

Working upstream: The implementation of a preventative occupational therapy model of practice with frail older adults in primary care

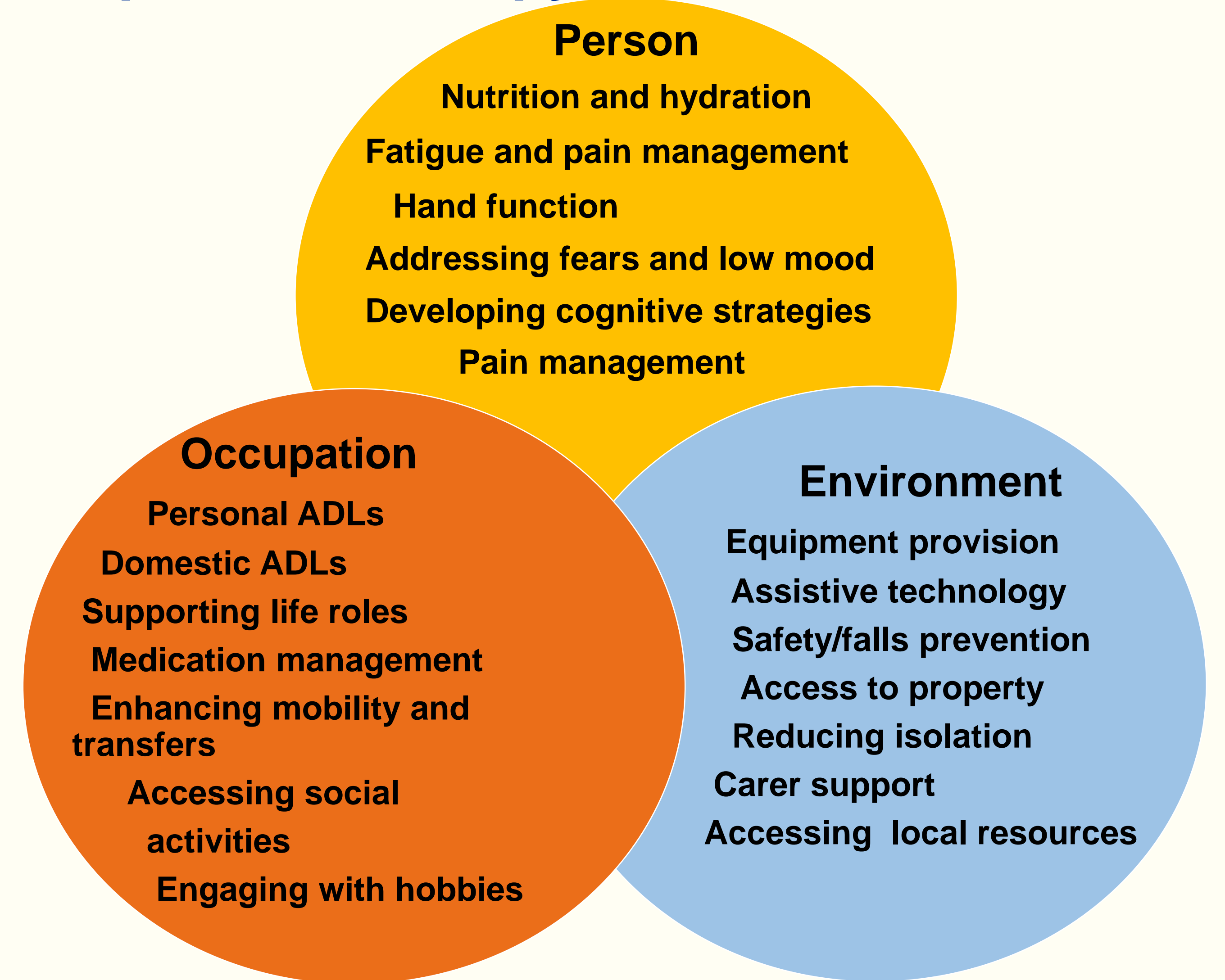
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Introduction

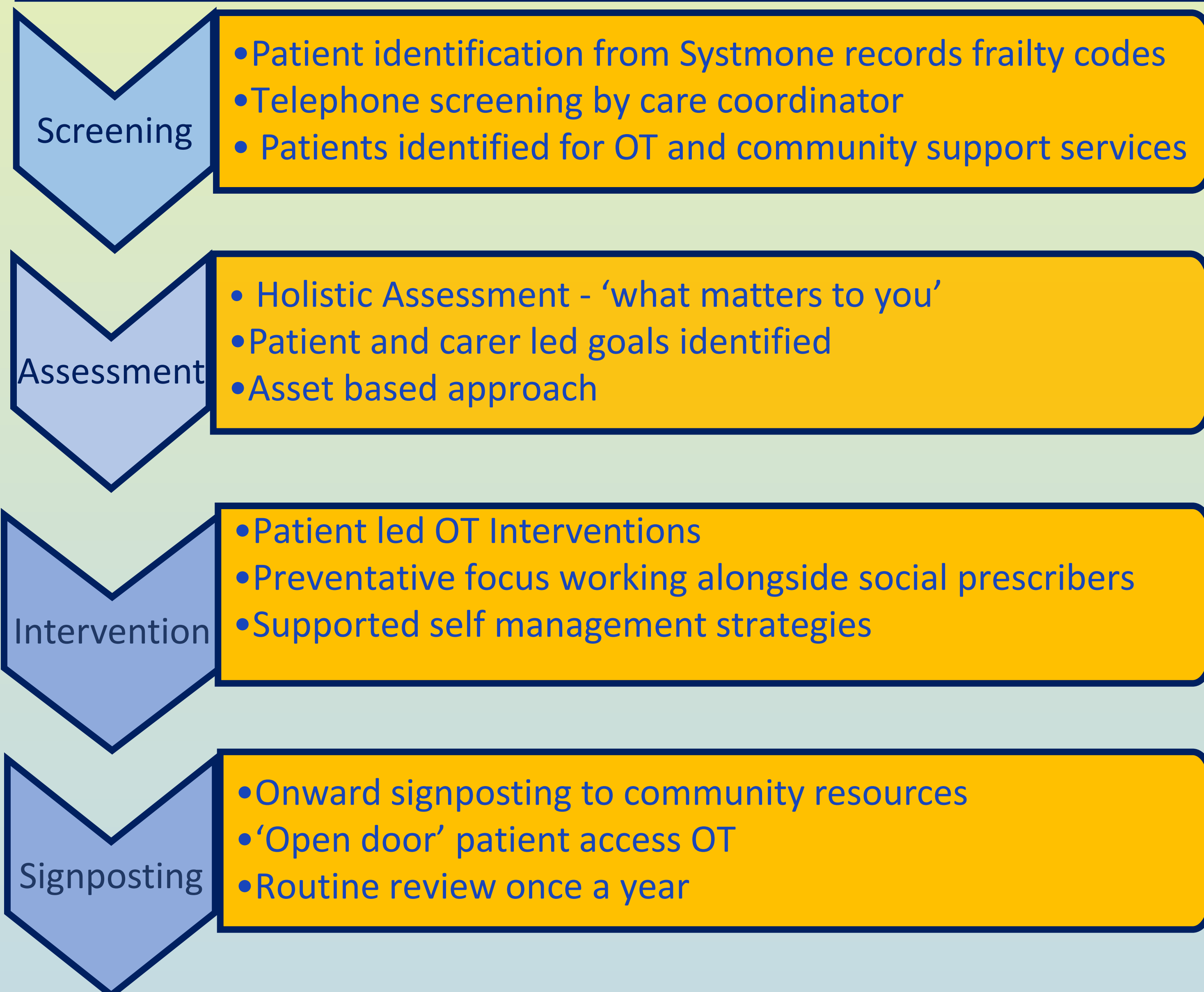
- Current national initiatives highlight how **anticipatory, preventative** models of care benefit patients' health and wellbeing¹
- Occupational therapists in GP practice **can** work upstream to prevent deterioration of patients living with frailty, **proactively** working **upstream** to enhance patients' occupational performance levels, wellbeing and independence
- This way of working promotes **equity** of service delivery by reaching out to patients experiencing frailty who face sensory and physical barriers to accessing services²
- An outreach model was developed as part of a broader frailty service in one Primary Care Network, working closely with a **care co-ordinator** and **social prescribers**
- The model was tested and evaluated over a one year period across six GP practices

Occupational therapy interventions



The Person- Environment-Occupation Model⁴

Outline of the preventative occupational therapy model with frail older adults



Patient and carer perspective on service

Support	Therapeutic Impact	Accessibility
<p>"The OT knows the 'ins and outs' of what's available, very knowledgeable" (patient)</p>	<p>"It's helped with my confidence; I've made contact with friends and use the trolley in the kitchen" (patient)</p>	<p>"I know the OT is there if we need anything, if anything changes" (patient's daughter)</p>

124 patients living with moderate to severe frailty were contacted for review over a one year period
51 patients were identified for occupational therapy input (41%). Patients not receiving occupational therapy frequently expressed appreciation for the review and having awareness of the service.
Therapeutic outcomes were measured using the Goal Attainment scale³. All patients receiving occupational therapy attained at least one therapeutic goal using this scale.

Conclusion

The implementation of the outreach model of practice demonstrates the high value of occupational therapists working collaboratively in preventative roles to improve the lived experience of older adults with. This model evaluates as 'fit of purpose' and is continuing to be developed in the Primary Care Network. It illustrates how occupational therapists can provide accessible, supportive interventions promoting occupational performance and wellbeing in this context.

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All photos obtained freely on-line from Pixabay <https://pixabay.com/>

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