

# Demonstrating the value of occupational therapy: Are inpatient occupational therapists measuring what matters?

**Assoc. Prof. Tamara Tse**

School of Allied Health, Human Services and Sport,  
La Trobe University, [t.tse@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:t.tse@latrobe.edu.au)



**Dr. Susan Darzins**

School of Allied Health, Australian Catholic  
University, [susan.darzins@acu.edu.au](mailto:susan.darzins@acu.edu.au)



# Outcome measures in practice



What is an outcome measure?

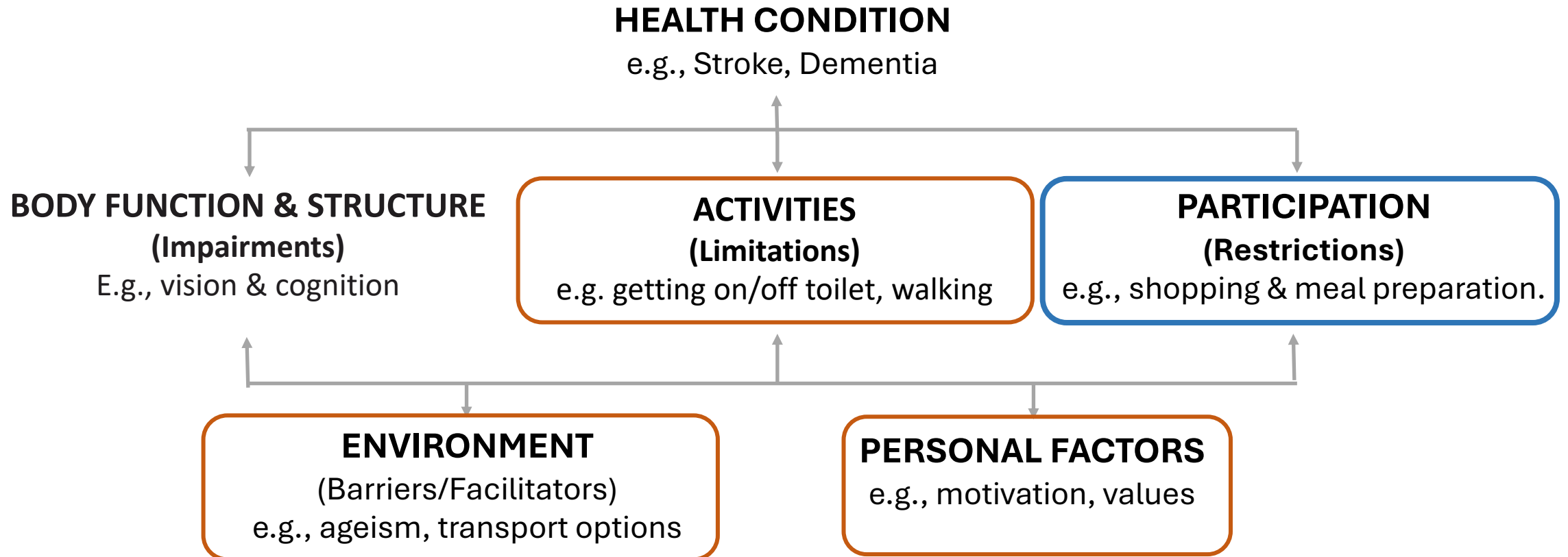


Why are outcome measures important?

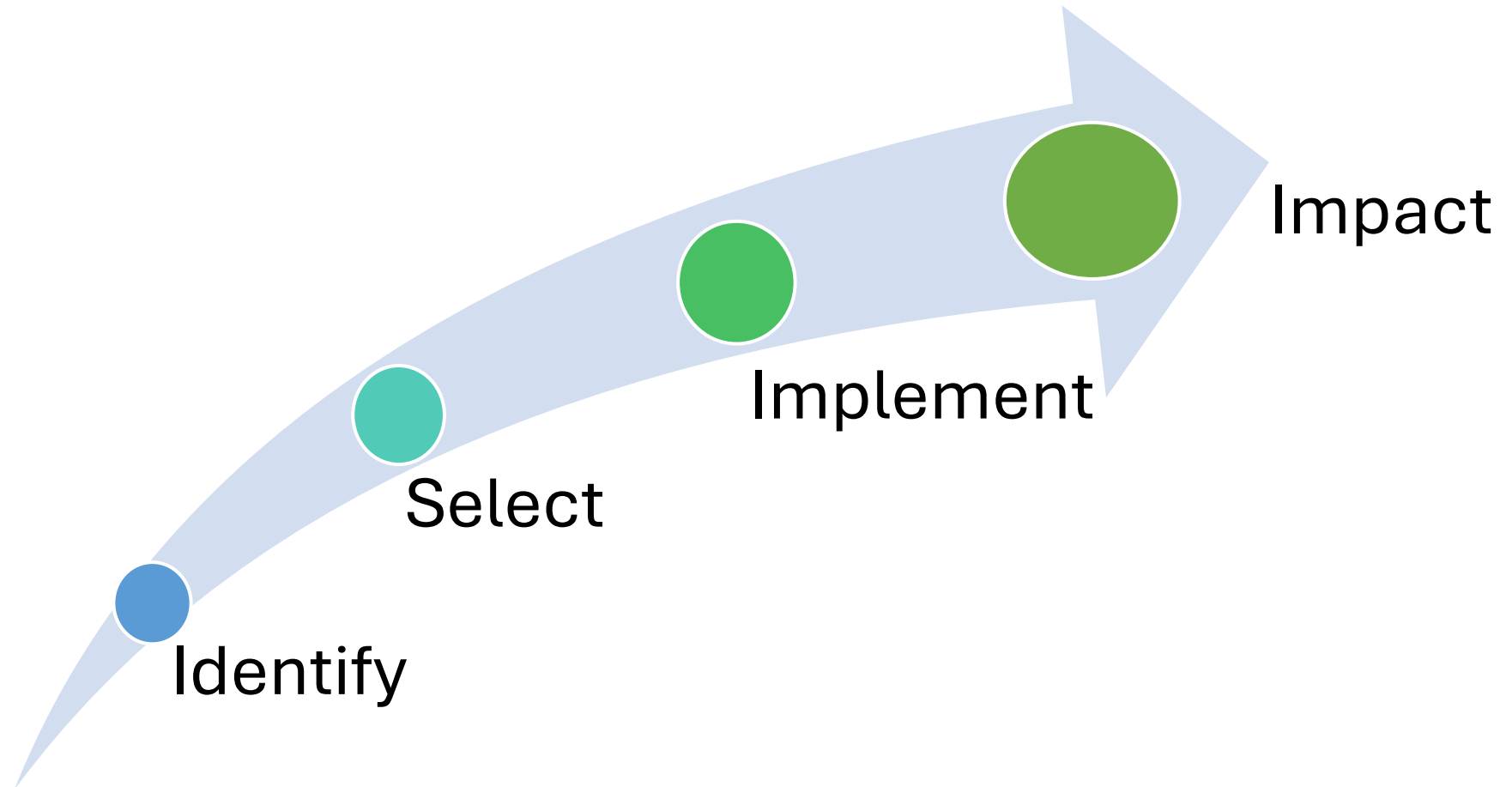


What are some challenges?

# WHO- ICF



# Measuring occupational therapy outcomes



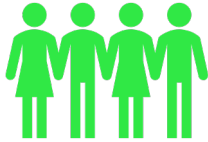
# Identify phase

---



## Aim

Identify ICF categories directly impacted through occupational therapy services



## Methods

Online survey of occupational therapists via REDCap

Participants – Senior occupational therapists from a large metropolitan hospital in Melbourne



## Survey

181 items - ICF domains and categories

Responses:

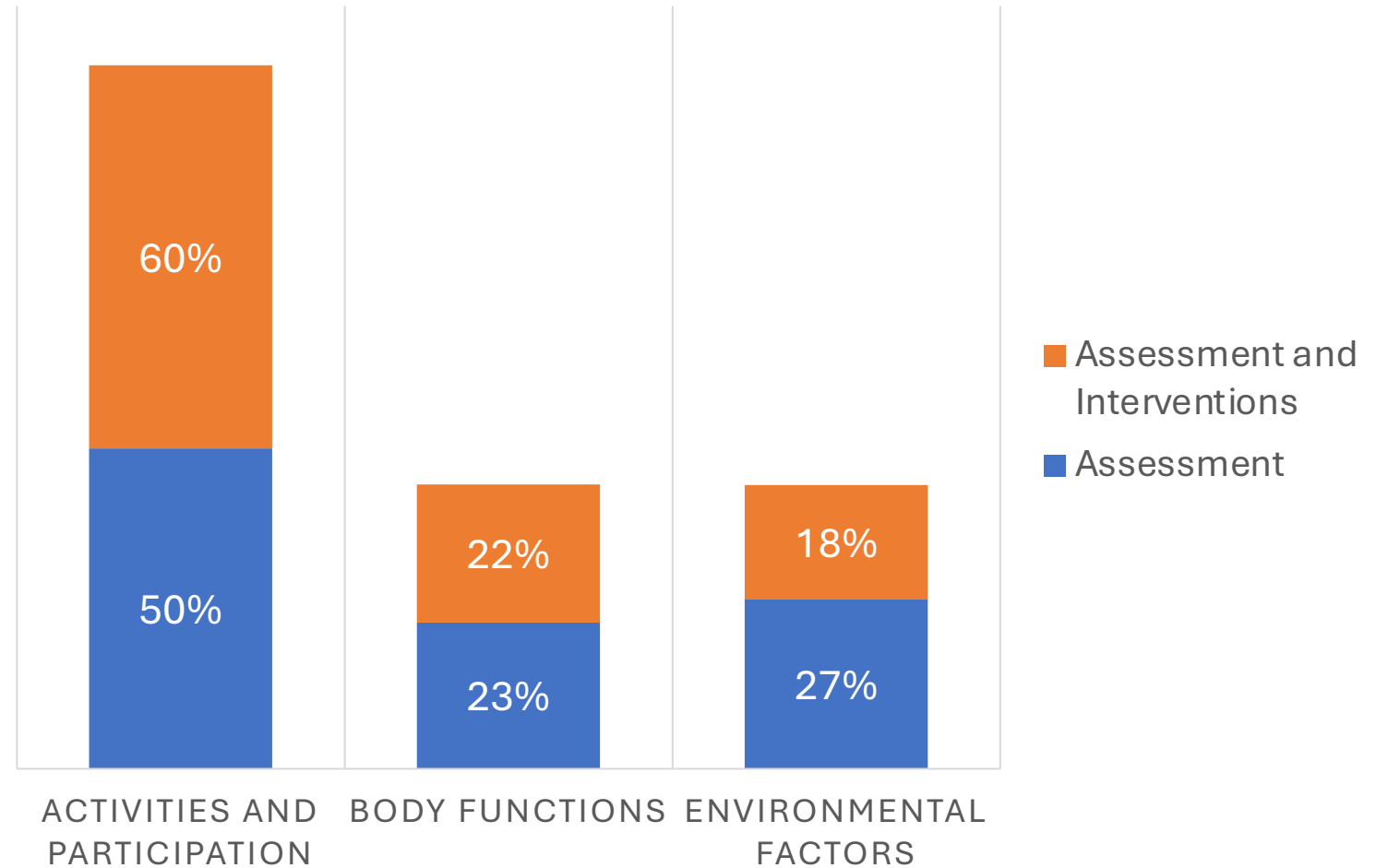
- Assess category
- Assess category AND provide intervention
- Neither

# Results

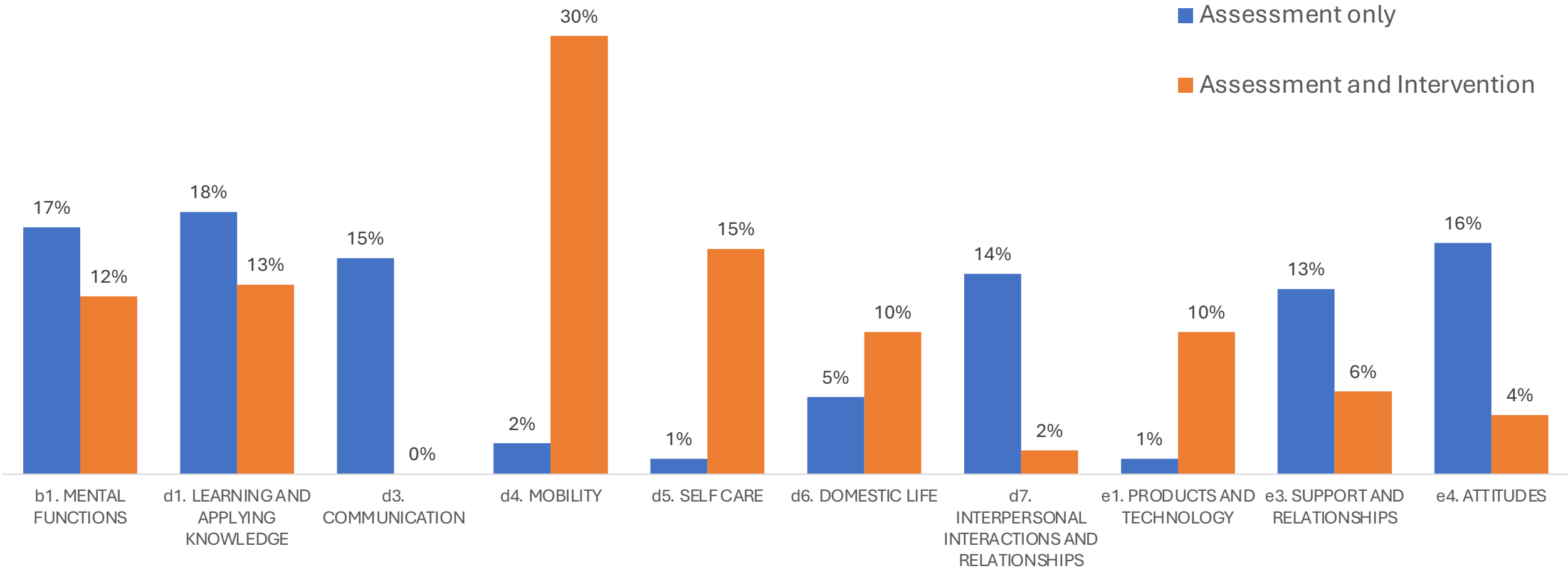
N=9 participants representing acute, rehabilitation, geriatric evaluation and management

Total 131 (74%) ICF categories covered by OT service

56% Activities & Participation  
22% Body Functions  
22% Environmental Factors



# Results: Most frequently recorded domains



# Results: Most frequently recorded categories for 'Assessment only'

Body functions	Activity and participation	Environmental factors
b180 Experience of self and time	d115 Listening	d710 Basic interpersonal interactions
b230 Hearing	d130 Copying	d740 Formal relationships
	d166 Reading	d850 Remunerative employment
	d172 Calculating	d860 Basic economic transactions
	d360 Using communication devices and techniques	

# Results: Most frequently recorded categories for 'Assessment and Intervention'

Body Functions	Activity and participation	Environmental Factors
b176 Sequencing complex movements	d110 Watching	d410 Changing basic body position
b710 Mobility of joint	d120 Other purposeful sensing	d415 Maintaining a body position
b730 Muscle power	d135 Rehearsing	d420 Transferring oneself
b735 Muscle tone	d160 Focusing attention	d430 Lifting and carrying objects
b810 Protective functions of the skin	d175 Solving problems	d440 Fine hand use
	d210 Undertaking a single task	d445 Hand and arm use
	d220 Undertaking multiple tasks	d449 Carrying, moving and handling objects
	d230 Carrying out daily routine	d450 Walking
	d520 Caring for body parts	d455 Moving around
	d530 Toileting	d460 Moving around in different location
	d540 Dressing	d465 Moving around using equipment
	d550 Eating	
	d560 Drinking	
	d630 Preparation of meals	
		e115 For personal use in daily living
		e120 For personal indoor and outdoor mobility and transportation
		e155 Design, construction and building products and technology of buildings for private use

# Discussion

- Practice mostly targets *Activities & Participation domain*
- *Environmental Factors* are more often assessed than *provided an intervention*
- Interventions cluster around *Mobility and Self-care*
- Assessment only categories are those suggestive of informing further assessment and intervention
- Focused on in-patient capacity, needs and supports needed to get people home – discharge.
- Need to use standardised measures that capture true impact of OT in inpatient settings
- Implementation research underway

# Questions

Tamara Tse:

[t.tse@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:t.tse@latrobe.edu.au)

Susan Darzins:

[susan.darzins@acu.edu.au](mailto:susan.darzins@acu.edu.au)

To stay informed of our work, please join our LinkedIn group: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/14343025/>



# References

- Atkins, L., Francis, J., Islam, R. et al. (2017). A guide to using the Theoretical Domains Framework of behaviour change to investigate implementation problems. *Implementation Science* 12, 77. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-017-0605-9>
- Cieza, A., Fayed, N., Bickenbach, J., & Proding, B. (2019). Refinements of the ICF Linking Rules to strengthen their potential for establishing comparability of health information. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 41, 574–583. <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638288.2016.1145258>
- COSMIN <https://www.cosmin.nl/> Accessed 24/01/2026
- Tse, T., Skorik, S., Fraser, R., Munro, A., & Darzins, S. (2024). Testing feasibility of relevant outcome measures in an inpatient setting to demonstrate the value of occupational therapy. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 71, 226–239. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1440-1630.12920>
- Wales K, Clemson L, Lannin N, Cameron I. (2016). Functional assessments used by occupational therapists with older adults at risk of activity and participation limitations: A systematic review. *PLoS One*, 11:e0147980. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0147980>.
- Waston, L., Tse, T., Darzins, S., Kunig, K. (2024) Measuring effects of occupational therapy in hospital settings: a systematic review of instruments identifying patients' participation restrictions.. PROSPERO 2024 Available from <https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/PROSPERO/view/CRD42024602154>
- World Health Organisation (WHO).(2001). The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) <https://www.who.int/standards/classifications/international-classification-of-functioning-disability-and-health> Accessed 06/06/2025.