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Summary Report - 2019 Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) Conference
“Occupational therapy roles in an Indigenous context: An integrative review”
Conference on-site guide: https://www.caot.ca/document/6709/ONSiteGuide2019_FNL.pdf

Description of the Conference

The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) Conference is the main conference for occupational therapists across Canada. The most recent conference took place from May 29th – June 1st, 2019 in Niagara Falls, Ontario, and featured 4 days of special events, speakers, poster presentations, and opportunities to connect with other occupational therapists.

Relevance to my Research Area

As an occupational therapist in training at the time, the CAOT conference was directly related to my research area. I presented a poster on an integrated review titled “Occupational therapy roles in an Indigenous context: An integrative review” completed as part of my Masters of Occupational Therapy at Dalhousie University. The profession of occupational therapy is grounded in Western science and ways of knowing, and attention should be paid to the ways this influences our work with Indigenous clients. The integrated review I conducted synthesized the literature to explore how our profession can better support and work with Indigenous communities and clients.

Outcomes

The CAOT conference allowed me to expand my network and research capacity in numerous ways. My CAOT conference poster was accompanied with a paper, and discussions and feedback at this conference helped enrich and refine this paper in order for me to submit to the *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy* in July 2019. I networked with occupational therapists working with Indigenous clients and met Indigenous occupational therapists. This networking has proven invaluable; I connected with the Occupational Therapy Aboriginal Health Network this year to work with occupational therapists who share the same interests and values, gaining access to mentorship and work experience opportunities with Indigenous communities and clients.

I attended sessions relating to my research such as:

- Knowledge gaps in Indigenous health: Disseminating national survey results (Jacek, Fritz, Moedt, Ellies & Lizon, 2019);
- Can occupational therapy assessments be culturally safe?: A critical exploration (MacLachlan, Phenix, Valavaara, 2019),

These, and other sessions allowed me to write a publication in the journal *Occupational Therapy Now* (reference below).

Next Steps

My next steps include:

- 1) Submit an abstract of my proposed PhD work to the National Gathering of Graduate Students (NGGS).
- 2) Attend the CAOT conference to present with Dr. Brenda Beagan and occupational therapist Kaitlin Sibbald on a project about occupational therapists who identify as racialized, disabled, ethnic minority, minority sexual/gender identity, or from working-class backgrounds.

References

- Truth and Reconciliation Canada. (2015). Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Retrieved from:
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- White, T. & Beagan, B. L. (2019). Occupational therapy roles in an Indigenous context: An integrative review. Submitted to the Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapists (CJOT) July 22nd, 2019.
- White, T., Dirk, A., Alexandre, K., & White, C. (2019). Indigenous themes reflected throughout the CAOT Conference 2019. *Occupational Therapy Now*, 21(5), Retrieved from:
<https://www.caot.ca/document/6817/Indigenous%20themes%20reflected%20throughout%20the%20conference.pdf>