

## Domestic Violence & OT: A Survey of Practitioner Experiences, Knowledge, & Attitudes

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**PURPOSE:** One-third of women and one-fifth of men experience domestic violence (DV). During the COVID-19 pandemic, DV rates increased by 18-33% making it a clinical and research priority. AOTA asserted occupational therapy practitioners' (OTPs) role in working with DV survivors, but OTPs overwhelmingly report a lack of confidence in working with DV survivors. This study aims to evaluate OTPs' experience, knowledge, and attitudes in DV.

**DESIGN:** Cross-sectional survey design.

**METHOD:** DV-related experience, knowledge, and attitudes. Inclusion criteria required participants to be U.S.-based, currently registered, and licensed as OTR/L or COTA, and be 18 years old or more. We disseminated an online survey using convenient sampling. Inclusion criteria required participants to be U.S.-based, currently registered, and licensed as OTR/L or COTA, and be 18 years old or more. Linear regression was performed to examine relationships between DV experience, knowledge, and attitudes for OTPs with different years of experience, practice setting, and training.

**RESULTS:** Fifty-seven OTAs and 256 OTs completed the survey. DV knowledge results suggest that academic settings expose OTs and OT students to more DV education compared to other practice settings. Victim-blaming attitude results illustrate the importance of DV education in developing trauma-informed OT clinicians. All three attitude results suggest that OTPs' DV-related job requirements significantly impact both how they view their role and their ability to treat DV survivors in practice.

**CONCLUSION:** This is the first survey to compare OTAs and OTs in the US on the factors that impact their DV knowledge and attitudes. Results clearly indicate a need for training to increase DV knowledge and role competence among OTPs. Healthcare institutions have the power and responsibility to model and create practice requirements that enable and train OTPs to treat DV survivors.

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