

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>The role of occupational therapy in alcohol and drug withdrawal services: A scoping review</b>
<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Dr Rebecca Phillips Principal Occupational Therapist, Mental Health, Justice Health, and Alcohol and Drug Services (MHJHADS)</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>Office of the Director of Allied Health, MHJHADS Level 3, 1 Moore Street Canberra City, ACT 2601</b>
<b>Telephone</b>	<b>02 5124 1664</b>
<b>Email</b>	<b>Rebecca.Phillips@act.gov.au</b>

**Lead discipline (please select one)**

- Nursing
- Allied Health
- Medicine
- Pre-clinical

- Health Economics
- Biostatistics
- Value-based Healthcare
- Epidemiology

**Outline of the project**

**Background:**

The Canberra Health Service's Alcohol and Drug Services Withdrawal Unit is trialling an occupational therapy position. People in the early stages of recovery often lack meaningful occupations because these may have been given up or reduced due to substance use (American Psychiatric Association 2013; Wasmuth et al. 2016). Occupation based interventions where individuals are involved in 'doing' activities can provide opportunities for people to master skills and practice new ways of thinking and new responses to challenges (Wasmuth et al. 2015). Further, the lack of new occupations in recovery can be linked to higher relapse rates, and engagement in occupations can improve treatment success (Correia et al. 2005). Occupational therapists can also provide education, assessment and interventions related to sensory processing and the use of sensory modulation to support people to regulate their emotions and engage in occupations (Scanlan and Novak 2015; Sutton et al. 2013).

A review of peer reviewed evidence and similar services described in the grey literature, will support the development of the occupational therapy service in this unit.

**Research question:**

What is the role of an occupational therapist working in an alcohol and drug withdrawal unit, including frameworks, assessments, interventions and evaluation strategies to guide

practice in this setting?

**References:**

American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

Correia, C.J., Benson, T.A. & Carey, K.B. (2005). Decreased substance use following increases in alternative behaviors: A preliminary investigation. *Addictive Behaviors*. 30, 19-27.

Scanlan, J. & Novak, T. (2015). Sensory approaches in mental health: A scoping review. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 62, 277-285.

Sutton, D., Wilson, M., Van Kessel, K. & Vanderpyl, J. (2013). Optimizing arousal to manage aggression: A pilot study of sensory modulation. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 22, 500-511.

Wasmuth, S.L., Outcalt, J., Buck, K., Leonhardt, B.L., Vohs, J. & Lysaker, P.H. (2015). Metacognition in persons with substance abuse: Findings and implications for occupational therapists. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 82, 150-159.

Wasmuth, S., Pritchard, K. & Kaneshiro, K. (2016). Occupation-based intervention for addictive disorders: A systematic review. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*. 62, 1-9.

**Proposed research methods**

- A scoping review of the peer review and grey literature investigating the research question.
- Consultation with the occupational therapist working in the withdrawal unit to contextualise the scoping review findings to this setting.

**Preferred study discipline being undertaken by the student**

Allied Health - Occupational Therapy

**Potential benefits to the student and to the department**

**Project deliverables:**

- A document describing the review highlighting frameworks, assessments, interventions and evaluation strategies that can be used in this setting to support occupational therapy practice.

The student will have the opportunity to develop their skills in reviewing peer-reviewed and grey literature, as well as contextualising the review findings through consultation with staff.

**Department within ACT Health Directorate / Canberra Health Services where the student will be based**

Office of the Director of Allied Health, Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services (MHJHADS)

Please submit form to [preclinical.research@act.gov.au](mailto:preclinical.research@act.gov.au)