

2024

## Translational Science Is Occupation

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### Recommended Citation

Smallfield, S., & Mahoney, W. J. (2024). Translational Science Is Occupation. *Translational Science in Occupation*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32873/unmc.dc.tso.1.1.02>

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### Keywords

occupation, knowledge translation, translational science

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# TSO

## Translational Science in Occupation

Volume 1, Issue 1

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### Translational Science Is Occupation

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## Translational Science Is Occupation

While the title of this new academic journal is Translational Science in Occupation, in this commentary, we argue that translational science, or the deliberate process of translating knowledge into action, *is* occupation. One common framework for translating knowledge is Graham and colleagues' (2006) knowledge to action process. They describe seven action steps (occupations) to translating science, including identifying the problem, adapting it to the context, assessing barriers to implementation, selecting interventions, monitoring implementation, and evaluating outcomes (Graham, et al., 2006). In reality, each of these steps include a myriad of occupations. What are those occupations? The purpose of this commentary is to describe knowledge translation through an occupational lens.

All occupational therapy practitioners, researchers, and occupational scientists have responsibilities to translate scientific knowledge into action to advance occupational justice and health. Scientific knowledge needs to be applied in the real world and often requires “translation” to use. While “science” can be associated with positivist views of knowledge based on seeking “the” answer via the scientific method, scientific knowledge in occupational therapy and occupational science can involve multiple ways of knowing. Regardless of our role as practitioner, educator, researcher, leader, administrator, policy maker, or influencer, we each need to consider which translational science occupations we are doing and what more we may need to do.

What are the occupations of *doing* translational science? We suggest the following:

- Challenge assumptions
- Write an action plan to bring professional development content into practice (e.g., how to take information learned into work the next day)
- Regularly access and appraise relevant evidence
- Lead or participate in a journal club (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2023)
- Use evidence to inform practice decisions and communicate with intended audiences
- Share evidence with clients, professionals (inter, intra), and others for whom the information would be useful
- Theorize explanations for observations in practice and research
- Collect and monitor client performance and outcome data to make practice decisions
- Deliberately select, administer, and readminister outcome measures
- Propose new or updated processes based on data
- Customize interventions for the practice setting based on research and other evidence
- Test that intervention customization is effective
- Develop new lines of service delivery based on existing evidence
- Create systems that integrate best practice into routine practice for sustainability
- Partner with those with different expertise, backgrounds, and perspectives from you to gain a stronger outcome
- Provide researchers feedback about the feasibility of intervention protocols in practice
- Collaborate with academic partners for scholarly activities
- Serve on a research advisory board to provide feedback and influence research questions
- Contribute practice-based evidence to inform future decision-making
- Challenge the historical way something has been done and consider an array of alternatives

Along with the previous translational science occupations that are relevant for all occupational therapy practitioners and occupational scientists in various roles, the additional occupations below are primarily associated with researcher roles:

- Intentionally include knowledge users (e.g., clients, practitioners) in all steps of the research process
- Invite knowledge users to join research advisory boards
- Design studies with input from knowledge users to address real problems with relevant methodology
- Choose dissemination venues based on knowledge users' access to the publication (e.g., open access)
- Choose wording and format appropriate for intended audiences (e.g., scholarly vs. plain language; infographics)

Both lists include occupations of translational science. While some are associated with knowledge creation and others on knowledge use, we found this distinction artificial. Knowledge use often involves adapting existing knowledge, which leads to the creation of something new. All occupational therapy practitioners, researchers, and occupational scientists can participate in translational science occupations.

How many of these occupations do you perform regularly? How many are necessary to meet a “threshold” of “doing” translational science? What additional translational science occupations would you add to this list or to your occupational repertoire?

### References

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