry-level, Intermediate-level

Course Description: This presentation explores how education and training impact paraprofessionals' ability to identify dysregulation and implement sensory strategies in a therapeutic day school setting. Attendees will gain an understanding of sensory processing concepts and practical strategies to support student engagement and participation in school-based occupations.