
Abstracts from Hebrew

Position Paper on the Role of Occupational Therapy in the Field of Driving Rehabilitation: Assessment, Rehabilitation, Adaptations and Alternatives for Mobility in the Community

Community mobility and driving are vital in order to maintain personal and social accessibility. Independent mobility, including the ability to drive, enables a person to access public facilities and sustain an autonomous lifestyle with respect to the financial and social aspects of daily living. Driving enables a person to pursue potential employment, engage in leisure and social activities, fulfill one's family role and complete errands. Over the life span, people generally must make accommodations and adjust their driving habits to ensure safe driving, such as adapting their sitting posture, organization of the visual spatial field and acquiring strategies to improve attention and concentration. Changes in health such as vision loss, cognitive decline, physical changes, mental health disabilities, learning disabilities and aging affect community mobility as well as driving. Enabling and promoting safe driving for individuals with any type of disability is the responsibility of any civilized society. Moreover, undetected and/or untreated disabilities that can adversely affect driving performance pose a risk both for the driver and those around him/her. Thus, the occupational therapy profession worldwide has targeted driving and driving rehabilitation as part of their domain and practice. As part of the comprehensive process of enabling individuals to achieve full community living, occupational therapists provide driving and community mobility assessments and intervention for their clients. This position paper includes a description of the multiple aspects of driving rehabilitation: the professional training required of occupational therapists who wish to specialize in this area, the theoretical models commonly utilized in this field, client populations who may benefit from these programs and driving fitness legislation in Israel as well as other countries. In addition, this paper details the components of driver rehabilitation intervention; the identification potential problems, the processes of referral, evaluation and determination of driving fitness, as well as the types intervention services offered— whether it be direct treatment of client factors, prevention and/or providing alternative means for community mobility.

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