

# Exploring occupational engagement following mild Stroke through the use of the Occupational Gaps Questionnaire

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## Introduction

When compared to their moderate to severe counterparts, people with mild stroke demonstrate less severe physical and cognitive impairments [1]. However, mild stroke still appears to have an impact on participation in life roles and everyday occupations, following hospital discharge [2-5].

It is difficult to identify how people with mild stroke may be impacted following hospital discharge, with many acute stroke assessment tools having ceiling effects for this population [6].

The Occupational Gaps Questionnaire (OGQ) may be a useful tool to identify the areas of life that are impacted for people with mild stroke, following hospital discharge, however, it is yet to be tested in the mild stroke population or within an Australian context [7-12].

## Purpose

To determine if the English version of the OGQ could be used to identify occupational gaps following mild stroke in the Australian context.

Three research questions were used to explore this aim:

- 1) What are the gaps that people in Australia with mild stroke identify?
- 2) How do people in Australia with mild stroke describe their occupational experiences & gaps?
- 3) What is the feasibility of the English translate OGQ in the Australian context?

## Participants

Description of participant characteristics.

Participant Number	Age* (years)	Gender	Stroke Type	Stroke Location	Time Points (months)	Living Circumstances	Employment
01	64	Male	Ischaemic	Left medial pontine	1 & 9	Home with partner	Full time work
02	40	Male	Ischaemic	Left thalamic	1	Home with partner and children	Full time work
03	48	Female	Ischaemic	Right capsular	1	Home with partner and child	Unemployed
04	65	Male	Ischaemic	Posterior left frontal	1	Lives alone; Discharged home to family	Retired
05	45	Male	Ischaemic	Left middle cerebral artery	1 & 9	Home with partner and children	Unemployed
06	57	Female	Ischaemic	Left cortical	9	Home with family	Unemployed
07	80	Male	Ischaemic	Right middle cerebral artery	9	Home with partner	Retired
08	73	Male	Ischaemic	Left thalamic	9	Home with partner	Retired
09	31	Male	Missing Data	Missing Data	1	Home with partner	Part time work
10	88	Female	Missing Data	Right pontine	1	Home with daughter	Retired

\*Mean age = 59.1 years

## Methods

- Cross-sectional mixed methods study - OGQ scores & qualitative comments
- Data obtained at 1- &/or 9- months post-discharge
- Descriptive statistics & inductive thematic analysis

## Quantitative Results

Occupations identified by more than one participant to have gaps at both time points.\*

1 month	9 months
Participating in outdoor activities (n=3, 43%)	Doing heavy-duty maintenance of home, garden, car (n=5, 100%)
Working (n=3, 43%)	Participating in outdoor activities (n=4, 80%)
Doing light home maintenance of home, garden, car (n=2, 29%)	Working (n=4, 80%)
Doing heavy-duty maintenance of home, garden, car (n=2, 29%)	Cleaning (n=3, 60%)
Participating/taking interest in sports (n=2, 29%)	Doing light home maintenance of home, garden, car (n=3, 60%)
Participating in cultural activities (n=2, 29%)	Doing laundry (n=2, 40%)
Studying (n=2, 29%)	Participating/taking interest in sports (n=2, 40%)
Performing voluntary work (n=2, 29%)	Helping and supporting others (n=2, 40%)
	Performing voluntary work (n=2, 40%)

## Qualitative Results

### Drivers of occupation

- Participants engaged in occupations due to a desire to make *connections* or they were highly *valued* and important for their wellbeing.

### Occupations can be challenged or enabled

- *External influences* or *personal factors* were seen to assist occupational engagement or create barriers to the completion of occupations.

### Feasibility of conducting the OGQ with people with mild stroke

- Completing the OGQ within a qualitative interview resulted in the results being richer than the yes/no answers provided when it is completed as a questionnaire.
- The interviewer supported participants to clarify responses, distinguishing between their current occupational situation and what they wanted.

## Take Home Messages

- The findings of this study support the feasibility of using the English version of the OGQ with people with mild stroke within the Australian context.
- Clinicians can use the OGQ to assess the areas in which people with mild stroke may need further assistance and can be utilised as an initial tool to ensure a broad range of occupational areas are covered.

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