

## The role of Occupational Therapy in interdisciplinary cancer rehabilitation

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**Introduction:** Many cancer survivors experience functional limitations affecting their quality of life. Since 2010, the Netherlands Cancer Institute offers interdisciplinary cancer rehabilitation to those with rehabilitation needs. The program aims to optimize patients' physical, psychological and social functioning, within the limits resulting from the disease and its treatment. While Occupational Therapy (OT) is considered usual care in cancer rehabilitation, studies on OT for cancer survivors are scarce, and neither reasons for OT consultation nor outcomes of OT in this population have been systematically reported. This study reports on six years of institutional experience with OT in cancer rehabilitation.

**Objectives:** To explore the reasons for OT consultation and outcome of OT interventions, within an interdisciplinary cancer rehabilitation program.

**Methods:** We analyzed the Canadian Occupational Performance Measurement (COPM) scores of patients who received OT between 2010 and 2016 as part of cancer rehabilitation. Problems were mapped onto the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), and changes in COPM-scores were calculated.

**Results/ Clinical implications:** The main reasons for OT consultation of 182 patients (mean age 52, 42% male, mixed cancer diagnoses) were problems with recreation and leisure activities (91%), carrying out daily routine (43%), acquiring, keeping and terminating a job (35%), driving (32%) and sleep functions (19%). After OT, patients reported significantly improved performance (mean change 3.0 points; 95%CI 2.8 - 3.2;  $p < .0001$ ) and satisfaction (mean change 3.4 points; 95%CI 3.2 - 3.6;  $p < .0001$ ) on the COPM.

**Conclusion:** For cancer patients experiencing problems in their daily activities, OT can provide a relevant contribution to rehabilitation.