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## The Role of Occupational Therapy in Enhancing Adaptive Golf

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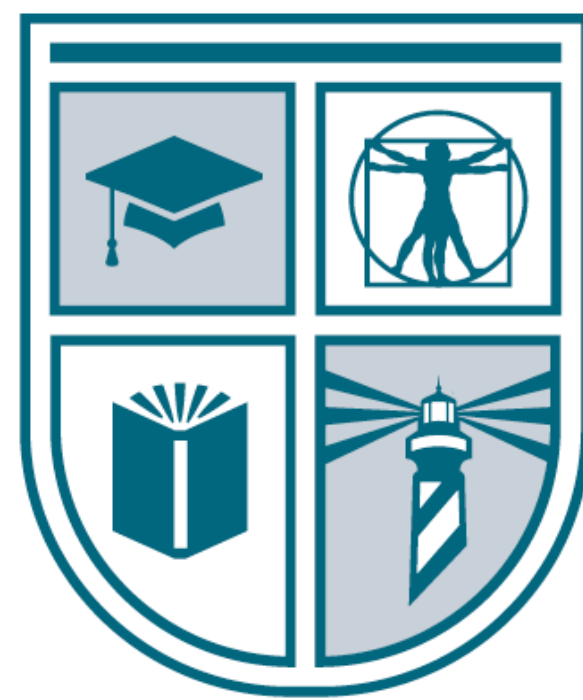
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# The Role of Occupational Therapy in Enhancing Adaptive Golf

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## BACKGROUND

- 42.5% of the U.S. population lives with some form of disability (CDC, 2024).
- 35% of the U.S. population for individuals with a disability desire to learn how to golf (USAGA, n.d.).
- 22% of this population used to play golf before inquiring their injury, but currently believe they cannot play anymore because of their limitations.
- PWD are at an increased risk of developing mental health and physical problems due to their sedentary lifestyle (CDC, 2023).
- Golf has shown to be beneficial for people by improving their overall quality of life, social participation, cognitive function, balance, improved visual perception, and improved fine and gross motor coordination (Diaz et al., 2019; Monforte et al., 2022; & Vrelus et al., 2022).
- Accessible environments are also key to having sustained participation in sport (Blauet et al., 2017).

## PROBLEM STATMENT

- There are a lack of resources on what facilities have adaptive golf in Orange County
- The limited funding prohibits many individuals and golf facilities in providing necessary adaptive equipment to adaptive athletes for public access.
- There is a lack of funding that acts as an inhibitor to golf directors and administrators in providing necessary accommodations for PWD and seated golfers.

## PURPOSE

- The purpose of this Capstone project was to spread more awareness and advocate for an underserved population by providing an educational in-service to golf administrators on ways to enhance and implement adaptive golf at their facility.

### GRANTS PROVIDED:

- Christopher Reeves Foundation, Kelly Brush Foundation, Outdoor equity grants program (\$50 mil. Available), Stand Up and Play Foundation, and more.

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## METHODS

- The Ecology of Human Performance (EHP) model framed this project.
- A needs assessment was conducted at several golf courses in Southern California in Orange County to determine the level of accessibility for seated golfers.
- Interviews were conducted with golf administrates and PGA golf pros to understand the concerns associated with having adaptive golfers at their facility.
- Interviews and assessments were also conducted with adaptive athletes to better understand their lived experiences and any barriers and facilitators when participating in sports.
- An educational in-service was created to inform golf administrators and golf professionals on ways to enhance accessibility and promote inclusivity at their courses.

## RESULTS/DELIVERABLE

### IMPACT:

- Adaptive golf has made a positive emotional impact on PWD by transforming their lives to make it more sociable, giving them a community and a sense of purpose.

### PREVALENCE:

- There is an estimated 35% of individuals within the population of disability who are interested in learning to play golf (USAGA, n.d.).
- There are approximately 22% of people within this same population who used to play golf but have stopped since inquiring their disability (USAGA, n.d.).

### BARRIERS:

- Lack of funding, equipment, and awareness were common barriers amongst golf courses and adaptive athletes in the community.
- Education was provided on ways to spread more awareness on how to promote adaptive golf on their website and utilizing guerilla marketing through social media.

### UNIVERSAL DESIGN:

- Simple & Intuitive use: this principle was incorporated through educating on the importance of utilizing signs, making it obvious to seated players on where they can enter their tee boxes.
- Equitable Use: Sand bunkers that are even with the fairway.
- Low Physical Effort: Ramps for a seated golfer to access their tee box.

### ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT:



## CONCLUSION

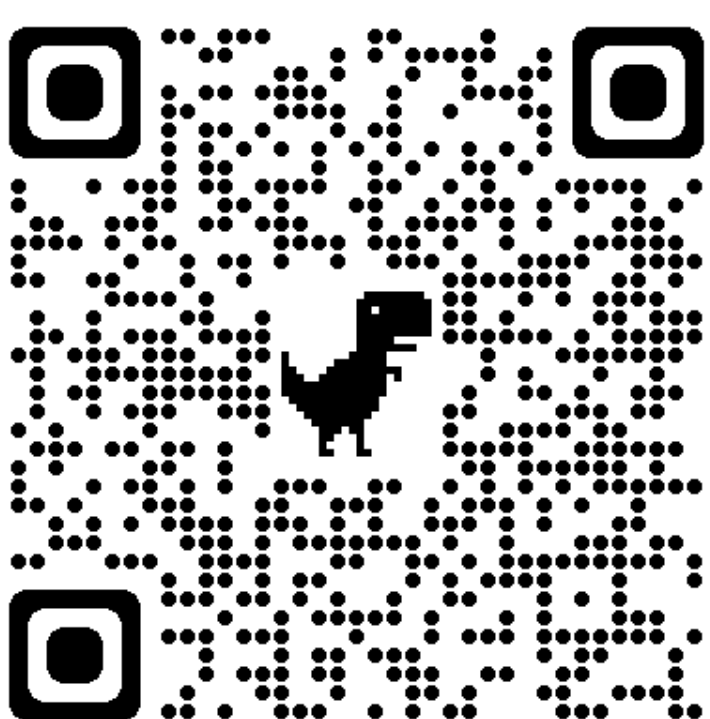
- Challenges with arranging meetings with golf directors and general managers for interviews on their perspective of adaptive golf.
- Liability is an unspoken concern amongst golf administrators and PGA pros in having adaptive equipment for rent at their facilities.
- More research can be done to really showcase the number of golf courses in southern California that are ready to accommodate adaptive golfers.
- Currently there are two golf courses in southern California that that can meet the needs of a seated golfer: Torrey Pines and Westchester Golf Course.
- Limited participating golf courses does stem from a lack of funding, but rather informing the potential adaptive athletes on what resources they have access to.

## CLINICAL APPLICATION

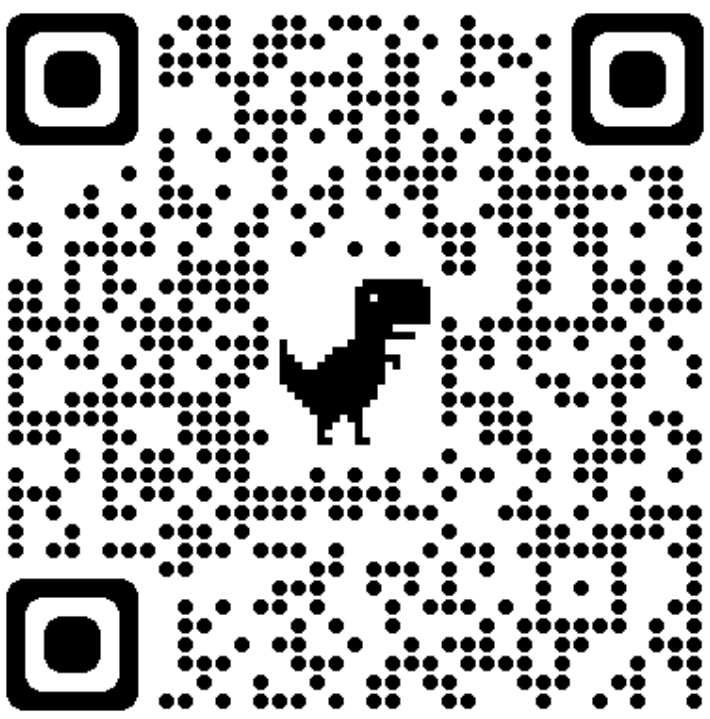
- Occupational therapists hold the role of an advocate, clinician, and educator. OTs have the ability to create connections and partnerships with local businesses and golf courses to promote inclusion and diversity across the nation and globe.
- Occupational therapists also have the unique role of implementing policies to allocate funding necessary for the equipment seated players would benefit from.
- Moreover, an occupational therapist can serve as an advocate for PWD by informing this population of the types of grants and resources they have available to them to help access golf on a greater level.
- Future potential to introduce adaptive sports at the collegiate level.

## RESOURCES

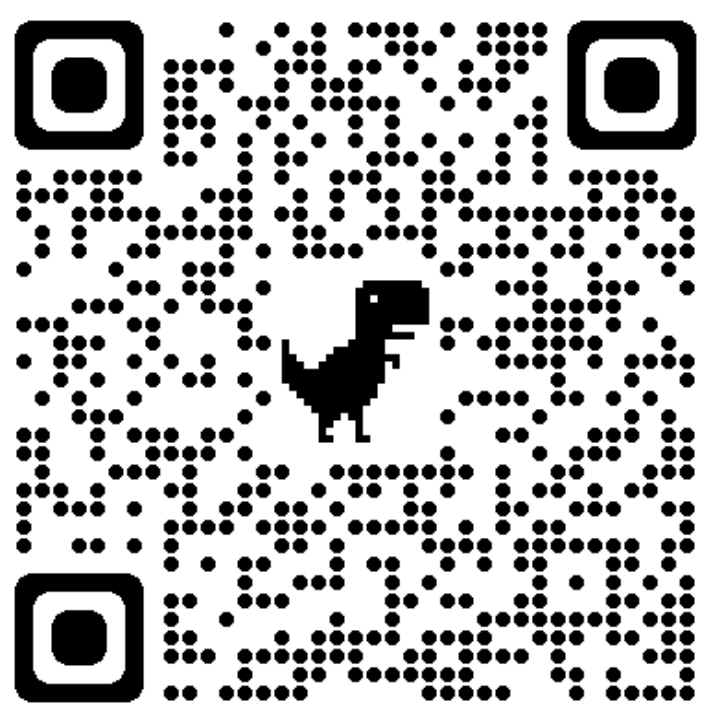
### In-service



### Grants



### References



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*This project does not involve human subjects and does not require an IRB approval*