Home Modification/Universal Design and Occupational Therapy

Scope

The purpose of the pathfinders created by the staff of the Wilma L. West Library is to provide occupational therapy practitioners and students, as well as consumers, starting points from which to begin to do research about a topic. A pathfinder is not a comprehensive listing of available resources but a guide to specific and reliable sources of information.

Introduction to the topic

“Home Modification refers to converting or adapting the environment to make tasks easier, reduce accidents, and support independent living. Examples of home modification include:

- Lever door handles that operate easily with a push
- Handrails on both sides of staircase and outside steps
- Ramps for accessible entry and exit
- Walk-in shower
- Grab bars in the shower, by the toilet, and by the tub
- Hand-held, flexible shower head
- Lever-handed faucets that are easy to turn on and off
- Sliding shelves and lazy susans in corner cabinet
- C or D ring handles on cabinet doors and drawers for easy gripping.

(Retrieved September 10, 2017 from https://www.homemods.org/directory/nrcshhm/aboutus/)

“Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. An environment (or any building, product, or service in that environment) should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to use it. This is not a special requirement, for the benefit of only a minority of the population. It is a fundamental condition of good design. If an environment is accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits. By considering the diverse needs and abilities of all throughout the design process, universal design creates products,
services and environments that meet peoples' needs.” (Retrieved on September 10, 2017 from http://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/)

Online databases

Eldercare locator

The Eldercare Locator is a nationwide service that connects older Americans and their caregivers with trustworthy local support resources. Since 1991, the Eldercare Locator has been linking those who need assistance with state and local agencies on aging, as well as community-based organizations that serve older adults and their caregivers. Whether help is needed with services such as meals, home care or transportation, or a caregiver needs training and education or a well-deserved break from caregiving responsibilities, the Eldercare Locator is there to point that person in the right direction.

The Eldercare Locator is a public service of the Administration on Aging (AoA), an agency of the U.S. Administration for Community Living.

AbleData

AbleData provides objective information on assistive technology and rehabilitation equipment available from domestic and international sources to consumers, organizations, professionals, and caregivers within the United States. We serve the nation’s disability, rehabilitation, and senior communities.

MEDLINE Plus®

MedlinePlus is the National Institutes of Health's Web site for patients and their families and friends. Produced by the National Library of Medicine, it brings you information about diseases, conditions, and wellness issues in language you can understand. MedlinePlus offers reliable, up-to-date health information, anytime, anywhere, for free.

REHABDATA database

REHABDATA, produced by the National Rehabilitation Information Center, is the leading literature database on disability and rehabilitation. The database describes over 70,000 documents covering physical, mental, and psychiatric disabilities, independent living, vocational rehabilitation, special education, assistive technology, law, employment, and other issues as they relate to people with disabilities. The collection spans 1956 to the present.

Reference resources (print and electronic)


**Associations, Foundations, and Organizations**

*Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA)*

*Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access (CATEA)*

*Institute for Human Centered Design*

*The Center for Universal Design*

*National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification*

**Image, video or podcasts**

Aging in place in the home – Vital Living Forum (video)

OT in Home Modification (video)

**American Occupational Therapy Association/American Occupational Therapy Foundation**

**Official Papers**


**Fact sheets**


**Tips for Living**

Remaining in your home as you age (2011)

Helping your older parent remain at home (2011)
Specialty certification

AOTA Specialty Certification in Environmental Modification

Publications


Selected Articles on the role of occupational therapy


Reviewed and Updated September 2017