

AbleOTUK -Newsletter

Making It Easier to Connect with the AbleOTUK Support Network

We're changing the way you access our monthly support groups to make things simpler and more accessible.

From now on, you will no longer need to sign up via Eventbrite. Instead, all AbleOTUK members will automatically receive an email on the day of each support group with the Zoom link and joining details.

To respect everyone's privacy, we won't be sending formal calendar invites, as these can disclose email addresses to others. Instead, we encourage you to add the support group dates to your personal diary or calendar app to help you plan.

We hope this change makes it easier to join us, whether you attend every month or drop in when you need a listening ear.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please get in touch. We're always eager to improve the network for you.



July is Disability Pride Month – A Time to Be Visible and Valued

Disability Pride Month is a chance for us, as disabled occupational therapists and allies, to celebrate our identities, experiences and communities. It is not about being proud of the barriers we face, but of how we navigate them, challenge them, and push for a more inclusive and equitable world.

This month is an opportunity to reflect on the richness and diversity within our profession. Whether you are newly identifying as disabled, have lived experience over many years, or are exploring your relationship with health, impairment or neurodivergence, you are part of this community.



Support sessions 2025

We hold monthly networking/support sessions on the first Wednesday of each month. These sessions are open to all UK-based occupational therapists/students who identify as disabled or have a long-term health condition.

We respectfully ask that allies do not attend these sessions to allow a safe space for all participants.

Date for 2025

Wednesday 9th July

Wednesday 13th Aug

Wednesday 10th Sept

Wednesday 8th Oct

Wednesday 12th Nov

Wednesday 10th Dec

"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."



#BeAnAbleOTUKally

Too often, disability is framed only through deficit. Disability Pride Month reclaims that space, reminding us that being disabled is not something to hide or overcome, but something to live fully and proudly with.

We encourage you to:

- Share your stories, art, writing or reflections
- Celebrate the contributions of disabled people in occupational therapy
- Continue pushing for access, equity and visibility

If you feel comfortable, please share your Disability Pride on social media and tag @ableotuk on Instagram. Use the hashtag #BeAnAbleOTUKally to help amplify our voices and show your support.

If you'd like to contribute to the next newsletter or spotlight a disabled OT you admire, do get in touch.

Together, we are changing the narrative - not just in July, but every day.

Take Action: Say No to the Welfare Reform Bill

The Welfare Reform Bill will be debated in Parliament on **Tuesday, 1 July 2025**. Despite a recent government U-turn, the proposed changes still risk excluding future claimants from vital support and creating a two-tier system that may breach the Equality Act.

AbleOTUK has published an **open letter** calling for co-produced reform shaped by lived experience. We are urging all members to **sign the letter, contact their MP, and join the #TakingthePIP campaign** on social media.

Read the full letter and take action here:

[Open Letter from AbleOTUK - Opposing Cuts and Calling for Co-production](#)

Let's make sure occupational therapists with lived experience are heard.

RCOT Members' Day: Rolling Back into Connection

RCOT Members' Day 2025 brought occupational therapists together from across the UK to reflect, connect and share ideas for the future of the profession. It was a day full of thought-provoking sessions, meaningful conversations and a strong sense of community.

AbleOTUK member Rachel Booth-Gardiner has written a personal reflection on the event, including accessibility experiences, professional insights and highlights from the day.

Read Rachel's blog here:
[Rolling Back into Connection: Reflections on RCOT Members' Day, 17th June 2025](#)

Contact us

Do you have something you would like to share with the AbleOTUK community?

Email AbleOTUK@gmail.com

Instagram [@AbleOTs](#)

Website <https://affinot.co.uk/ableotuk/>

Newsletter put together by Rachel Booth-Gardiner.

Have your say on RCOT's revised Learning and Development Standards

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) has launched a consultation on its updated **Learning and Development Standards for pre-registration education**, open until **30 September 2025**.

These standards aim to shape how OT programmes are designed and delivered, with a renewed focus on:

- Embedding occupation-centred practice
- Equity, diversity and belonging
- Preparing students and apprentices for real-world practice

As disabled occupational therapists and allies, your lived experiences matter. Please take some time to reflect:

- Do these standards reflect your needs as a disabled person?
- Have your experiences of education or supervision been inclusive and accessible?
- Are your needs recognised within the support offered to learners, educators and practice educators?

You can read more and access the consultation here:
RCOT News Article: www.rcot.co.uk/latest-news/learning-and-development-standards

Consultation Document and Survey: rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/learning-and-development/consultation-learning-and-development-standards

Please make your voice heard; your insights are essential to ensuring that future standards reflect the diversity of our profession and the communities we serve.