



**Service Priorities and Programmes**  
**Electronic Presentations**

**Convention ID:** 1040

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**Post title:** Occupational Therapist I, QEH, KCC

**Systematic Review on Occupational Therapy for Patients with Sleep Problems:  
Issues and Opportunities**

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**Keywords:**

Sleep

Occupational Therapy

Systematic Review

**Introduction**

Sleep problems are a worldwide health issue, with prevalence rate ranging from 10-30%. Instead of seeking proper intervention, many people use over-the-counter hypnotic drugs or alcohol to cope with sleep problems. In 2008, sleep was defined as core occupation in the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework which is equally important as Self-care, Work and Leisure in achieving an occupational balance. Over recent decades, the role of occupational therapy in sleep management has been being keenly discussed and different forms of sleep management program have been developing. However, development of sleep management in the field of occupational therapy has been stagnant due to lack of conceptual frameworks and scientific evidence in clinical practice. Therefore, it is needed to review the existing literature in occupational therapy systematically in order to establish a foundation for occupation-based sleep management.

**Objectives**

This paper aims to analyze the conceptual framework of sleep management in occupational therapy. Review current literature regarding the effectiveness of existing sleep intervention and identify factors affecting one's sleep, so as to provide a foundation for development an occupational based sleep intervention program.

**Methodology**

Articles were retrieved from January 2007 to October 2017, through database searches in Scopus (Elsevier), MEDLINE/PubMed, Science Citation Index (SCI) OneFile (GALE) and ScienceDirect, by using the keywords 'sleep', 'rest' or 'insomnia' 'and 'occupational therapy', 'occupational therapist' or occupational therapy intervention'. Each article was retrieved and read, data extracted systematically.

**Result**

Eleven studies were included in the systematic review. Client age range from 30 days to 82 years old from different disease group. All sleep management programs demonstrated effectiveness in managing patients with sleep problem including increased sleep duration, shorten latency, reduced nighttime awakenings and

improved daytime engagement. The Person-Environment-Occupation Performance (PEOP) framework was used to analyze related sleep intervention in person, environment and occupational level. Four types of sleep intervention were identified, namely, use of assistive device/equipment, use of activity, cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBTi), and lifestyle intervention. Use of assistive device/equipment was found to be the most popular intervention in occupational therapy. Latest trend of applying Lifestyle intervention aims at maximizing one's occupational balance is important in developing occupational based sleep intervention program. The findings show that occupational therapy sleep management program is effective in improving one's sleep. Wishing the insights of this review increase the awareness of occupational therapists on sleep management and provide guidance for further development on occupational based sleep intervention to meet the growing needs in the community.