
Editorial Notes

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Editorial Notes

*We are proud to present this expanded issue that deals entirely with the field of geriatrics. This issue is dedicated to our dear friend, a one-of-a-kind occupational therapist, **Dr. Nurit Weinblatt**, of blessed memory, who was completely devoted to this field and contributed greatly to the development of geriatric occupational therapy in Israel.*

This issue reflects the changes and developments that have taken place in geriatric occupational therapy in Israel in recent years. These impressive developments can be seen both in clinical practice as well as in research. For many years, geriatrics had been only marginally considered within the public discourse of occupational therapists and was less "popular" among young occupational therapists. Relatively few occupational therapists worked in this area and the majority of attention of occupational therapists was devoted to geriatric rehabilitation.

The increased life expectancy, the opening of many community geriatric settings (assisted living facilities, day-care centers) and the rapid development of institutionalized care (that included the development of hundreds of new departments of geriatric nursing care, as well as for the mentally frail and the feeble), the continued development of geriatric rehabilitation units and the increased awareness of the advancement of health, all provided fertile ground for the entry of occupational therapists to work in widely varied settings and roles in this field.

*Substantial changes have occurred within the Geriatric Division of the Ministry of Health, along with the intensive efforts devoted to the area via the National Occupational Therapy Service in the Ministry of Health, especially thanks to **Maayan Katz**, who is the Deputy Director of the National Occupational Therapy Service and whose responsibilities include the area of geriatrics. These efforts led to the establishment of hundreds of new positions all across the country for occupational therapists who work with the elderly, and to a broad range of professional achievements through a continuous process of growth and development. This work has the whole hearted support of the Israeli Occupational Therapy Association, who organized a multitude of professional seminars and initiated the Occupational Therapy Nursing Home Forum.*



Sarit Rabinowicz

Liora Peleg

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We hope that this issue will provide the occupational therapists' community the opportunity to get a taste of the beauty, the variety and the achievements in the field of geriatrics in all of its many nuances.

This issue includes a literature review presented by **Adi Goldhirsh** on the important topic of **Learned Helplessness among Elderly Patients**.

In an article that relates to the treatment of the elderly in the community, **Sarit Rabinowicz, Evelyn Klinger, Professor Amos Korchin, Professor Perla Werner and Professor Naomi Josman** describe **The Use of a Virtual Reality Supermarket Environment to Examine the Relationship Between Executive Functions and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living Among the Elderly with Mild Cognitive Impairments**. In yet another article that deals with community living, **Orit Lif Kimchi, Ruth Tamir, and Lily Pessach** describe a unique type of group therapy for Parkinson's patients living in the community, run by a multidisciplinary staff ("**Think Big**" and "**Feel Big**" with **Parkinson's Disease**).

Next, **Orit Segev-Jacobovski**, together with **Professor Noomi Katz, and Professor Tamar Weiss**, present their research in the area of rehabilitation that deals with a very practical issue though the use of technology, in their article: **Attention and Performance During a Virtual Street Crossing Task Following Orthopedic Surgery Due to Falling**.

Orit Lif Kimchi and Nava Ratzon also contribute to the area of rehabilitation in a piece that describes the examination of the **Reliability and Validity of the Dynamic Version of the Clock Completion Test (CCT) Among Hospitalized Elderly in Geriatric Rehabilitation**.

Ronit Lineal provides a broad literature review on the immense progress made in the area of institutional settings in her article: **Trends in the Employment of Occupational Therapists in Geriatric Nursing Institutions over the Course of Ten Years (1998-2008)**.

Finally, **Netalie Banne, Dganit Gross Beker, and Miri Kakon** present an article that discusses a most welcome achievement, namely, the development of a **Peer Group for Geriatric Occupational Therapists working in Nursing Homes**. Their article describes the development of this group, initiated a bit more than a year ago, which sets an example for the accelerated professional development and fascinating professional discourse that has taken place in geriatric occupational therapy.

Our regular columns include the "**Personal Glimpse**" column, in which **Nurit Levitan** presents her experiences as one of the most veteran occupational therapists in the field of geriatrics. In addition, the "**Technology and Internet**"

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column from **Maayan Katz and Naomi Gefen**, reviews innovative therapeutic and rehabilitative approaches and, in the "Book Review" column, **Noga Ziv** presents a critical appraisal of the book, "The challenge of aging: Mental health, assessment and treatment" by **Liora Bar-Tor**.

We hope that the various articles in this issue will contribute to those who work in the field of geriatrics, and will provide a glimpse of the field of geriatrics to the general occupational therapist population and inspire them to develop an interest in the field.

Pleasant reading,
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