Background
Working in mental health has been traditional for occupational therapists since its inception. However, this is not enough. Modern services require evidence that interventions work; making a real difference to peoples lives. To generate this evidence of effectiveness, researchers must conduct robust research studies. This allows comparisons between the effectiveness of a range of interventions.

Aim
To stimulate debate about three challenges to generating evidence of effectiveness of mental health occupational therapy interventions:
1. What is the desired outcome in mental health settings?
2. What should be used as an outcome measure?
3. What are the active components of mental health occupational therapy interventions that bring about desired outcomes?

1. What is the desired outcomes of mental health occupational therapy interventions?
Several concepts are reported as indicators of health in occupational therapy and multi-disciplinary literature.

Which, if any, of these do/should our interventions target?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Measure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICF Functioning</td>
<td>Wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICF participation</td>
<td>Quality of Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social participation</td>
<td>Coherence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social inclusion</td>
<td>Occupational participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social functioning</td>
<td>Occupational performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>?</td>
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2. What should be used as an outcome measure?

- Matched to the outcome
- Valid for population
- Reliable
- Sensitive to change
- Easy to use
- Multidisciplinary recognition

Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICF participation</td>
<td>WHODAS 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social functioning</td>
<td>Social functioning questionnaire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Widespread agreement will make outcomes of different intervention studies comparable; strengthening the evidence base.

3. What are the active components of mental health occupational therapy interventions?
In mental health occupational therapy, interventions are often individualised, idiosyncratic and can be conceptualised as complex. There are few interventions that have been proven to be effective in mental health occupational therapy. This does not mean what we are doing is ineffective; however that evidence is lacking.

Highlighting the active components of the intervention
What is the desired change?
What brings about the desired change - the active component/ingredient?
How does it work?

We need to answer these questions before we can test if the intervention works. Interventions developed in a structured, systematic and transparent way are required

Implications
- Evidence of effectiveness of occupational therapy in mental health settings needs strengthening
- Effectiveness research in mental health occupational therapy is hampered by lack of consensus on these three key issues

Recommendations
- Build a network of mental health researchers
- Align with national and international research priorities
- Reach consensus on the outcomes of importance and how these are measured
- Use robust methods to develop, describe and evaluate mental health occupational therapy interventions

MOTION
Mental health Occupational Therapy Interventions and Outcomes Network
If you are researching intervention effectiveness in mental health or want to pursue this, you might be interested in joining MOTION
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