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Occupational Therapy Europe

ROTOS
Research in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science Foundation

Conducting occupational therapy research during the Covid-19 pandemic: challenges and adaptations

Dr. Alison Laver-Fawcett
Chair, Research into Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science (ROTOS)

ROTOS

Research in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science Foundation

@_ROTOS_

- ROTOS’ vision, strategic aims
- Challenges for research posed by the pandemic
- New ways of conducting research
- New areas to be researched
- How you can get involved with ROTOS

Occupational Therapy
Europe

COTEC
Council of Occupational Therapists
for the European Countries

ENOTHE
European Network
of Occupational Therapy
in Higher Education

SPOT

ROTOS
Research in Occupational Therapy
and Occupational Science

ROTOS Foundation

ROTOS is for all researchers at all levels

ROTOS
Research in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science Foundation

- ROTOS became a Not For Profit, Charitable Foundation 11th March 2020 under the law in the Netherlands
- The ROTOS Foundation now has a Board (previously a committee)
- ROTOS is not a membership organisation (unlike ENOTHE and COTEC) and so it does not charge membership fees.

ROTOS Foundation Board

ROTOS
Research in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science Foundation

Alison Laver-Fawcett (Chair)
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Sasa Radic (Communications)
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Esther Steultjens
(Previous chair)
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ROTOS' Vision

ROTOS
Research in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science Foundation

Improving European citizens' lives through occupation focused research and science by having one strong voice for occupational therapy and occupational science research.

Strategic plan ROTOS 2020-2023
Overall Strategic Aim

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That knowledge from occupational therapy and occupation science research will be appropriately used to inform and shape European policy and practice, through the establishment of a strong European profile of occupational therapy and occupational science researchers, that both strengthens occupation-based knowledge generation and supports access to this knowledge for the benefit for all Europeans.

Strategic aim 1

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Establish occupation as powerful knowledge domain

To use current research and evidence, and to support the development of further research, by bringing together established researchers and encouraging a strong voice at all levels of occupational therapy in the research agenda.

Strategic aim 2

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Use occupational therapy and occupational science research outcomes for advocacy and to influence policy development

To develop research leaders confident in promoting the outcomes of occupational therapy, occupational science and interdisciplinary occupation-focused research as beneficial to the lives and occupational wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Strategic aim 3

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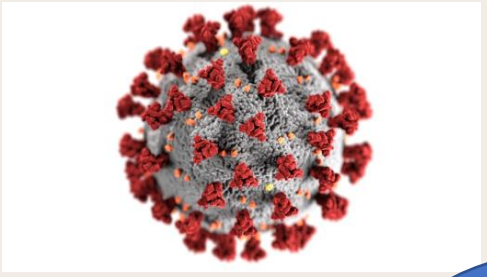
To build strong collaborations to achieve the ROTOS Foundation's vision

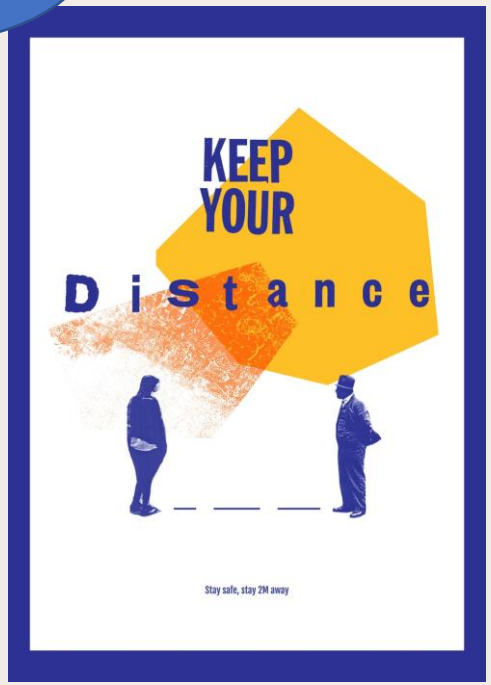
To achieve a sustainable ROTOS Foundation and create a strong research network, to link researchers to practitioners, educators and other researchers, through facilitating working across boundaries in the European context.



Covid-19: Challenges to research

Funding

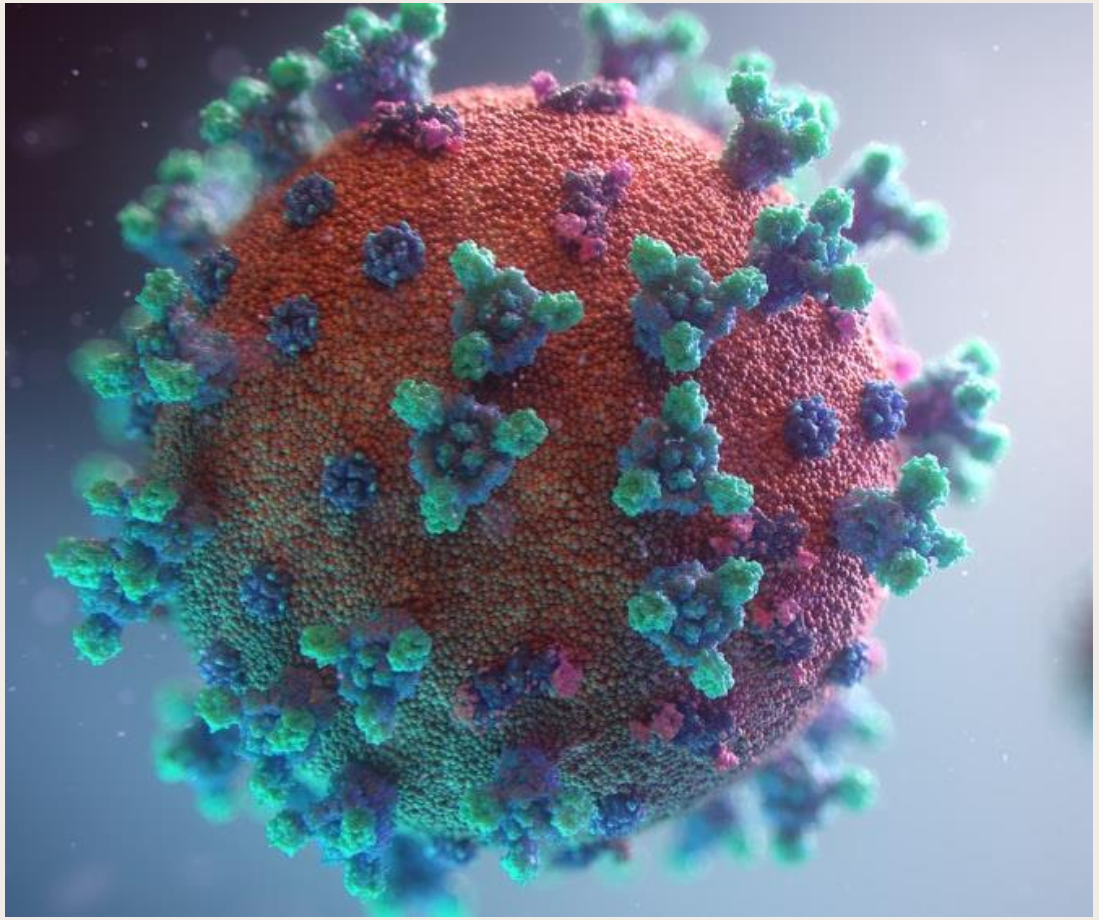
Postponed



Cancelled

Changed

Covid-19: Adaptations to research



- Additional risk assessment
- Funding implications
- Altered consent procedures
- Amended ethics applications
- Changing sample recruitment methods
- Changing data collection methods
- Changes to supervision and research team meetings

Adaptations: Risk assessment

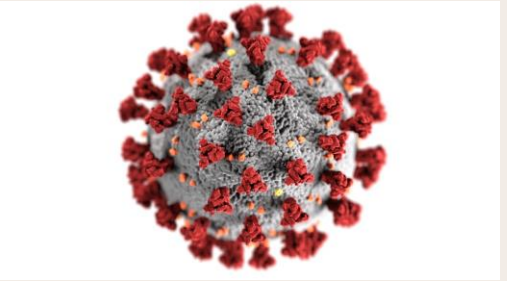
- Covid Infection: a new risk of harm to consider
- New strategies to ensure the wellbeing of participants and researchers
- Isolation of researchers and mental wellbeing, e.g., for full-time PhD students

Consent procedures

TEMPLATE INFORMED CONSENT FORM
FOR SUBJECTS ABLE TO GIVE CONSENT

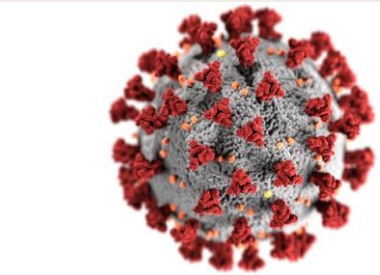
- Email
- Print, sign, scan and email
- Consent using online surveys/ google docs
- Audio recording consent

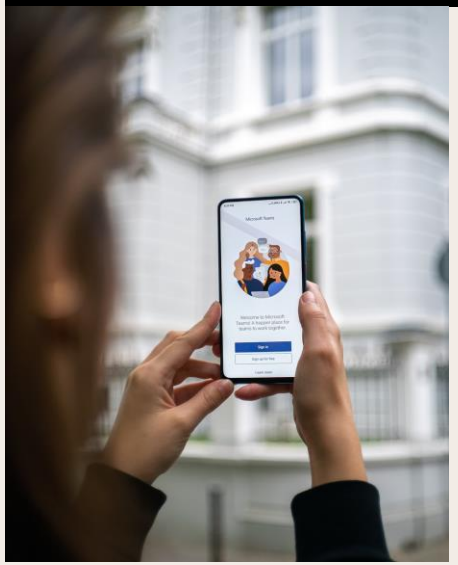
Adaptations: recruiting samples



- Increased use of social media
- Convenience samples
- Snowballing strategy

Adaptations: data collection methods





- Online data collection methods for interviews and focus groups
- Online surveys
- Questions posted on social media
- Being clear with participants if they are answering questions related to now or their pre-pandemic ‘normal’.

zoom

Microsoft Teams

qualtrics XM

Instagram

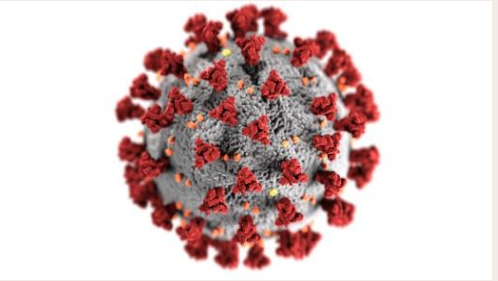
Supervision and research meetings

- Regular meetings – keeping momentum with the research project but also supporting the maintenance of mental wellbeing
- Agreeing changed timelines
- Bringing some work forward whilst other work was postponed
- Staying connected: e.g. use of networks through Twitter, Facebook groups, Researchgate, LinkedIn

COVID - 19
Coronavirus
Vaccine
Injection only

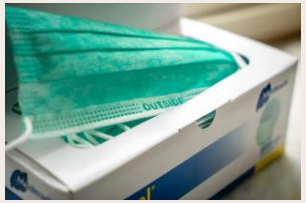
2021

Moving forward with research



For face-to-face research

- Allow more time for sample recruitment
- Advising participants not to attend if they have Covid-19 symptoms
- Taking temperature before starting
- More time between participants for deep cleaning rooms and equipment
- Allowing more time for data collection phase if need to rebook data collection



New Covid-19 related questions to research

- Effectiveness of occupational therapy Rehabilitation for people recovering from COVID-19 (e.g., see RCOT 2020).
- Effectiveness of occupational therapy with people dealing with the physical and mental health effects of lockdown (Crowder et al, 2020)
- Effectiveness of occupational therapy interventions for people following intensive care for Covid-19
- Effectiveness of occupational therapy interventions for people experiencing 'Long Covid'
  - "Not recovering [for] several weeks or months following the start of symptoms that were suggestive of covid, whether you were tested or not" (Navabi, 2020)
  - 'Fatigue was the most common trait in people who had symptoms beyond three weeks' (Navabi, 2020)
  - 'Satisfactory treatment is lacking' (Royal Society, 2020)

New questions to research

- More OT has become virtual rather than face to face during the pandemic: effectiveness of telecare occupational therapy interventions
- Pedagogical research, e.g., effectiveness of virtual teaching and learning, new models for practice placement
- How the COVID-19 pandemic and lock down periods have affected leisure patterns and the use of ‘free time’

Examples of published Covid-19 research

- Telehealth for the Provision of Occupational Therapy: Reflections on Experiences During the COVID-19 Pandemic (Dahl-Popolizio, et al, 2020)

- Occupational therapy: The key to unlocking locked-up occupations during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kamalakannan and Chakraborty, 2020)

Research summary briefs

- Are OT or OS evidenced based documents suitable for a wider audience
- Have a clear and specific purpose
- Provide a succinct summary of the evidence base, where possible drawing upon peer-reviewed published meta-analyses and systematic reviews
- Focus on OT / OS European evidence where available, but draw on wider international evidence if needed
- Include a list of references and acknowledged sources
- The people who write the brief will be the authors
- Written for, reviewed by and published / circulated by ROTOS and Occupational Therapy Europe
- Dated

How to get involved

ROTOS
Research in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science Foundation

- ROTOS website: https://www.rotosfoundation.eu/

Contact us using the form:

https://www.rotosfoundation.eu/contact-us/

Contact details

ROTOS

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Resources

- WFOT has established a dedicated FREE online platform to support requests to network, share and develop resources regarding the impact of COVID-19 and its relevance to the occupational therapy profession.
- The forum is available on the Occupational Therapy International Online Network (OTION) which can be accessed via this lin:

- https://wfot.link/covid19

- https://www.wfot.org/news/2020/occupational-therapy-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic [accessed 26.2.2021]