**Toolkit for self-directed learning**

Launch Event Reflective Resource

Occupational Therapy Week 2021: #OTsForEquity

Introduction

The term ‘health inequalities’ refers to the disparities in care experienced by different groups within society. These unfair and avoidable differences in healthcare provision negatively impact the opportunities that people have to lead healthy lives (Kings Fund 2020, NHS UK nd).

At the RCOT Annual Conference 2021, Professor Sir Michael G. Marmot, Director of the Institute of Health Equity, delivered a plenary session on health inequalities. In his presentation ‘*Social justice and health equity’* he encourages occupational therapists to consider how the work they do fits into the picture of health inequalities. As outlined in the framework for allied health professionals produced by the King’s Fund (2021), by developing our awareness, taking action and being advocates, we can make a contribution to tackling health inequalities.

This Toolkit is designed to help you think about your understanding of health inequalities, how health inequalities affect the people you work with, and how you can address them in your own professional practice - whether in a clinical, educational, research or leadership context.

As well as supporting you to think about your individual role, this Toolkit also encourages you to think about how we can create health equity within our teams, organisations and our profession. The Toolkit supports the Leadership Pillar of the [RCOT Career Development Framework](https://www.rcot.co.uk/publications/career-development-framework) for students, support workers and qualified staff at any Career Level.

Research shows that professional learning is most successful when reflection on new skills, ideas or knowledge is used to improve practice. By reflecting soon after an event, you will retain your new knowledge and skills more securely. You will be more likely to remember and apply them, benefiting your professional activities and those who use your service. This will allow you to meet the [CPD standards required by the HCPC](https://www.hcpc-uk.org/cpd/your-cpd/our-standards-for-cpd/).

How to use the Toolkit

The Toolkit supports you to reflect on Professor Sir Michael Marmot’s presentation ‘*Social justice and health equity’* and the expert panel Q&A discussion which follows. You may have watched this live, or you can access a recording on the [RCOT Occupational Therapy Week 2021 webpage](https://www.rcot.co.uk/occupational-therapy-week-2021-otsforequity#otsforequity-launch-event-recording).

The resource has four parts. In Section 1we ask you to reflect on your awareness and understanding of health inequalities, and the individuals and communities with whom you work. You can record your learning from this event and identify further learning needs in Section 2. Use these responses to complete Section 3 by identifying actions you can take to apply what you have learnt to your role. Further activities are suggested in Section 4 to help you to go deeper with your learning.

The questions provided are not exhaustive or prescriptive. They are a starting point to stimulate your thinking and to help maintain your learning. Use the questions in any way that works for you.

Complete Sections 1 and 2 as soon as you are able after the learning event while everything is fresh in your mind. If you are short of time, jot down a few key points right away and return later to expand your ideas. If you haven’t had any further ideas, reviewing your notes will still help to embed your learning. As you do so, you may think of more points that you want to record. Sections 3 and 4 are for you to map, reflect and plan in greater depth if you wish.

Contribute your thoughts, learnings and insights to the [RCOT Occupational Therapy Week 2021 Ideas](https://www.rcot.co.uk/occupational-therapy-week-2021-ideas) page, open until the end of November 2021.

As you work through the Toolkit, you may feel excited to discover new ways of working. Sometimes though, feelings of discomfort can arise at the prospect of change. Try to notice if this happens to you, because this can be a clear signal of an opportunity for learning and professional development.

It may be helpful to review your thoughts with a critical friend or mentor, or to discuss your learning in your supervision sessions. Come back to the Toolkit as often as you want, particularly to Section 4, to refresh your learning and guide your next steps for professional development.

The Toolkit is designed to support you as an individual but can be adapted to use in pairs or with groups of friends or colleagues (see Section 4).

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| **Your name** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Date of presentation access** | Click or tap here to enter text. |

1. Awareness and understanding

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| **Thinking about the individuals and the communities with whom I work, and the organisation in which I provide a service:** |
| How does the information in the presentation relate to the people that I support in my current role? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What do I consider my role to be in addressing health inequalities? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What is already being done in my professional setting to address health inequalities? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What change(s) would I like to see happen? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

1. Knowledge, skills and confidence

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| What new knowledge did I gain from watching this presentation? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What would I like to learn more about as a result of watching the presentation? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What activities could help me to address gaps in my knowledge? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What support might I need to address the learning needs that I have identified? *(for example, from colleagues, my employer, professional body, Government bodies)* |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

1. Applying learning to practice

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| Based on what I have learnt, what action(s) can I take as an individual to create health equity in my own area of professional practice?  |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What practical steps could I take alongside colleagues to address health inequalities through my work?  |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

1. Going deeper with my learning

**Learning in groups**

Find a partner to work with or bring together a group of friends or colleagues. Complete sections 1, 2 and 3 individually and then meet face to face or remotely) to share your answers and discuss your thoughts.

How similar or different are your views and experiences? Do any themes emerge? Are any key problems or learning gaps identified? Review your original responses to the sections and add any additional thoughts.

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| Record points raised during your discussion |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Engage in additional OT Week activities**

**#OTalk**

Take part in #OTalk on **Wednesday 3rd November**. If you cannot take part in the live chat, a transcript can be downloaded from the [Otalk website](https://otalk.co.uk/). You can continue to contribute to the discussion on Twitter using our hashtag #OTsForEquity.

**Twitter Spaces discussion**

We’ll be talking about some of the ideas discussed during OT Week in a Twitter Space discussion on Friday 5 November. Twitter Spaces is the new way to have live audio conversations on Twitter. It will be recorded and made available on the [RCOT website](https://www.rcot.co.uk/occupational-therapy-week-2021-otsforequity#events-in-occupational-therapy-week-2021) (scroll down to #OTsForEquity: Twitter Spaces Conversation).

**Contribute to RCOT’s action plan**

For the month of November 2021, we have made available an Ideas Platform through which you can exchange your thoughts with peers. This can be accessed via the [OT Week Webpage](https://www.rcot.co.uk/occupational-therapy-week-2021-otsforequity). Participation is voluntary and can be done anonymously. A series of questions are posed, similar to those in this Toolkit. Responding to these questions and/or observing others’ responses can help you to further your learning by hearing others’ perspectives, whilst also developing your critical thinking. This will also help you to apply your learning further by actively contributing to the Royal College of Occupational Therapist’s action plan.

**Record and expand on additional CPD activities**

**Record and plan further learning**

If you engage in any further CPD activities as a result of gaps you have identified in your knowledge, record your learning from these activities using our [Five minute reflection: Capture your learning](https://www.rcot.co.uk/bite-sized-learning#five-minute-reflection-capture-your-learning) resource.

To consolidate and apply your learning further, use our [Apply your learning to practice](https://www.rcot.co.uk/deep-dive-learning#apply-your-learning-to-practice) resource. This will help you to map, reflect, and plan your learning in greater depth using the [Career Development Framework](https://www.rcot.co.uk/publications/career-development-framework) and the [Professional Standards for Occupational Therapy](https://www.rcot.co.uk/publications/professional-standards-occupational-therapy-practice-conduct-and-ethics).

Remember to add this toolkit and any subsequent reflective tools to your CPD portfolio so you can demonstrate your learning and show the benefit of your learning for you and those who use your service. This will help you to meet the CPD standards required by the HCPC.

**Explore additional resources**

Make a list of the additional resources that may be brought to your attention in relation to health inequalities. Over time, make use of these resources to continue to extend your learning.

One resource we recommend you refer to is the King’s Fund framework (Kings Fund 2021).

Feedback

Your views are important to us! Please send us your feedback so we can make improvements for future participants. Or let us know if you liked this! Email us at: Prof.Dev@rcot.co.uk.

References

NHS UK (nd) *Definitions of Health Inequalities* Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ltphimenu/definitions-for-health-inequalities/> Accessed on 21.10.21

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Kings Fund (2021) My role in tackling health inequalities: a framework for allied health professionals. Available at: [My role in tackling health inequalities: a framework for allied health professionals | The King's Fund (kingsfund.org.uk)](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/tackling-health-inequalities-framework-allied-health-professionals) Accessed on 27.10.21