

AbleOTUK -Newsletter

Update: Easier Access to AbleOTUK Support Sessions

We've made it simpler to join our monthly support groups. You no longer need to register via Eventbrite – all members will now receive an email on the day of each session with the Zoom link.

To protect privacy, we won't send calendar invites. Please pop the dates in your own diary or calendar app.

These sessions are for UK-based occupational therapists and students who identify as disabled, neurodivergent, or as having a long-term health condition. They're held monthly, offering space to connect, share, and support one another.

2025 Support Group Dates - 7 pm

Wednesday 10th Sep,
Wednesday 8th Oct,
Wednesday 12th Nov,
Wednesday 10th Dec



Disability, Disclosure, and HCPC Re-registration

The HCPC re-registration Occupational Therapist window opened on 1st August 2025 and runs until October, meaning all registrants need to complete the process in this period. For those of us with disabilities, long-term health conditions, or neurodiversity, this can feel even more daunting.

One of our founding members, Georgia Vine, has written a blog that you may find helpful, reflecting on what's new and what hasn't changed in the process.

Drawing on her own lived experience, Georgia highlights the positive progress made through her collaboration with HCPC, including changes that mean disability disclosure no longer automatically triggers a fitness-to-practise process. You can read her full reflections here: [HCPC Re-registration Time: What's New, and What's Not?](#)



Disability rights expert Zara Todd appointed to lead new Independent Disability Advisory Panel

Disability rights expert Zara Todd to chair new Independent Disability Advisory Panel

Equity and inclusion consultant Zara Todd has been appointed Chair of the Government's new Independent Disability Advisory Panel, announced on 21 August 2025.

The panel will include up to 10 Deaf and disabled individuals, as well as those with long-term health conditions, ensuring that lived experience is central to shaping health and disability policy. Zara, with over 20 years' experience in disability equality, will lead its development and advise the Government directly.

She currently chairs the Edinburgh Accessibility Commission, is convener of Disability Equality Scotland, and serves on several advisory boards.

Recruitment for additional panel members will be launched soon on GOV.UK.

 [Read the full press release](#)

"Remember that everything AbleOTUK does is voluntary, so please bear this in mind if you ask for support or advice via email or social media."



We're excited to invite you to an AbleOTUK in-person meet-up at the V&A Museum in London on **Saturday, 13th December 2025**, to explore the *Disability and Design* exhibition together.

This is a great chance to connect with fellow members, discover inclusive design, and enjoy time together in a relaxed, creative space.

Meet-up details:

V&A Museum, South Kensington, London

Meet outside the museum at 11.00 am

Exhibition entry: Please book a ticket for 11.15 am or 11.30 am

Tickets: range from **free to £16**

Disabled visitors: free ticket + free companion/carer ticket

Book early as time slots sell out: [Book here](#)

Optional WhatsApp Group: Once you've booked, email us at ableotuk@gmail.com with your name and mobile number if you'd like to join the group chat about the day.

Spotlight on the Sociability App

The **Sociability app** helps disabled people find and share detailed accessibility information about places in their community – from step-free access and toilet availability to seating and noise levels. For people with lived experience of disability, this can make planning a day out easier, reduce uncertainty, and support fuller participation in social and occupational life.

AbleOTUK member Rachel Booth-Gardiner recently tested the app on a day out and reflected on how digital tools like this can act as **aids to occupation and belonging**.

Read Rachel's blog post here: [Apps as Aids to Occupation and Belonging – My Day Out with the Sociability App](#)



AbleOTUK Spotlight: RCOT EDB Insights Session

Event: Equity, Diversity and Belonging Insights: HCPC Standards

Date: Wednesday 1st October 2025

Time: 12:30–1:30pm

Platform: Online (Zoom)

This session introduces the new RCOT guide to help occupational therapists apply **HCPC Standard 5**, which requires us to practise in ways that are culturally responsive, non-discriminatory, and inclusive.

The session will provide an overview of:

- How our personal values, beliefs and assumptions can influence practice
- The importance of understanding and applying equality legislation
- Identifying and addressing barriers to access, inclusion and occupational justice
- Implementing and advocating for reasonable adjustments in practice

This event is relevant to all occupational therapists, regardless of their setting or specialism, and is designed to strengthen knowledge and commitment to equity, inclusion, and anti-discriminatory practice.

Speakers:

- Rachel Booth-Gardiner
- Savania China

Booking details:

This event is free for RCOT members and included in your membership.

Sign up here: [RCOT Event Page](#)

Opportunity for OT Students: Become an AccessAble Student Ambassador

AccessAble is inviting students to apply for their Student Ambassador programme. As an ambassador, you'll help raise awareness of accessibility on campus, promote inclusive design, and support fellow students with lived experiences of disability and health conditions.

This is a chance to:

Develop leadership, communication, and advocacy skills

Gain experience in disability awareness and accessibility campaigns

Make your university a more inclusive place

Connect with a network of like-minded students nationally

It's a great opportunity for Occupational Therapy students to strengthen skills that directly link to professional practice around access, inclusion, and occupational justice.

Find out more and apply here: [Become an AccessAble Student Ambassador](#)



AccessAble
Your Accessibility Guide

Celebrating a Huge Achievement for AbleOTUK!

We're thrilled to share that the very first issue of the brand-new journal *Human Occupation and Well-Being (HOWJ)* features an article by one of **AbleOTUK's founding members!**

The piece, "*Beyond Superpowers: Naming and Dismantling Ableism in Occupational Therapy Through the Lens of Lived Experience*", powerfully challenges the 'superpower' narrative of disability and calls on occupational therapists to actively dismantle ableism in practice, education, and professional structures.

This is a fantastic milestone for both the author and for AbleOTUK, showcasing how lived experience can shape, challenge, and inspire the future of our profession.

Read the article: [Beyond Superpowers](#)

Explore the journal: [Human Occupation and Well-Being](#)

OTalk Relaunches

Many of you will remember OTalk, the weekly Twitter chat that for years brought together occupational therapists, students, educators, and researchers from across the world. OTalk created a vibrant community of learning and support.

Now, OTalk is entering an exciting new partnership with RCOT and will be hosted on the RCOT Communities platform. This move means OTalk can continue to thrive in a more accessible and sustainable space, connecting even more OTs in meaningful conversations.

The first live chat will be on 30th September, led by Georgia Vine and Margaret Spencer – and you heard it here first in the AbleOTUK newsletter!

How to join: The first OTalk will be live on the RCOT Communities platform (members only) at 8pm on Tuesday, 30th September. Just log in, find the OTalk group, and join the discussion!