Evidence Exchange Writing a Critically Appraised Paper

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I have seen information on the Evidence Exchange on the AOTA Web site, in the 1-Minute Update, and in OT Practice, and I am interested in getting involved in writing a Critically Appraised Paper (CAP). I've been in clinical practice for 2 years and am familiar with evidence-based practice through my occupational therapy education. I read research articles regularly and I'm somewhat comfortable with the critical appraisal process. Do you have any suggestions to make the CAP writing process easier?

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We appreciate your interest in the Evidence Exchange, a grassroots effort to develop a central repository for CAPs. CAPs are critically appraised summaries of a single article in the research literature. CAPs use the process of critical appraisal, which carefully and systematically examines research to judge its trustworthiness, and its value and relevance in a particular context. For the Evidence Exchange, CAPs also provide a summary of the value and relevance of the article for the scope of occupational therapy practice.

To find information on preparing a CAP, go to this link on the AOTA Web site: http://www.aota.org/Practice/ Researchers/Evidence-Exchange. aspx. There, you will find a preview of the materials you need to write a CAP, including a CAP worksheet and CAP guidelines. Resources for developing a CAP also include the CAP Submission Toolkit; Evidence Exchange CAP Developer Training, which includes tips on collaborating with a partner; and Research Statistics 101 for evidence-based practice. These materials will guide you through some of the basics of critical appraisal and writing a CAP.

For those having difficulty finding an article to use when writing a CAP, try using an article included in a currently

available Critically Appraised Topic (CAT). CATs are "at-a-glance" syntheses of a group of articles selected for focused question systematic reviews. CATS can be accessed through each practice area on AOTA's website, at www.aota.org/Practice.aspx. CATs are organized by practice areas (i.e., Children and Youth; Productive Aging; Mental Health; Work and Industry; Rehabilitation, Disability, and Participation: Health and Wellness). CATs include Alzheimer's disease, autism spectrum disorder, children and adolescents with sensory processing disorders, driving and community mobility for older adults, and workers' compensation.

For prospective authors looking for free access to journal articles, remember that AOTA members receive free access to all archived articles in the American Journal of Occupational Therapy, the British Journal of Occupational Therapy, and the Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy. In addition, those certified through the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy have access to ProQuest.

Potential articles (and abstracts, if available) may also be found by searching in PubMed (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed), Google Scholar (http://scholar.google.com), OT Seeker (www.otseeker.com), and the Education Resources Information Network (ERIC; www.eric.ed.gov). PubMed, Google Scholar, and ERIC often have the full text of an article directly on their Web sites.

PubMed also manages PubMed Central (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc), a free digital archive of the peer-reviewed biomedical and life sciences literature. After selecting the link for "Journal List," one can read those open-access journal articles available for free, mostly those featuring government-funded research. Journals of interest to occupational therapy practitioners available through PubMedCentral include the American Journal of Public Health, Arthritis Research and Therapy, BMJ, Physical Therapy, and Occupational and Environmental Medicine. Information regarding the NIH Public Access Policy can be found on PubMed's homepage, at www.ncbi.nlm. nih.gov/pubmed.

In addition, AJOT delivers journal articles through Highwire Press, a division of Stanford University Libraries (see http://ajot.aotapress.net). Articles older than 3 years are generally open; all others are available to AOTA members and AJOT subscribers. The Directory of Open Access Journals (www.doaj.org), a source of scientific and scholarly literature, provides access to journals printed in all languages. With a variety of sponsors, the directory is housed at Lund University in Sweden and includes journals in the health and social sciences.

We hope that this information is helpful, and we look forward to seeing your CAP when it is submitted to the Evidence Exchange! ■

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