



2021 NCOTA Spring Conference Schedule

March 20, 2021 | Virtual

8:00-9:30 **Session 1**

1A. The Hope Program at Atrium Health: A Unique approach to Healthcare Resources for Underfunded Patients *

Dana Gentile OTR/L & Kelly Werts, DTP

Physical Disabilities | **Entry**

Atrium Health's HOPE Program is designed to reduce the length of stay for patients in acute care hospitals, including those with spinal cord injury (SCI), who have funding or disposition issues preventing them from qualifying for inpatient rehabilitation (IPR). This grassroots, teammate-initiated idea was approved by system-wide departments including administration, human resources, and safety teams. In the past 20 years, there has been a national trend showing up to 50% fewer trauma patients being discharged to rehab centers (Nehra, 2016). The HOPE program was created to maximize physical functioning, address biopsychosocial factors to facilitate safe community discharge, reduce psychological effects of institutionalization resulting from prolonged hospital stay, and more efficiently utilize healthcare resources.

1B. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

Benjamin Triplett, OTR/L

Mental Health | **Advanced, Intermediate**

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy is a framework created and used originally used by psychologists to increase a client's flexibility by accepting difficult experiences while also committing towards valued actions. This presentation will summarize tenants of this framework, describe application of tenants to principles of occupational therapy practice in mental health settings, and give case examples of an ACT-based approach to Occupational Therapy practice in mental health settings. Specific applications of ACT-based Occupational Therapy practice include promoting clients' participation in occupation in spite of aversive experiences such as depression, pain, and psychotic symptoms.

1C. Addressing the Needs of Caregivers: OT Perspectives

Debbie Hand, MS, OTR/L, BCG & Susan Misciagno, OTD, OTR/L BCG, C/NDT

Geriatrics, General | **Entry, Intermediate**

Family caregivers often feel unprepared to assume the role of caregiving for adults post discharge. Being a caregiver places an increased burden on a family member which can lead to the caregiver having poor health, depressive symptoms, and a lack of fulfillment. This in turn can negatively impact client outcomes. Occupational therapy practitioners can help caregivers better adjust to their new role and the demands of caring for an adult or older adult by better understanding caregivers' readiness for and adjustment to the role. This presentation offers ideas for best practices to assess caregiver readiness and burden, to address unmet needs, and to promote quality of life for the caregiver and thus the client through this formal approach.



1D. OTAs: Getting Involved in Research

Abigail Swidergal, MS, COTA/L, CKTP & Melissa J. Tilton, OTA, MS, COTA, ROH

Education/Research/Fieldwork, General | **Entry**

The pillars supporting Vision 2025 are useful in identifying a large area of opportunity for OTAs within research. Through the use of pillars: effective, leaders, collaborative, accessible, and equity, inclusion and diversity, OTAs are the perfect match to research for OT services. It will increase evidence for practice, create new leaders, increase collaboration, be more accessible through intervention, and increase diversity in the thoughts, ideas, and population participating in OT research.

1E. American's with Disabilities Act – An Overview to Empower Clients

Kathryn Sorensen, OTD, OTR/L, ADA-C

General | **Entry**

This course is designed to give therapists an in-depth understanding of the rights and laws of people with disabilities as put into law under the ADA, FHA, AACA, Rehabilitation Act and other laws. This course is designed to help therapists know the laws that protect our clients and how you can help them advocate for the modifications they need to engage in life to the fullest!

1F. Prosthetic Intervention for Partial Hand Amputees & The OT Practitioners Integral Role in Patient Outcomes

Hannah M. Smith, MBA

Assistive Technology, Physical Disabilities, Mental Health | **Intermediate**

In this session, we will dive deep into the partial hand and finger amputee population etiology, Naked Prosthetics' engineered solutions, and the pivotal role OT practitioners play in creating positive patient outcomes. Attendees will gain an appreciation of actual impairment resulting from partial hand loss and the value of working collaboratively with certified prosthetists in helping restore physical and psychosocial health, independence, and autonomy.

9:30-9:45 **Break**

9:45-11:15 **Session 2**

2A. The Role of OT in Wheelchair and Mobility Management

Amber L. Ward, MS, OTR/L, BCPR, ATP/SMS, FAOTA

Physical Disabilities, Assistive Technology | **Entry, Intermediate**

The role of the OT practitioner with regards to mobility and the impact safe and functional mobility has on occupational performance is an important one, but at times the OT role is less clear with regards to our PT partners and perceived lack of knowledge in these areas. This session will focus on opportunities both to assist clients and grow professionally in this area, with specific discussion on both practical options to take-away as well as options for systemic/group/population influence. While seating and wheeled mobility seems like a specialty niche, the session will focus on how all OT practitioners can take a pivotal role to enhance occupation with regards to wheeled mobility.



2B. Reclaiming Occupation: A Practice Based Inquiry in Mental Health

MaryBeth Gallagher, PhD, OTR/L, BCMH, Nancy Bagatell, Keara Palpant, OTR/L, Kevi Mihas, OTR/L, Zack Schafer, OTR/L & Darren Peters, MOTR/L, BCMH

Mental Health, Education/Research/Fieldwork | **Entry, Intermediate**

The need for developing and using research in practice continues to be central to the mission and value of occupational therapy. This session presents a process of practice-based inquiry within an acute-care mental health team. The team formed a community of practice scholars to research and advance occupation-based practice, individually and collectively. Attendees will hear how engaging practitioners in a practical research method involving reflection and dialogue enabled the generation and immediate application of new knowledge to practice. Narratives from practitioner-researchers will be shared to provide understanding of how this community of practice supported, motivated and activated therapists to consider facilitators and barriers in practice and to better conceptualize, carry out, and promote occupation-based practice in mental health.

2C. Don't Fall Behind in Fall Prevention: Using Virtual Fall Risk Screenings to Reach Older Adults at Home

Cynthia S. Bell, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA & Megan Edwards Collins, Ph.D., OTR/L, CAPS, CFPS, Sara Migliarese, PT, PhD, NCS, MSCS, LaVerene Garner, PT, DPT, NCS, Nancy Smith, PT, DPT, PhD, GCS, Alison Hartman, PT, DPT, & Christina Criminger, PT, PhD, GSC

Home & Community Health, Geriatrics, Education/Research/Fieldwork | **Intermediate**

The purpose of this presentation is to share with the learner a piloted virtual fall risk system implemented over the summer of 2020 aimed at providing evidence-based assessment data, education, and online options for fall prevention programming to older adults in the Piedmont Triad area of North Carolina. This includes holding virtual fall screening events and running virtual Otago and A Matter of Balance falls prevention programming.

2D. Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Learning Activities to Consider

Linn Wakeford, PhD, OT/L

Educational/Research/Fieldwork | **Entry**

This panel presentation will include OT and OTA student reflections on events and activities that their educational programs have offered related to issues of social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Activity details will be shared so that occupational therapy practitioners in educational programs, agencies, institutions, and other workplaces can replicate or adapt the activities to fit their setting. This presentation is intended to advance efforts of educational and practice settings to offer multiple types of opportunities for students, educators, and practitioners to think about and address issues of race, racism, diversity of all kinds, equity, justice, and inclusion.

2E. Leadership During a Crisis: Creating an Employee Wellness Program *

MaryBeth Gallagher, PhD, OTR/L, BCMH, Darren Peters, OTR/L, BCMH, Brittni Winslow, OTR/L, & Shelley Ashcroft, OTD, OTR/L, BCMH

Leadership & Administration, Mental Health | **Entry**

This presentation will give you the structure to create an employee wellness program. We will explore the following; definition and importance of employee wellness, role of occupational therapy in wellness, utilization of the meaningful activity engagement tool and understand the 5Cs of resiliency framework in improving and maintaining wellness.



2F. COVID Pandemic Through the Lens of Individuals with Mental Illness

Chinyu Wu, PhD, OTR/L, Jonathan Brown, OTS, Joyous Hawkins, OTS, Troy Jones, OTS, Stephanie Sample, OTS & Lauren Tait, OTS

Mental Health, Education/Research/Fieldwork | **Entry**

This session will present a PhotoVoice study that explored the meaning of community participation for individuals with mental illness during the COVID pandemic. The study was conducted at a peer-operated center in the summer of 2020. Six members of the peer center aged from 25 to 60 years participated in the study by taking photos of their lived experiences during the pandemic. Participants attended three photo discussion meetings facilitated by the SHOWED discussion guide. With the aid of a computer program, NVivo, methods of grounded theory were used to analyze the data. We will share the challenges encountered by the participants, as well as practice implications for occupational therapy practitioners who work with this client population.

2G. Update on the OT Interstate Compact and Advocacy Efforts at the North Carolina General Assembly

Ashley Perkinson, NCOTA Lobbyist & Nahale Kalfas, Legal Counsel at the Council of State Governments – National Center for Interstate Compacts

Advocacy | **Entry**

Join NCOTA Lobbyist Ashley Perkinson and Council of State Governments Legal Counsel Nahale Kalfas for an update and discussion on the Occupational Therapy Interstate Compact legislation currently being considered by the North Carolina General Assembly and supported by NCOTA. Kalfas, one of the primary drafters of the OT compact, will discuss the benefits of adoption of the interstate compact for occupational therapists in North Carolina and provide an update on advocacy efforts in other states to adopt the compact. Perkinson will give an update on the advocacy efforts for the compact at the North Carolina General Assembly and update participants on developments related to all 2021 NCOTA Legislative Priorities. Perkinson will also provide tips for advocacy and outreach to our North Carolina legislators.

11:15-12:15 **Lunch**

12:15-1:45 **Session 3**

3A. Standardized Stroke Assessment: A Scoring Tool You Want to Use

Kelly Anderson, PhD, OTR/L

Physical Disabilities, Home & Community Health, Geriatrics, Education/Research/Fieldwork | **Intermediate**

We know standardized assessments are important. However, simple scores are often not helpful to therapists. What does it mean that Mr. Jones scored 42 on the Fugl-Meyer Assessment? What if there was a scoring method making results clear and understandable to clinicians and patients? What if your score sheet was a simple 1 page visual “roadmap to recovery” helping identify what deficits should be addressed when? In this session, therapists will learn a new scoring system for a standardized stroke assessment. We will discuss how results can be shared with clients so they feel empowered to take ownership of their recovery process. This tool can help therapists better use evidence to create an occupation-based treatment plan tailored to the needs and abilities of clients.



3B. Student Veterans' Experiences in Post-Secondary Education from an Occupational-Based Perspective *

Bernadette Schmeltz OTD, OTR/L, CLT & Jenna Trinh, OTS

Research/Fieldwork | **Entry**

Veterans are enrolling in higher education at increased rates due to the benefits of the Post-9/11 GI Bill (Williston & Roemer, 2017). Completing a postsecondary education degree is valuable as it offers greater economic opportunities (Norman et al., 2015). When pursuing postsecondary education student veterans often encounter unique challenges (Tomar & Stoffel, 2014). These distinctive occupational barriers impact student veterans' occupational performance and quality of life compared to occupational barriers traditional college students experience. For this short course, presenters will discuss student veterans' perceptions of barriers that impact their higher education and how both occupational therapists and faculty members can support student veterans in their transition to higher education.

3C. What Did You Say? An Overview of Hearing Loss for OTPs

Shelly Alicia Cristobal, AuD, CCC-A, F-AAA

General, Geriatrics | **Entry**

Hearing loss impacts many clients encountered in practice as an occupational therapy practitioner. As an invisible disability that impacts about 15% of Americans, understanding hearing loss will help maximize function and quality of life for those served by Occupational Therapy Services. This presentation will be an introduction level course to help practitioners communicate more clearly and understand the challenges of clients with hearing loss. Impacts on cognition, balance, and communication will be reviewed. Recommended referrals and an overview of available hearing therapies (auditory training, hearing assistive devices, hearing aids, cochlear implants) will also be covered.

3D. Implementation and Outcomes of a Virtual Interprofessional Grand Round Event

Kate Hickert, OTS, Madison Goers, SLP Graduate Student, & Ashtyn Wastchak, SLP Student

Education/Research/Fieldwork | **Entry, Intermediate**

Occupational therapy practitioners work in a multitude of settings with various other professionals, therefore it is important that practitioner students learn to work with other professionals for the benefit of their clients. Interprofessional grand rounds events are effective in teaching students the four IPEC core competencies that lead to successful interprofessional practice: values/ethics, roles/responsibilities, interprofessional communication, and teams/teamwork. In this session, participants will identify benefits of a grand rounds event, as well as benefits and barriers relating to the virtual delivery of interprofessional education. Finally, participants will engage in an abbreviated simulation of a virtual grand rounds event so that participants will understand the implementation and process of holding such an event.



3E. When You're the Odd one Out: Tips on Thriving in a Culture of 'No'

Cathy Driscoll MS, OTR/L & Lauren Jones MS, OTR/L

General | **Entry, Intermediate, Advanced**

Being the 'different OT' or the "odd man out" in a group of OT practitioners in your workplace can be draining mentally, professionally, and possibly have negative outcomes on your annual performance review. And for new practitioners in their first few years of practice, this can be even harder as they try to bridge the gap from the ideals of best practice they learned in school with the demands and expectations, alongside non-verbal peer pressure from co-workers and managers, and gain confidence in their own practice. In 2018, AOTA joined the Choosing Wisely initiative of the American Board of Internal Medicine's Foundation, which aims to promote meaningful conversations between practitioners and clients to ensure that appropriate and quality care is being provided. (2018 <https://www.aota.org/Publications-News/AOTANews/2018/Choosing-Wisely-American-Board-of-Internal-Medicine.aspx>) In this session, we will provide practitioners tangible tips on how to maintain your occupation-centered EBP while maintaining workplace standards and coworker relationships.

3F. Effectiveness of Dynamic Seating on Attention During Classroom Activities *

Bernadette Schmeltz OTD, OTR/L, CLT & Carolina Pluta, OTS

Children & Youth, Education/Research/Fieldwork | **Entry**

Attention is an important academic skill that allows students to thrive throughout their educational journey. Due to advancing academic rigor, maintaining attention may be challenging for younger students, affecting their developmental ability (Fisher et al., 2014). Introducing children to sensory integration, such as dynamic seating, at a young age is beneficial because it forms the foundation of learning and perception (Bodison & Parham, 2017). Published literature suggests a positive relationship between attention and physical stimulation that helps promote sensory integration (Merritt, 2014). Throughout this course, presenters will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of various dynamic seating, and demonstrate which is most beneficial in maintaining attention of students.

3G. Student Advocacy Workshop

Erica Martin, OTAS & McKenzie Bolin, OTS

Student-Focused | **Entry**

Learn about current legislation that is affecting Occupational Therapy and gain confidence to work with legislators by utilizing your unique student experiences to improve advocacy skills. Activities will include role playing, writing prompts, and much more!

1:45-2:00 Break



2:00-3:30 Session 4

4A. Acute Care in the Age of COVID: Treatment, Challenges and "Post COVID" Implications *

Adam Lisewski, OTR/L, Jason Spruil, OTR/L & Melissa Wagner, OTR/L

Physical Disabilities | **Intermediate**

This course will explore COVID-19's impact on occupational therapy practitioners working in an acute care setting. Explore challenges, both clinical and non-clinically associated with working in a hospital setting during the turbulent Age of COVID. Review occupational therapy treatments performed in the confines of isolation floors as well as expanding evaluation considerations with the COVID patient. The course will also review chronic systematic changes associated with the COVID 19 infection which will have implications beyond the acute care setting in various occupational therapy practice areas.

4B. The Value of Service Dogs for Student Veterans *

Bernadette Schmeltz OTD, OTR/L, CLT & Sarah May, OTS

Mental Health, Education/Research/Fieldwork | **Entry**

Student veterans often suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) as a result of combat (Yarborough et al., 2018). Service dogs can help student veterans to live their lives despite these challenges by helping these individuals minimize anxiety, reduce hypervigilance, reconnect with humans, improve sleep quality and duration, and remain present (Morris et al., 2019; Scotland-Coogan, 2019a; Yarborough et al., 2018). Service dogs are an excellent resource, but there is a lack of information available to student veterans on their benefits, so this valuable resource is often underutilized. For this short course, presenters will discuss the benefits and challenges of service dog utilization for veterans, along with implications for practice.

4C. Sweatin' to the Oldies: A Music and Occupational Therapy Dance Group for Older Adults

Lauren Jones, MS, OTR/L, Ruby Law, MT-BC & Hanna West, OTS

Geriatrics, Mental Health | **Intermediate**

This session will outline the creation of a dance-based therapeutic group that emerged from a collaboration between an occupational therapist and a music therapist in an inpatient psychiatry setting. Presenters will discuss supports, barriers, and outcomes of the intervention and offer recommendations for implementation across diverse practice settings. Current literature on the positive impact of music and dance for the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial functioning of individuals with a variety of health conditions will be discussed. Attendees will also have the opportunity to learn a brief choreography and perform alongside the presenters!



4D. Practical Advocacy Strategies

Samantha Ryan, COTA/L & Abigail Swidergal, MS, COTA/L, CKTP

General | **Entry**

Solving the crucial challenges currently facing the occupational therapy profession can be achieved through embedding advocacy into our daily professional lives. This presentation will deliver information on the impact of inclusive language on role perceptions within and outside of the OT profession, direct relationship of advocacy on occupational therapy as a profession, and equip learners to implement strategies to support ongoing engagement in advocacy in local, state, and federal arenas.

4E. Creating Positive Remote Fieldwork Experiences: Perspectives from Student and Instructor

Noam Shemer, OTS & Sara Peña, M.Ed., OTR/L

Student-Focused, Children & Youth | **Entry**

Over this past year, OT students have found themselves unexpectedly thrown into a new reality of what it means to learn and practice during a global pandemic. Instructors and OT educators have risen to the challenge of preparing students to enter our continuously changing field, all while adjusting to virtual platforms themselves. In this session, an OT student and her fieldwork instructor will share their first-time experiences of completing Level 2 Fieldwork, with all therapy sessions completed virtually, within a public-school system. From each of their perspectives, they will reflect on the challenges encountered, lessons learned, and resources used. Participants will join in discussing strategies for students, therapists, and educators to make the most of uncertain barriers in future education, fieldwork, and practice settings.

4F. Bilateral Upper Extremity Prosthetics training and Amputee Adaptations

Ali Rose Leri, MSOTR/L, MEd, CLT

Physical Disabilities | **Intermediate**

This presentation was designed to share a unique professional opportunity as an occupational therapy practitioner to work with a patient with bilateral UE amputations and his mentor with bilateral UE amputations. This case study will provide “real life” examples for managing UE prosthetics and adaptive equipment for improving the quality of life for patients.

3:30-3:45 **Break**

3:45-4:45 **Ethics**

Understanding the 2020 OT Code of Ethics

Brenda Kornblit Kennell, OTR/L, FAOTA, Education Representative to the AOTA Ethics Commission & Leslie Bennett, OTD, OTR/L, Member-at-Large Representative to the AOTA Ethics Commission

The AOTA Code of Ethics (2020) is significantly different from previous versions. To help participants understand the rationale for these changes, the presentation will first provide participants with a brief history of ethics in the OT profession. The presenters will explain the Code's shift from a focus on ethical principles to a guide based on ethical Standards of Conduct, and how to apply the new code to practice. Lastly, the presentation will address what an OT practitioner should do if there is concern about unethical behavior.

Total CEUs – up to 40 hours

**Indicates a pre-recorded session.*