

Closing Keynote Address

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RESEARCH ROUND-UP 1981-2011

As we close the conference and reflect on the leadership and learning shared, I can't help reflecting on the very first national conference I attended about 30 years ago. We talked about research, but you could count the number of research papers on one hand; we looked for research leadership, but there were a only couple of PhD qualified occupational therapists in Australia; and we recommended research training, but only one, perhaps two, of the five occupational therapy schools in the country offered PhD programs! Now in 2011 – how stark the contrast! A conference with research papers by the dozen, a profession with PhD programs, graduates and supervisors, and a knowledge base expanding through multidisciplinary and specialist publications and programs! What a generational change! This presentation will share the pride and excitement I feel reflecting on the extraordinary achievements in research made by occupational therapy since 1981. I'll highlight what has been and what remains to be done in the following: research training, mentoring and succession planning; research funding, resources and infrastructure; research agendas, priorities and relevance; research rewards and responsibilities; and, research policy, performance and personnel. This 'round-up' will round-off a conference where, 30 years on, research is not only a topic of discussion but the language of debate.