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Embracing Retirement: Enhancing Older Adult's Access to Meaningful Occupation via Smartphone Technology. An occupational therapist's guide to incorporating technology into intervention plans with our clients

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Technology plays a significant role in communication, access to information, and leisure activities in today's society, thus impacting our occupations. However, the development of technology is becoming increasingly more advanced and can create a gap for the older adult population to have comprehensive access. The significantly swift development of new technology comes with a disadvantage to the older adult population and continues to leave them left behind and often excluded. There is a common misconception that older adults are too old to learn how to utilize advanced technology, thus reinforcing the generational gap between older adults and technology. However, studies have shown that older adults have the capacity to learn how to use smartphones, and in certain situations, their ability to acquire smartphone skills are comparable to those of younger adults. By helping older adults navigate through their smartphones using a client-centered approach, older adults can reap the occupational benefits that younger adults are currently doing through the use of smartphones, such as socializing with loved ones through different medias, utilizing sources for transportation or acquiring knowledge, and retaining their independence in order to improve their overall quality of life.

Learning Objectives:

1. Recognize current trends in society regarding older adults and technology use
2. Identify common age-related barriers affecting older adults when accessing
3. Explain how technology can increase occupational engagement among older adults
4. Describe the unique role OT can play in social participation and access to meaningful information for older adults

Teaching Methods: Lecture/Discussion