

# The Economic Evidence Clearinghouse (EEC) : *From development to uptake*



Andrew Freeman, OT, PhD, Université Laval

Nadine Larivière, OT, PhD, Université de Sherbrooke

Josee Séguin, OT, Director, Knowledge Translation Programs

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists



## **Objective**

Showcase the evolution of the Economic Evidence Clearinghouse (EEC) as a key open access resource for supporting the profession's capacity to make the economic case for its services.

# Background

- International agreement exists within our profession about the need for economic evidence to support the development or preservation of occupational therapy services (e.g., Weatherly et al., 2025)
- For decision makers, it is necessary to demonstrate that occupational therapy is a good use of available financial resources.
- Although various efforts have been made to build evidence and support profession stakeholders, **strategic development of the profession's capacity in this area remains an important challenge.**

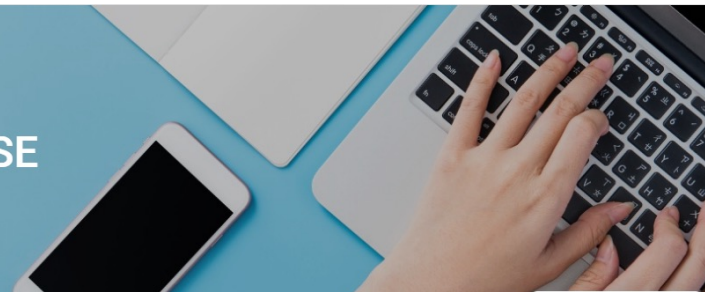
Weatherly, H., Cook, O., Davies, C., & Whitehead, P. (2025). College of Occupational Therapy-Research Priority 10: What is the cost-effectiveness of occupational therapy services? Making the economic case for occupational therapy. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 88(6), 329-332. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03080226241304253>

# Background

Rapid review (Freeman et al., 2025). For example:

- 135 studies conducted in 23 countries.
- 80% of the studies included older adults ( $\geq 65$  years).
- 54% of the occupational therapists were members of interdisciplinary rehabilitation teams.
- Most commonly conducted: with adults/older adults; in home, inpatient, outpatient, and rehabilitation centre settings; with individuals with cerebrovascular accident and orthopaedic conditions.
- The specific occupational therapy role was specified in only 60% of the studies.

Freeman, A. R., Larivière, N., Baillet, J., Beauchemin, R., Lavoie-Trudeau, É., Martel, M., & St-François, M. (2025). Economic evidence in occupational therapy: A rapid review. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 92(3), 173-184. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00084174241306983>



# Strategic aims

1. Disseminating economic evidence to a range of stakeholders;
2. Facilitating practitioner engagement with economic evidence;
3. Supporting projects involving economic analyses;
4. Enhancing the profession's ability to communicate its value (e.g., to policymakers).

## Economic Evidence Clearinghouse

- Open access (English and French)
- 3 complementary aims: rigour, engagement, advocacy

## Search engine

- Economic evidence research regarding OT services for all domains of practice. It currently includes summaries of over 150 studies including an assessment of their economic analysis rigour.
- **Key word menus** E.g., practice setting, country, condition, age group, main occupational challenge, OT intervention evaluated, research design, type of economic analysis, reference/author(s)

[www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca); Practice resources; Economic Evidence Clearinghouse

## ECONOMIC EVIDENCE CLEARINGHOUSE

The EEC information is organised in the following content areas:

- What is meant by economic evidence?
- Practical summaries and infographics for occupational therapists.
- The most recent reviews of occupational therapy research findings.
- How can I contribute to measuring the economic dimensions of occupational therapy services?
- Integrating economic considerations into service planning: some good examples.



What is meant by economic evidence?



Practical summaries and infographics for occupational therapists



Search engine



The most recent reviews of occupational therapy research findings



How can I contribute to measuring the economic dimensions of occupational therapy services?



Integrating economic considerations into service planning : some good examples

## Search engine example

### Effectiveness of a lifestyle intervention in promoting the well-being of independently living older adults: results of the Well Elderly 2 randomised controlled trial

Clark, F., Jackson, J., Carlson, M., Chou, C. P., Cherry, B. J., Jordan-Marsh, M., Knight, B. G., Mandel, D., Blanchard, J., Granger, D. A., Wilcox, R. R., Lai, M. Y., White, B., Hay, J., Lamb, C., Marterella, A., & Azen, S. P. (2012). Effectiveness of a lifestyle intervention in promoting the well-being of independently living older adults: Results of the Well Elderly 2 randomised controlled trial. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 66(9), 782-790. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jech.2009.099754>

**Research objective:** To determine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a preventive lifestyle-based occupational therapy intervention, administered in a variety of community-based sites, in improving mental and physical well-being and cognitive functioning in ethnically diverse older people.

**Country:** United States

**Year:** 2012

**Practice setting:** community organization nursing home

**Condition:** cognitive decline dementia

**Age group:** older adult (65- years)

**Main occupational challenge:** functional difficulties participation restrictions

**OT intervention evaluated:** lifestyle intervention

**Research design:** randomized controlled trial

**Type of economic analysis:** cost effectiveness analysis

**Quality of Health Economic Studies (QHES) scale score:** 70/100

**Summary of the economics-related research findings:** (1) The intervention group had a significantly greater increment in quality-adjusted life years, which was achieved cost-effectively. (2) The estimated base case cost per QALY of US \$41 218/ UK £24 868 is low enough for the intervention to qualify as cost-effective.

**Research limitations:** The effect size estimates for significant outcomes in the primary intent-to-treat analysis ranged from 0.14-0.23. These values are smaller than those obtained in these researchers' previous trial. However, the current investigation included design characteristics that are not conducive to yielding large effect sizes.

# Next steps in 2026

Developing capacity-building tools that OTs can use to describe their services and the associated costs at individual and national levels:

1. Current survey project with professional regulatory college in the area of return-to-work for individuals with musculoskeletal injuries in private practice: description of interventions, direct and indirect costs.
2. Supporting measurement of occupational therapy services in interprofessional primary care clinics

## **Moving forward, we encourage...**

...the strategic prioritization of areas in which to develop economic evidence (e.g., those aligned with government action plans).

...the development of national cost description projects that inform decision-makers about OTs' specific contribution.

...international collaboration between OT professional associations.



ขอบคุณ

Thank you!



To contact us:

Andrew Freeman

([Andrew.Freeman@rea.ulaval.ca](mailto:Andrew.Freeman@rea.ulaval.ca))

Nadine Larivière

([nadine.lariviere@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:nadine.lariviere@usherbrooke.ca))

Josée Séguin ([jseguin@caot.ca](mailto:jseguin@caot.ca))