

2026 OOTA Annual Conference: Poster Panel #2

October 16, 2026



ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Addison Wheeler

Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student

Addison Wheeler, S/OT is a third-year occupational therapy doctoral student at Xavier University. Her scholarly interests include rehabilitation interventions that support postpartum women in their occupational engagement and well-being. Her interest in this area developed through conversations with women who described challenges with resuming meaningful occupations and reconnecting with their sense of self after childbirth. These interactions inspired Addison to explore the rehabilitation services currently available during the postpartum period and to advocate for the role of occupational therapy within the postpartum care team. She looks forward to continuing to expand her knowledge in this emerging area of practice and sharing findings from her work.



Introduction:

- After childbirth, women are expected to resume daily responsibilities during physical and emotional recovery
- 51.7% of pregnancy-related deaths occur within the postpartum period with 3 out of 5 deaths preventable (Petersen et al., 2019)
- Common postpartum challenges consist of fatigue, musculoskeletal pain, pelvic floor dysfunction, and adjustment to maternal role

For women during the postpartum period, what rehabilitation interventions are provided to support occupational engagement?





Methods:

- The JBI Manual for Evidence Synthesis was used to guide the methodology (Peters et al., 2020)
- Databases searched included CINAHL, MEDLINE, PsycINFO, and PubMed
- Inclusion criteria:
 - April 2021-2026
 - Participants between period of immediate delivery and 6 months postpartum with vaginal or cesarean sections
- Exclusion criteria:
 - Pharmacological interventions
 - Pregnant participants or > 6 months postpartum

Results

- 702 articles initially identified in literature search, with 66 duplicates removed and 588 excluded based on title/abstract
- 408 articles full-text reviewed, 23 included in study
- Findings were grouped by intervention types and rehabilitation disciplines, with all studies showing positive results

Figure 1: Intervention Types

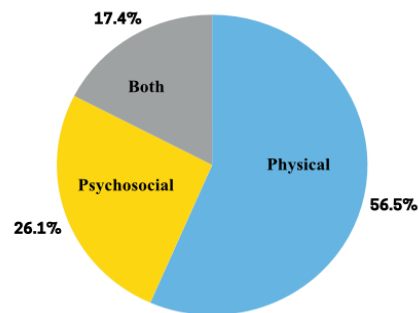
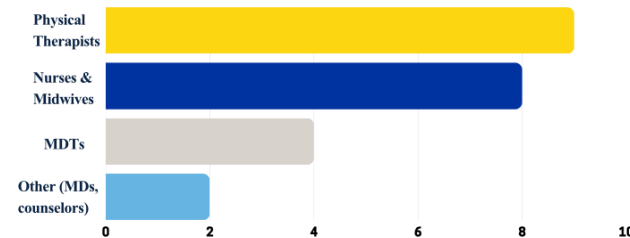


Figure 2: Disciplines Providing Interventions



Discussion & Conclusion:

- Rehabilitation interventions effectively addressed physical and psychosocial recovery
- Improvements in pelvic floor outcomes, sexual function, self-efficacy, and maternal functioning resulted from intervention
- No studies identified occupational therapists as providers of postpartum rehabilitation interventions despite their expertise in addressing physical and psychosocial performance in meaningful occupations
- Future research should include OT-led interventions targeting ADLs, IADLs, rest and sleep, work, and health management to better support postpartum recovery

References



THANK YOU!

Addison Wheeler, S/OT

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ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Jane Meister

Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student

Jane Meister, S/OT, is a third-year occupational therapy doctoral student at Xavier University with an interest in women's health and pelvic health occupational therapy. Her interest in pelvic floor therapy developed through her growing interest in the role of occupational therapy in addressing conditions that affect participation in meaningful daily activities, including self-care, work, leisure, and sexual activity. As part of her doctoral capstone preparation, Jane conducted a scoping review examining the influence of occupation-based pelvic floor therapy on occupational performance and functional participation in adults with a uterus. Through this work, she has developed a greater understanding of the potential role of occupational therapy within pelvic health and the current gaps in the literature. Jane is excited to continue expanding her knowledge and experience in pelvic health and to advocate for the role of occupational therapy within interdisciplinary pelvic health care.



Introduction:

- PFD affect approximately **24%** of individuals with a uterus (NIH, 2008).
- Symptoms may include pelvic pain, bladder/bowel dysfunction, sexual dysfunction, and pelvic organ prolapse.
- Symptoms can limit participation in **self-care, work, leisure, and sexual activity**.
- Limited research examines occupation-based pelvic floor interventions and their impact on functional participation.

Research question:

- For adults with a uterus, how does occupation-based pelvic floor therapy influence occupational performance and functional participation?

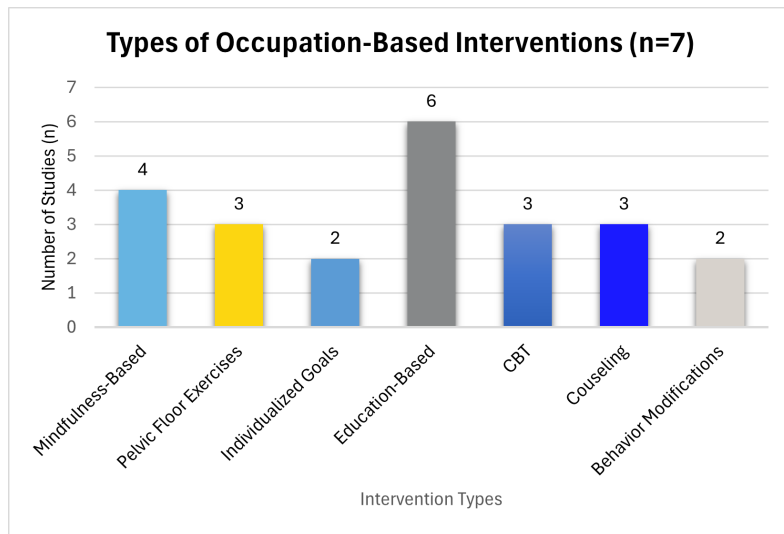




Methods:

- Databases: MEDLINE, CINAHL, Health Source: Nursing and Academic Edition (EBSCO), and Cochrane.
- Inclusion criteria:
 - Adults with a uterus
 - Occupation-based pelvic floor therapy
 - Peer-reviewed studies
 - Published 2016-2016
- 7 articles were included in the final review

Results



Interventions reported across included studies (overlapping categories).

•Functional and symptom related outcomes

- Studies reported outcomes related to sexual participation, daily functioning, and quality of life.
- Other outcomes included pain, urinary symptoms, pain self-efficacy, and psychological well-being.
- Direct measurement of occupational performance and participation varied across studies.

•Occupational outcomes

- Improvements in ADLs, IADLs, physical activity, work, and sexual function.
- Symptom-related improvements included pain, anxiety, depression, and fear of movement.

Discussion & Conclusion:

Occupation-based pelvic floor therapy shows promise for supporting daily participation, but stronger evidence is needed.

Evidence gaps

- Small samples, varied interventions, limited long-term follow-up, and underrepresentation of diverse populations.

Clinical practice

- Prioritize individualized goals, occupation-based strategies, habit formation, and self-management.

Future directions

- Conduct stronger, more inclusive research and expand OT representation in interdisciplinary pelvic health care.

References



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ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Isabella Martin

Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student

Isabella Martin, S/OT, is a third-year occupational therapy doctoral student at Xavier University. Her scholarly work focuses on pelvic floor rehabilitation and its impact on quality of life in women. Her interest in this subject developed from a growing passion for women's and pelvic health and the role of occupational therapy within pelvic health practice. Isabella conducted a scoping review examining current literature related to pelvic floor rehabilitative interventions and contributors to quality of life. This project led to a deeper understanding of the importance of addressing pelvic health concerns and their impact on meaningful daily occupations and overall well-being. Isabella hopes to pursue a career in women's pelvic health and is excited to continue expanding her knowledge of pelvic health and exploring occupational therapy's role within this growing area of practice.



Introduction:

- Pelvic floor dysfunction (PFD) affects ~28 million women worldwide; up to 1 in 3 experience symptoms (The University of Chicago Medicine; Fyhrie et al., 2024).
- Symptoms limit daily activities and reduce quality of life (QoL).
- QoL includes physical, psychological, and social well-being, including participation in meaningful occupations.
- Pelvic floor rehabilitation improves function and QoL, but literature synthesis, especially from an occupational therapy (OT) perspective, remains limited.

Research Question:

For women with pelvic floor dysfunction, how do pelvic floor interventions provided by rehabilitative therapists impact quality of life?

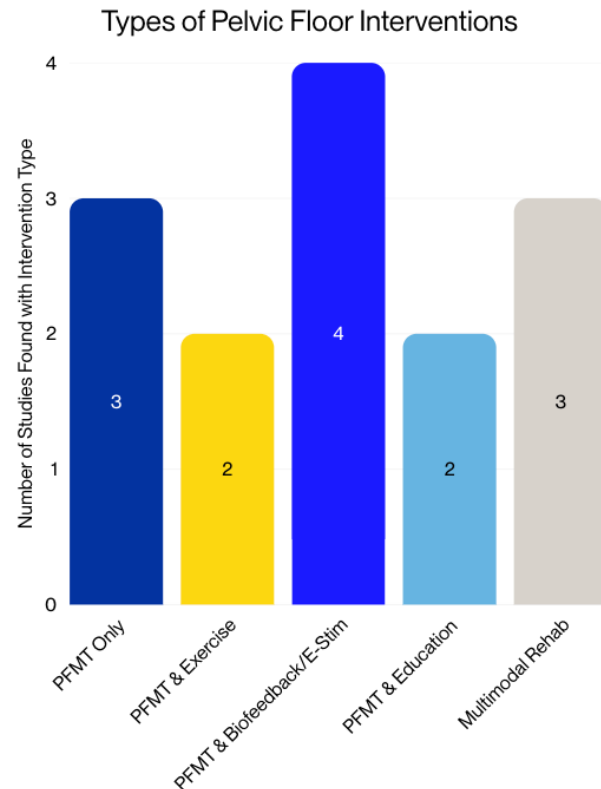




Methods:

- Guided by JBI Manual; reported using PRISMA-ScR.
- Databases searched: CINAHL, MEDLINE, PsycINFO (March 2026).
- **Inclusion Criteria:**
 - Adult women (≥ 18) with PFD
 - Studies examining rehabilitative interventions and QoL outcomes
 - Published between 2016-2026
 - English
 - Peer reviewed
- **Exclusion Criteria:**
 - Pediatrics
 - Males
 - Non-rehabilitative interventions
 - PFD related to other primary conditions such as stroke, cancer, and multiple sclerosis

Results



- 1,076 articles in original search
- 74 duplicates removed
- 1,002 articles screened
- 32 articles eligible for full text screening
- 14 articles included

- The review aimed to capture rehabilitative interventions across disciplines, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, and related fields, all included studies involved interventions delivered by physical therapy professionals.
- Findings demonstrated improvements in QoL, along with reductions in urinary symptoms, enhancements in sexual function, and decreased pain intensity.

Discussion & Conclusion:

Pelvic floor rehabilitation improves quality of life and functional outcomes in women with pelvic floor dysfunction. Although physical therapists delivered all interventions, findings align with OTPF-4 domains, highlighting occupational therapy's role. Further OT-specific research and publication are needed to support occupation-based interventions and expand pelvic health practice.

Gaps & Limitations:

- No OT-led studies despite strong alignment with OT practice.
- Variability in interventions and outcome measures limits comparison.
- Limited focus on long-term outcomes and participation-based measures.

Implications for Occupational Therapy:

- OT is well-positioned to contribute to pelvic health care.
- Need for:
 - Increased OT-specific research and publication
 - Greater integration of pelvic health in OT education
 - The expansion of occupation-based, holistic interventions



References



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ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Ashlyn Coleman & Stacey Rosselot

Ashlyn Coleman, OTD, OTR/L, is a practicing occupational therapist in outpatient pediatrics. Ashlyn is a recent graduate from the University of Findlay, where she completed the presenting capstone project surrounding perinatal mental health. Ashlyn is passionate about advocating for holistic, family-centered care.

Stacey Rosselot, OTD, MOTR/L, PHS-C, TIPHP is an Occupational Therapist with extensive experience supporting maternal mental health, pelvic floor therapy, and infant/pediatric care. She earned her Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Findlay and went on to complete her Doctorate in Occupational Therapy at Indiana University. As the Founder of Mommy and OT Holistic Wellness & Co-Owner of Wildflower Wellness Therapy Services, LLC, Dr. Rosselot is dedicated to helping mothers navigate the unique challenges of pregnancy, postpartum recovery, and early motherhood. Her passion lies in empowering women by addressing the physical, emotional, and mental health needs that arise during this transformative stage of life.



Occupational Therapy's Impact on Perinatal Mental Health and Daily Functioning

Presented by: Ashlyn Coleman

UF Faculty Mentor: Rebecca Herr, OTD, OTR/L

Site Mentor: Ashley Bush, MSW, LISW-S, PMH-C

Site: Bloom Women's Counseling, Consulting & Wellness, LLC.

Content Expert Mentor: Stacey Rosselot, OTD, MOTR/L, PHS-C, TIPHP



Background Information & Question



Interests

- A friend's pregnancy experience
- Personal mental health journey
- Interest in OT mental health

Question

- How does participation in OT interventions affect perinatal mood and anxiety disorder (PMADs) symptoms and improve daily participation in the perinatal population?

Literature Review

Prevalence:

- PMADs affect 14-20% of women during pregnancy and first year postpartum
- PMADs are considered the #1 complication of childbirth
- “Baby Blues” impact 26-84% of women

Biopsychosocial Theoretical Framework:

- Biological risks
- Psychological factors
- Sociological influences

Complications:

- Leading cause of maternal suicide
- Increased complications for Mom and Baby

Gap in the Literature:

- Implementation of OT services with the perinatal population

(Accortt et al., 2022; Barbic et al., 2021; Blount et al., 2021; Britton & Henton, 2024; Canavan et al., 2021; Merkel et al., 2023; Pollari et al., 2022; Templeton, 2024)



Site Selection & Needs Assessment

Bloom Women's Counseling, Consulting, & Wellness

- Maumee/Toledo & Findlay
- Serving women

Experienced Providers

- Licensed social workers
- Certified nurse practitioner
- Certified lactation consultant
- Postpartum Support International (PSI) training

Services

- Private 1:1 therapy
- Couples/family counseling
- Medication management
- Lactation support
- Support groups



Growing Mother, Blooming Baby



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Blooming Baby

for mothers and their babies aged 0 – 2 years

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Feb. 24th or 28th
March 5th or 7th
March 12th or 14th
March 26th or 28th
April 2nd or 4th
April 9th or 11th



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Hosted by: Bloom Women's Counseling, Consulting & Wellness, LLC.
Facilitated by: Ashlyn Coleman, S/OT



O O T A



Evaluation

Formal Evaluation

- Overall Program Evaluation (Pre/Posttest)
 - Edinburg Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)
 - Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS)
 - Open-ended discussion question about daily functioning
- Individual Program Evaluation

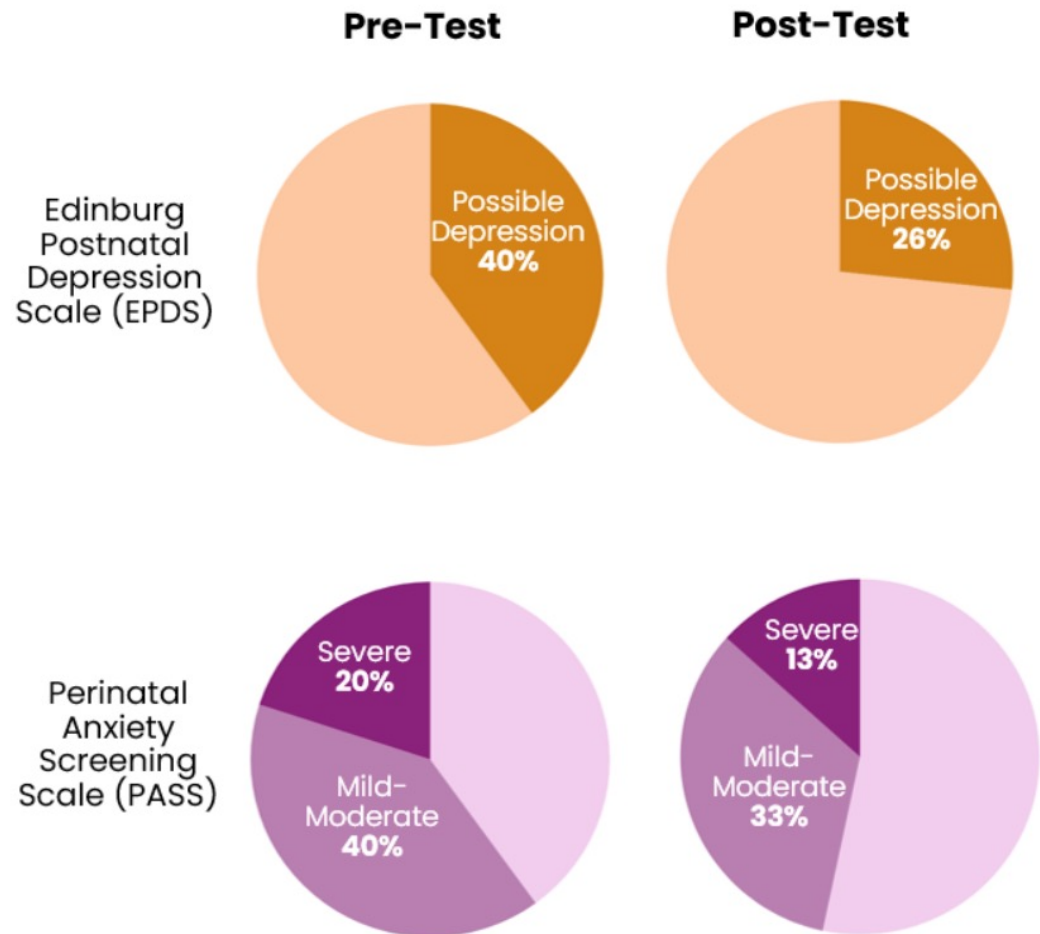
Informal Evaluation

- Expertise mentor
- Bloom professionals



Group Outcomes

- Decrease in depression
- Decrease in anxiety
- Improvements to perceived daily functioning



Supporting Maternal Mental Health: A Guide for OT Professionals

Maternal mental well-being is the ultimate foundation for a child's success. As OT professionals, recognizing and addressing your "invisible client", the mother, is essential to achieving optimal pediatric outcomes.

The Mother-Infant Dyad

- **Prevalence:** Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs) affect 14% to 20% of mothers and are the most common complication of childbirth.
- **The Biopsychosocial Interplay:** Maternal health is a balance of biological risks, psychological factors, and sociological influences.
- **Impact on Development:** Unaddressed mental health issues can lead to decreased attachment and bonding, as mothers may struggle to engage in caregiving occupations, negatively impacting the child's long-term trajectory.



Our Unique Value as OTs

- Shifting our focus from Mom's "lack of attention" to "lack of capacity" is vital for effective intervention.
- A perfect 60-minute session cannot overcome a disconnected home environment during the other 167 hours of the week.
- A mother's mental capacity must be treated as a prerequisite for the child's progress.
- Spending 5 minutes checking on a mother should be viewed as an efficient investment that strengthens pediatric outcomes, not an interruption.

Advocacy in Action: What You Can Do

- You don't need to be an expert in maternal mental health; you just need to be an expert in recognizing occupational barriers.
1. **Start the Conversation**
 - Use foundational skills like active listening to be present with your clients and open the door to support.
 2. **Utilize Screening Tools**
 - Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9)
 - Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7)
 - Postpartum Stressors Scale (PPSS)
 - Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)
 - Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS)
 3. **Provide Resources**
 - Postpartum Support International (PSI)
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
 - Local mental health resources in your specific area



Listen to the presentation by
scanning the QR code



Presented by: Aimee Coleman, S/OT
University of Findlay Department of Occupational Therapy
Aimee Coleman Consulting & Wellness, LLC

University of Findlay
Occupational Therapy
Blum
Aimee Coleman Consulting & Wellness, LLC

Advocacy for Maternal Mental Health

- Advocacy is a key foundation of the OT profession
- Educational presentation with corresponding handout
- Dispersed to 15+ pediatric OT facilities
- Importance of treating the entire family system

Continued Sustainability & Impact



- Opening doors for future OT students and professionals
- Possible grants or employment for OT professionals
- Bloom as a central pillar for maternal mental health
- Impact on women in perinatal period





"A mother's emotional well-being is just as vital as her physical health because a healthy mind is the foundation of a healthy baby."

References



THANK YOU!

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Discussion | Q&A

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