

Position Paper on An Occupational Perspective of Health

AOSC Position

AOSC adopts an occupational perspective of health which recognizes that

- People need to participate in a balanced range of purposeful occupations for their health
- People have a right to participate in occupations relevant to their community.
- Participation in occupation promotes healthy individuals, communities and populations.

AOSC Mission

AOSC seeks to build healthier, more equitable and more prosperous communities through mainstreaming an occupational perspective of health.

AOSC Strategies

AOSC educates the public and researches collaboratively through community-based, occupation-focused projects.

Background

An occupational perspective of health is based on evidence that people need meaningful and purposeful occupations for their health and wellbeing. An occupational perspective of health is unique in that it focuses on what makes and keeps people well, rather than on what causes them to be ill. An occupational perspective of health is derived from occupational science.

Occupational science generates knowledge about occupations, the things that people do in their everyday lives. Occupational science was developed by occupational therapists in the late 1980s to strengthen the knowledge and theoretical base of occupational therapy practice. However, given the broad nature of its focus, occupational science is a basic interdisciplinary science. Occupational science has potential to contribute to various professional and academic fields (e.g. social sciences, health sciences, business and administration).

Occupational scientists undertake quantitative and qualitative research to explore:

- relationships between occupation and development
- how occupation changes over the life course
- how people organise daily occupations
- personal and socio-cultural meanings of occupation
- individual and societal functions of occupation
- relationships between occupation and people's contexts
- how people experience the things they do
- how occupations influence and are influenced by health and well being
- the impact of economics, environmental issues and government policies on people's occupational opportunities and choices..
- effects of disruption to occupation, occupational injustices, occupational deprivation and occupational apartheid

Additional information

AOSC projects and publications are available on the AOSC website. <http://shoalhaven.uow.edu.au/aosc>