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# Qualitative Evaluation of Occupational Therapy Assessments in Treating Veterans with PTSD Who are Transitioning into Civilian Life

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## BACKGROUND

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is known to affect the well-being of veterans and is exacerbated by the transition stressors of becoming a civilian once more (Mobbs et al., 2018). The clinical skills of OTs are uniquely suited to promote independence for veterans with PTSD who are transitioning into civilian life (Kinney et al., 2020)

## PROBLEM

Occupational therapists lack consistent assessment tools to use when treating veterans with PTSD who are transitioning into civilian life .

## PURPOSE

Explore OTs' perception of occupation-based assessments resulting in increased understanding of standardized strategies to evaluate and treat traumatized veterans transitioning into civilian life.

### Research Questions:

R1: What are the strengths of an OT based assessment toolkit for veterans with PTSD transitioning into civilian life?

R2: What are the limitations of an OT based assessment toolkit for veterans with PTSD transitioning into civilian life?

R3: How do OTs view their role in treating veterans with PTSD transitioning into civilian life?

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## METHODS

**Design:** Qualitative Research Study

**Recruitment:** Snowball sampling method utilizing email, social media, and CommunOT

**Participants:** Licensed OT's who work with veterans with PTSD within the U.S.

**Data Collection:** Virtual Interview via Zoom

Six participants participated in virtual consent, introduction to the toolkit, and a semi structured interview.

**Data Analysis:** Thematic Analysis

The interviews were audio recorded utilizing Zoom software. The audio was transcribed utilizing transcription software.

Following transcription, the data was analyzed, organized, and coded into themes to answer the research questions.

## Theoretical Framework

### MOHO

Temporally focused on the present (Gerardi, 2016)

Emphasis on volition (Blom et al., 2020)

## RESULTS

### TREATMENT TEMPLATE COMPONENTS

#### Assessment Tools:

1. The Canadian Occupational Performance Measure
2. The Role Checklist
3. The Occupational Questionnaire
4. the Modified Interest checklist
5. The Self-efficacy Scale
6. The Short PTSD Rating Interview

#### Conclusions

- ❖ An assessment toolkit such as the one developed would aid OTs by giving them more tools to assess the social-emotional well being of veterans with PTSD transitioning into civilian life.
- ❖ The tool kit would allow OTs to choose assessments that best fit their clients in order to best address the symptoms of PTSD and transition stress.
- ❖ The assessments aid OTs in client-centered approaches.

#### Themes for Research Question 1

- ❖ Lack of familiarity with chosen assessments
- ❖ Client-Centered
- ❖ Identification of Roles and Interests
- ❖ "Foot in the Door"

#### Themes for Research Question 2

- ❖ Length of assessments
- ❖ Prefer informal assessments
- ❖ Lacks information on communication skills
- ❖ Lacks information on depression

#### Themes for Research Question 3

- ❖ Transition services focused on social-emotional well being
- ❖ Education on PTSD
- ❖ Collaborate with other professionals in a multidisciplinary team.
- ❖ Help clients understand their triggers.

## Recommendations

- ❖ Focus group
- ❖ Advocate for education on PTSD symptoms
- ❖ Advocate for education on transition stressors

#### References

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