

Grant recipient: Audrey Yong

Grant: Research Career Development Grant 2023

Title of project: The occupational therapy contribution to good home environment design to support the participation and wellbeing of people with intellectual disabilities

Abstract:

In the United Kingdom many people with intellectual disabilities live in houses that are not safe or suitable for them. Some people with intellectual disabilities may be autistic and have physical disabilities. They can experience isolation, poor health, poverty and abuse. These experiences can sometimes lead to being hospitalised.

The 'Building the Right Support' programme by the Department of Health says that people with intellectual disabilities should have equal human rights to live satisfying, valued lives. Their homes should be in their community, near their families, so that they can get support and build relationships.

The aim of this study is to understand how occupational therapists contribute to the design of homes of people with intellectual disabilities, to help them live better lives.

I will be interviewing occupational therapists about their work in environment designing and how they support engagement and participation of people with intellectual disabilities who could be struggling living at home. They could be showing distress such as self-harming or destructive behaviour, or sensory-related (such as seeking or avoiding touch, light or sounds). I will ask about the assessments they use to support this work, such as the Safe Home Environment Assessment, which was developed by occupational therapists.

I will seek Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) as the needs and priorities of disabled people have not always been included in research and in the providing of services.