

Global Perspectives: How Occupational Therapy Professionals with Disabilities Impact Diverse Workforces

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Workplace discrimination and barriers continue to be issues for occupational therapists with disabilities in the US and UK despite legislative changes. Research shows that OTs with disabilities experience attitudinal, organizational, and environmental barriers within the profession globally. Studies also show that some OTs with disabilities fear and experience repercussions as a result of disclosing their disabilities. Although they face barriers to inclusion within the profession, OTs with disabilities also present unique strengths that can help meet clients' needs. Three university research studies from the US and UK (University of North Dakota, University of Illinois Chicago, and Brunel University London) and data from the Network of OT Practitioners with Disabilities & Supporters (NOTPD) representing over 3000 members from 9 countries will be presented showcasing perspectives of professionals with disabilities and their colleagues as it relates to occupational therapy professionals with disabilities. Barriers and benefits will be explored with emphasis on impact of disability as part of diverse workforces. Research demonstrates similar perspectives, barriers, and successes in the US and UK. This 1.5 hour workshop will allow for interactive discussion on the data presented. Room capacity number of participants welcomed.

Participants will be able to identify at least two legislations that impact employment of occupational therapists with disabilities.

Participants will be able to list at least 3 barriers to successful and inclusive employment for occupational therapists with disabilities

Participants will be able to identify at least 3 benefits for employing occupational therapists with disabilities.