

USE OF DESIGN THINKING TO RECONSTRUCT THE EXPERIENCE OF SENIOR ADULTS TRANSITION INTO NURSING HOMES IN SINGAPORE



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Services: Senior Day Care | Home Care | Nursing Home | Active Ageing and Senior Fitness | Rehabilitation and Physiotherapy | Family Medicine
Community Support: CCMS (Community Case Management Services) | CREST (Community Resource, Engagement and Support Team) | Henderson Home


Transition into Nursing Homes Is a **Wicked Problem** and an **Occupational Justice Issue**.

The Multidimensional Transition & Occupational Injustice



Occupational Injustice

 Loss of routines, autonomy, meaningful activities

 Decline in perceived quality of life



Existing practices prioritise logistics & medical stabilisation, not lived experience

The Critical Gap & Research Aim



Limited models addressing how transitions are experienced

Occupational therapy roles underutilised & constrained



To reconstruct the transition experience of senior adults entering nursing homes in Singapore using **design thinking**, while explicitly addressing **occupational injustice** and the realities of nursing home practice

Design Thinking as Theoretical Framework | Multi-Phase, Iterative Research



Phase 1: Deepening Empathy (Phenomenology)



3 × 8-hour observations +
in-depth interviews (n=10)



Identified 4 transition phases



Developed 4 personas
representing dominant
transition experiences



Phase 2: Co-Creation with Stakeholders



Focus groups (n=15):
nursing home team +
occupational therapists



Validated As-Is and To-Be
journey maps



Co-created: 6 guiding principles,
5 quality-of-life domains
prioritised by senior adults



Phase 3 — Translation into Practice



Developed a care model +
30-day service blueprint



Iterated using a design sprint to:

- Address resistance to change
- Integrate blueprint into existing workflows

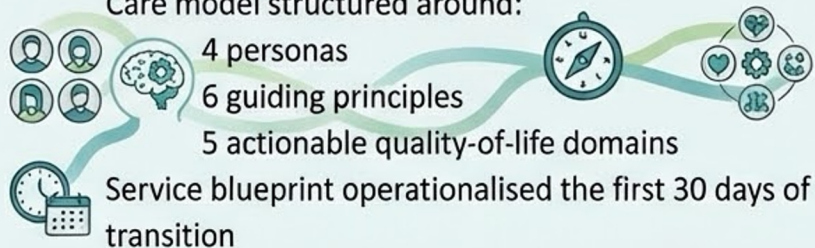


Pilot & mixed-methods
evaluation (n=30)

Impact of the Care Model & Significance to Occupational Therapy Practice

A Design-Thinking, Informed Care Model for Transition

Care model structured around:



✓ Demonstrated Feasibility & Early Outcomes

- Improved perceived transition experience over time
- Structured emotional check-ins, orientation, social integration feasible in practice
- Role clarity enhanced team performance despite staff turnover

Reframing the Role of Occupational Therapists

OT positioned as:

- Designers** of transition experiences
- Advocates against occupational injustice
- Consultants embedding occupation-centred practice across the team
- Model acknowledges resource constraints & focuses on impact of Occupational Therapy

Significance

- First care model using design thinking to address nursing home transitions
- Offers a scalable framework for Singapore & beyond
- Demonstrates how OT can lead systems-level change, not just rehabilitation



Benjamin Lim
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Thank You!



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Red Dot Award Winner | Designpreneur |
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