

Classen, S., Lopez, E. D. S., & Winter, S. Meta-synthesis of qualitative studies on older driver safety and mobility. Accepted for Publication in: *OTJR: Occupation, Participation and Health*.

Abstract

A meta-synthesis approach was used to identify, assess and synthesize six qualitative studies on older driver safety and community mobility. Included studies had rich narrative results and thematic findings on older adults' and stakeholders' needs, factors influencing safety, and their goals. Using ATLAS.ti, we performed iterative data analysis, coded deductively and inductively, and developed themes from the constant comparison method. A core construct emerged: older adults' driving ability is innately connected to their identities and desire to maintain their independence. The five overarching themes -- assessing risk, acceptance versus denial, cessation beliefs, communication, and involved others -- inform occupational therapy clinicians and researchers of opportunities for role expansion. The findings point to underlying beliefs that influence decision-making and driving safety that can be explored using qualitative, survey, or experimental studies. Furthermore, these findings may facilitate changes in occupational therapy practice such as enhancing driver evaluations.