

Hello,

Welcome to **Week 14 MSCOS**. Please check out this week's news, features and of course, our online pages and moderated [discussion forums](#), where you can post anonymously – we need YOUR perspectives on practice so get scribbling!

You can also find our previous weekly updates [here](#). All our weekly updates are best viewed on desktop versus mobile ☺

This week we would like to thank [Kezia Llewelyn, Associate Lecturer in Occupational Therapy at Brunel University](#) and [Dr. Nicola Wright, Associate Professor in Mental Health, School of Health Sciences, University of Nottingham](#) for explaining their work to us in the context of the MSCOS.

Also, to [The Baobab Centre](#), for their excellent multi-disciplinary event to discuss UK asylum age assessment processes. Look out for our forthcoming [MSCOS online expert forum](#) on young people!

Please scroll down to sign up for the [launch event for the 2nd International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council \(ISTAC\)](#).

[THIS WEEK'S FEATURE](#)



[Access to medical treatment](#)



We think the MSCOS Community of Practice will benefit from understanding the value of **Occupational Therapy**: how it can work in a practical way for survivors of trafficking/modern slavery, and can complement, or run in parallel with other forms of care for health and well-being.

[Kezia Llewelyn, Associate Lecturer in Occupational Therapy at Brunel University, London, says:](#)

“In my experience of working with survivors of human trafficking/modern slavery in a safehouse, Occupational Therapy has a great deal to offer. I would like it to become far better known across all of the disciplines in the anti-trafficking sector, and to see it embedded in healthcare practices and survivor support services offered within, and outside of the National Referral Mechanism.

Occupational Therapy supports people to engage in meaningful activities, with an emphasis on promoting purpose, independence and improving health and well-being. Having an OT's perspective examines how an individual engages in occupations, builds identity, seeks satisfaction and autonomy, as well as promoting the importance of habits, routines and choices that lead to increased health and well-being. These all help build an individual's ability to be empowered and take control over their own life. It can enable survivors to rebuild their lives, enhancing their independence and finding purpose again to live a meaningful life following exploitation.

Occupational therapy fosters an emphasis on several key areas:

- **Activities of daily living:** which could include – Functional Mobility
-

- **Instrumental activities of daily living**, for example, meal preparation, money management
- **Leisure**: what we might do in our free time and for fun, such as photography or swimming
- **Work / Education**: Learning English, vocational skills - volunteering, gainful employment
- **Social participation**: Interactions with others, communities and social network
- **Health management**: social and emotional health promotion and maintenance, symptom and condition education and management
- **Rest and sleep**: sleep preparation and participation. Sleep management and hygiene techniques, along with exploring the environment to support participating in sleep.

OTs used formal standardized and non-standardized assessments to gather information. These assessments are extremely valuable in recognising potential barriers to service user's participation in the above key areas. Along with goal setting and providing graded and adapted interventions to support service users engage in the key areas of living. All of these areas are core elements that contribute to our overall health and wellbeing and satisfaction in life."



The **Royal College of Occupational Therapists** have a monthly paper called [OT News](#) – This is where you can find more information and supporting evidence on the significant role of OTs. For specific information on Occupational Therapy in relation to supporting survivors of human trafficking/modern slavery, see: [OT News - Occupational](#)

[Therapy and Human trafficking Article](#) (for members only)



Occupational Therapists (OTs) are health care professionals who have completed their degree and are registered under The Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC). They have the knowledge and skill set to support people with physical, cognitive and mental health

challenges.

OTs working in the anti-trafficking sector is an emerging role. They currently work in a wide range of settings using evidence based and clinical reasoning to conduct interventions. They work in multidisciplinary teams within the health care system and have a holistic, client centered viewpoint, treating the whole person, including awareness of cultural sensitivity and a trauma informed approach.



Finding purpose in life and self-actualisation

Project team: University of Nottingham, Survivor Alliance, University of Manchester, Kings College London

Funded by: National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)

Finding Purpose in Life and Self-Actualisation was highly significant for survivors who participated in the original MSCOS academic study. We selected it for our first online forum on 17 May. Rather than a 'final outcome' to be achieved after all other needs are met, it represents the fundamental basis of recovery, well-being and integration, requiring the awareness of professionals from the outset.



Dr Nicola Wright, Associate Professor in Mental Health, School of Health Sciences, University of Nottingham, explains the MOMENTS studies as follows:

"Recovery is a subjective experience that refers to people being supported to live as well as possible..."

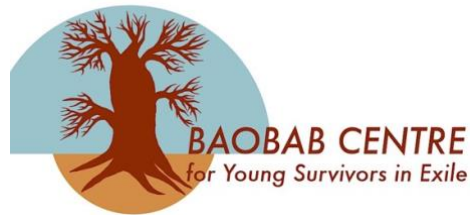
A particular challenge is the concept of recovery for survivors of human trafficking/modern slavery; how it is defined and therefore how it is promoted. In the context of the MOMENTS (*MODern slavery MENTAL health with Survivors*) studies, recovery has three core features:

1. It is not synonymous with cure;
2. The lived experience/survivor perspective is prioritised over the clinical or professional viewpoint; and
3. Strengths, assets and goals are prioritised over deficits.

The MOMENTS studies aimed to explore initially what recovery meant to survivors of modern slavery and then to gain consensus on the core components of recovery across different stakeholder groups. To achieve this, we first undertook a qualitative interview study with 36 survivors to explore with them what mental health recovery meant to them; second, we used the data from the interviews to develop an online Delphi survey to identify with 5 stakeholder groups (survivors, policymakers, NGO professionals, health and social care workers and academics) what the core components of recovery are in the anti-slavery context.

Findings from the interview study demonstrate that survivor experiences and desires in relation to recovery align with existing models in mental health. For example, being connected to others and communities, having hope for the future and developing a new sense of identity. **However, unlike other groups, survivors identified that safety was also important in terms of physical safety, structural safety and developing safe relationships with others.**

The MOMENTS studies address an unmet need in anti-slavery policy and practice in terms of conceptualising recovery. Whilst there are similarities to recovery in other contexts and populations, the studies highlight features which are unique to survivors of modern slavery, for example the emphasis on agency, autonomy and safety. **If used, the findings from the two studies can guide policy and practice to ensure it is evidence based and relevant to the specific needs of survivors.”**



We attended a talk by [The Baobab Centre](#) this week, which focussed on UK asylum age assessment processes, their planned evolution, and the best interests of children.

Introduced and chaired by [Sheila Melzak](#), Director of the Baobab Centre for Young Survivors in Exile, this event included presentations by:

- [Professor Tim Cole](#) (UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health), member of the Home Office Age Estimation Scientific Advisory Committee;
- [Nick Lessof](#) (NHS), paediatrician working as Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children in North-East London; and
- [Syd Bolton](#) (Methoria), (non-practising) solicitor and a co-founder of the UK charity Methoria.

All the speakers explained the dangers of solely relying on bio-technology to conduct age assessments, which were described as resulting in the exclusion of vulnerable children from appropriate care and support. There was discussion states' responsibility in safeguarding children, issues of informed consent, and how age assessments can fail to take the best interests of children as the starting point.



[Launch event for the 2nd International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council \(ISTAC\)](#)

We are big fans of ISTAC, which represents the possibilities of Survivor Leadership on an international scale! Please do sign up for this launch event on 21 June.

The official inauguration of the 2nd cohort of the International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Board (ISTAC), consisting of 21 prominent human trafficking survivor leaders from across the OSCE region.

ISTAC assists ODIHR's work in combatting trafficking in human beings and it is set up with due attention to diversity in terms of professional experience, gender and crosscutting regional representation. Its 2nd cohort is appointed for a two-year term, 2023-2025.

The online launch event will introduce newly appointed ISTAC members and provide an overview of ISTAC accomplishments during the inaugural term, including the presentation of the Code of Practice for Ensuring the Rights of Victims and Survivors of Human Trafficking. The event aims to inform and promote exchange of information and views among OSCE delegations, international experts, civil society and survivors of trafficking on the importance of including and promoting the voices of survivors in all matters related to combating human trafficking.

If you are interested in attending this online session, you can find more information and the link to sign up [here](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

If you've joined our mailing list recently, over the last 13 weeks we have covered a variety of outcomes, highlighting best practice models and frameworks. You can access them all [here](#).

Please forward MSCOS to any colleagues or network connections that you think may be interested in our work, and they can sign up to receive newsletter invites via our contact form [here](#), or by direct email to mscos@kcl.ac.uk.

The MSCOS Community of Practice content is designed and directed by Queenie Sit and Rachel Witkin.



[Working with core outcomes as a set](#)



[Secure & suitable housing](#)



[Safety from any trafficker or other abuser](#)



[Long-term, consistent support](#)



[Trauma-informed services](#)



[Finding purpose in life and self-actualisation](#)



[Access to medical treatment](#)



[Access to education](#)