



Abstracts

AOTI CONFERENCE 2017

ASSOCIATION OF OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPISTS OF IRELAND

Looking Back, Moving Forward

Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Limerick
April 21st & 22nd 2017

Development of a Guidance Document for Primary Care Occupational Therapists working with clients with dementia.

Orla Shannon, Lisa MacDonnell and Joanne Nihill

Background:

Limerick primary care occupational therapists (OTs) identified an increasing amount of referrals for people with dementia and a need to streamline the service provided.

Methods/Intervention:

A group of seven primary care OTs was formed to develop a guidance document for the service. NICE guidelines were researched and the Alzheimer's Society and therapists working in other services throughout the country were contacted to determine clinical practice in other areas. Subgroups were formed to examine the diagnosis of dementia and impact on function, assessment (formal and informal) and intervention with this client group.

Outcomes:

A streamlined process of formal and informal assessment of this client group was suggested, trialled and presented to the department. Small changes to the departmental initial assessment form were made to prompt if further cognitive assessment was required. Occupational therapy (OT) intervention with these clients was examined and broken down into different categories in accordance with the NICE guidelines. Under these categories a number of interventions were researched and information booklets were devised specific to each intervention and available as a clinical resource for therapists. There is a more efficient feedback mechanism to doctor/consultant on outcome of OT assessment and intervention.

Implications:

Primary care OTs have a comprehensive resource to reference and use when working with clients with dementia and their families/carers. This resource is founded on evidence-based practice. Therapists can access and use more specific interventions (for example, home-based memory programme for clients with early-stage dementia and insight into their deficits). Areas for further development include auditing the use of and satisfaction with the guidance document and the effect on clients and practice.

Learning Objectives:

- Gain an overview of a service development initiative in Limerick primary, community and continuing care.
- Increase knowledge and understanding of a variety of assessment and intervention strategies for primary care therapists working with people with dementia and their families/carers.

“Ageing Well” – Occupational Therapy in a community population based health promotion project

Olivia Wall, Triona Twomey and Sarah Doherty

Background:

As part of the Cork Integrated Falls service there was a need for community prevention based interventions for adults regarding health and well being. An 8 week pilot community group was advertised in August 2016, which commenced in October 2016. The group was entitled “Ageing Well” and material used was obtained from the Well Elderly study (Jackson et al, 1998) and from Lifestyle Matters (Craig & Mountain, 2007).

Methods/Intervention:

An 8 week group was delivered to community dwelling people, aged 50+ for two months in 2016. The group was delivered in a local library in Cork city. 55 people from Cork city and suburbs signed up for the group. The 8 week group content included links with activity and health and well being, falls prevention, overcoming loneliness and a planned outing to a local Cork museum. The programme was delivered by two Occupational Therapists in Cork city. Client satisfaction was measured through the use of pre and post questionnaires regarding knowledge and confidence with daily activities in their locality.

Outcomes:

Clients reported an increase in their knowledge and confidence with regards to their physical and mental health in their own community. They also rated that their confidence engaging in community activities had increased as a result of attending the 8 week course.

Implications:

Occupational Therapists have traditionally looked at individual client centred practice rather than population based health and well being. The principles of links between activity and health/well-being can successfully be carried out in a community setting with well older adults to encourage health promotion.

Learning Objectives:

- Delegates will have an increased understanding of what occupational therapists in primary care settings can practically do to actively engage in community health promotion.
- Delegates will have an opportunity to hear the feedback from an 8 week urban group that was conducted by Occupational Therapists in Cork city.
- Delegates will be more aware of the different strands of the Cork Integrated Falls Service (e.g.: community based falls risk assessment clinics, community based groups for well elderly clients, specialist falls service) and how the service is integrated together in Cork city and county.

What is the driving assessment process utilised by occupational therapists for elderly people living in community in the South East of Ireland?

Mukesh Gandhi

Background

In contemporary Ireland, driving is an essential occupation that enables the individual to engage in activities such as shopping, working, dining out, attending church, socialising and participating in community activities. Within Ireland, the introduction of *Sláinte agus Tiomáint* guidelines (2014) means that the driving assessment process is becoming more formalised. In particular, the occupational therapists role in driving assessment of elderly people, frail elderly people or post illness is an emerging area of practice.

Method/Intervention

A qualitative methodology was used to explore current driving assessment process. Five occupational therapy practitioners working in variety of settings such as acute care, rehabilitation and community were interviewed. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, recorded, transcribed and analysed through the process of thematic analysis.

Outcomes

Two major themes emerged are 'Comprehensive driving assessment' and 'Looking for the bigger picture'. Subthemes emerged representing the complex nature of the driving assessment process and factors which occupational therapists considered to carry out driving assessment. Findings of the study highlighted the importance of an occupation-based approach to on-road driving assessment.

Implications

This is the first study in Ireland that detailed the process utilised by occupational therapists for driving assessment. This study highlighted that there is no uniformity in using the standardised tools for driving assessment process due to the lack of guidelines. The study demonstrated that the comprehensive assessment by occupational therapist (off-road, on-road driving assessment, functional assessment and liaison with health professionals) could assist consultant/general physician's decision to return to driving or to stop driving.

Learning Objectives

This presentation would enhance participant's ability to understand driving assessment process, factors needs to be considered during driving assessment process and the benefits of comprehensive assessment for decision making.

Friendship Characteristics of adolescent girls with Autism spectrum disorders.

Christian Ryan, Maeve Coughlan, Jean Maher, Patricia Vicario,

Background

Girls with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are a neglected group in research and practice (Shefcyk, 2015). Social difficulties are a key feature of ASD. Many children with ASD experience difficulties in developing and maintaining friendships. Research documents parents' perspectives of their children's friendships however the children's self-perception are not accounted for.

The lack of knowledge about the female profile in ASD risks inappropriate interventions for this population (Kirkovski, Enticott & Fitzgerald, 2013). Having insight into girls with ASD concepts of friendship will help develop more appropriate interventions, responsive to their needs.

Methods

Qualitative Study with ethical approved from Cope Foundations Ethics Committee A focus group involving 6 girls aged 13 to 15 years with a diagnosis of ASD was facilitated. Further demographic data was collected (*CAPE/PAC etc). An inductive approach to thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. In a series of face to face meeting, all authors collapsed and refined similar themes.

Results

Write up is currently in progress. Primary themes are summarised below:

- Establishing friendships; qualities and conflicts
- Occupations and leisure interests as a context for friendships
- Friendship as a continuum
- Context of friendship
- Gender differences

Conclusion

- Friendship is grounded in meaningful activities and is the context for establishing and maintaining positive peer relationships.
- Parents' perceptions in research to date vary considerably and are not representative of the girls' personal experiences.
- Teenage girls with ASD demonstrated self-awareness consistent with their typically developing peers in relation to friendships.

Learning Objectives

- To establish the girl's pre-existing ideas about friendship and activity involvement so as to plan interventions for this population.
- To expand the literature surrounding girls with ASD by giving girls a voice in researches.

The upper limb stretching songs: feedback on the effectiveness of a joint OT and music therapy programme in acute paediatric neurosciences.

Ms. Sarah Governey & Ms. Alison Sweeney

Background

Upper limb stretching programmes are often recommended by Occupational Therapists (OTs) to reduce the risk of contractures in children. OTs and Music Therapists (MTs) can work jointly to enable occupation in various settings including while in hospital. This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of a joint OT and MT programme designed to facilitate upper limb stretching with children in acute neurosciences.

Method/Intervention

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to gather parents' experience of completing the 'Upper Limb (UL) stretching songs' with their child through self-developed questionnaires. The research was approved by the Temple Street Children's Hospital Research and Ethics committee.

Outcomes

Questionnaires gathering feedback about the experience of using the 'UL stretching songs' were sent to 8 parents and were returned by a total of 4 respondents (50% response-rate). The children ranged from 8 months to 5 years and presented with acquired brain injuries or a brain tumour. Parents gave positive feedback about the programme with the mean score of effectiveness being 9 out of a possible 10. Themes highlighted that the songs provided an improved sense of control for the child and increased fun and enjoyment in an otherwise challenging activity.

Implications

The 'UL stretching songs' present as an innovative multidisciplinary tool to facilitate stretching programmes reducing anxiety and distress and increasing control and fun according to parents surveyed. It is recommended these songs are implemented to a wider group of children with extra supports and a visual aid is developed and further evaluation with a larger sample.

Learning Objectives

- Delegates will learn what the 'UL stretching songs' are, how they were developed and how they facilitate an upper limb stretching programme.
- Delegates will gain an understanding of the research methodologies used to gather parental feedback on this novel initiative
- Delegates will become aware of the plans for future developments and how this can relate to their professional practice and setting

The development of occupational therapy in Grangegorman Psychiatric Hospital, Dublin: 1930 – 1960,

Rebecca Cahill and Judith Pettigrew

Background

The history of occupational therapy has been documented internationally in countries such as the United States (Quiroga 1995) and the United Kingdom (Wilcock 2002). As part of ongoing research exploring its history in Ireland (Pettigrew *et al.* forthcoming), this study maps occupational therapy's development in Grangegorman Hospital (Ireland's first public psychiatric hospital) from the pre-professional era (1930s) through to the beginnings of the professional era (1960s).

Method

Historical documentary research methods were used to analyse primary source data from Grangegorman Committee Minutes, Inspector of Mental Hospital Reports, Boroughs of Mental Hospitals, Foreign Affairs documents and newspaper archives.

Results

An occupational therapy department was established in Grangegorman in 1935 by nursing staff who had undergone a six month training course in Cardiff. Staff promoted patients' engagement in handicraft activities as a means of diversion, but also to engage individual interests and skills. These nurses became founding members of the Irish Occupational Therapy Association (IOTA) in 1951 and this paper also discusses the tensions between this (now defunct) organisation and the professionally qualified occupational therapists who formed AOTI a decade later.

Conclusion

This study illustrates the pre-professional development of occupational therapy in Grangegorman Hospital. It identifies that the work had therapeutic underpinnings, although they were comparatively limited to those underpinning professionally qualified occupational therapy. This paper also illustrates the overlap between pre-professional and professional occupational therapy.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will gain knowledge about early mental health occupational therapy practice in Ireland.
- Participants will gain insight into the tensions between IOTA and professionally qualified occupational therapists.

Recovery Through Activity: A feasibility pilot study in the West of Ireland.

Clair Harte and Miriam Noonan

Background

The Recovery Approach emphasizes the importance of empowering people to be active participants in their recovery and communities. 'Recovery Through Activity' was developed by Sue Parkinson and is grounded in the Model of Human Occupation. This study explores the experiences and potential benefits of attending a 'Recovery Through Activity' group in a rural setting.

Method/Intervention

A mixed methods approach was employed for this study. Ethical approval was granted from Galway University Hospital.

Convenience sampling was used to recruit participants. Pre & post group participants completed:

- The Activity Checklist
- Occupational Self-Assessment

Qualitative data was gathered via focus group.

Outcomes

Six adults participated. Analysis of qualitative data yielded the following themes:

- Extrinsic to intrinsic motivation
- Experiential learning
- Participation/Group experiences

Improvements in the OSA were noted from pre to post test, however this was not statistically significant due to the sample size

Implications

Qualitative outcomes indicate there are benefits to attending a 'Recovery through Activity' group. The significance of having a high proportion of activity based group sessions was recurrently noted throughout the data and this would guide facilitation of a similar group in the future.

Learning Objectives

Practicalities of running a 'Recovery through Activity Group'

- Appropriate outcome measures
- Completing qualitative research through use of a focus group

Job Club: A group approach to job skills incorporating an Independent Placement Support framework

Niamh McDonagh and Esther Crowe Mullins,

Background:

The opportunities for a person with severe/enduring mental health needs to engage in meaningful paid employment are limited. The importance of the vocational role is highlighted in Recovery Model literature. While a 1:1 approach between the OT and Employment Specialist had been used previously, a group approach had not been trialled.

Method/Intervention:

A 6 week job skills group was run for clients with severe/enduring mental health needs. This was co-facilitated by an OT and an Employment Specialist whose role was funded by the National Mental Health Services Reform under the GENIO project. The Worker Role Interview (WRI) was completed with each group member to explore their motivation and skills in relation to working and environmental benefits and limitations. The topics covered included client and employer's expectation of work, benefits of working; financial implications of work, obtaining work, matching skills with interests and social skills when working.

Outcomes:

7 Service users completed the programme. WRI was completed with each service user before and after the programme. Client understanding of the employment process and confidence in obtaining and maintaining employment as well as the financial implications of work were compared before and after the group session.

Implications:

1. The benefits of collaboration between Occupational Therapy and Employment specialists when working with clients exploring engagement in the workforce
2. Using a group approach to explore common skills and work related queries with clients with severe/enduring mental health needs
3. Using an occupation focused tool to assess subjective and objective experience of the Job Skills group

Deepening the roots of Occupational Therapy practice education: Moving theory forward into competent clinical practice – issues and strategies

Fiona McDonald, Tina McGrath,

Background

Practice Education is a core component of occupational therapy training. Fieldwork placement provides important opportunities to consolidate curriculum-based teaching and learning experiences. This process facilitates students to integrate theory with practice, encouraging the deep roots necessary for the development of strong professional identity and competent occupational therapy practice. Clinical education is a complex aspect of Occupational Therapy education, requiring specialised teaching and learning skills.

Method

The particular challenges of supporting students to integrate theory with practice are explored with examples of typical issues that arise for students whilst on clinical placement.

Results

Useful teaching and learning methodologies specific to practice education are outlined. Practical strategies to assist students on placement to develop their clinical reasoning skills are presented.

Conclusion

Practice Educators will gain specialist knowledge and practical skills that will support their important role in the placement-based education of occupational therapy students.

Learning Objectives

- Gain deeper understanding and appreciation of the specialist teaching and learning issues for students in the practice education experience
- Enhance useful knowledge of strategies and methods to support students with the complex task of integrating theory with practice.

Exploring the Lived Experience of the Transition to Retirement from an Occupational Perspective

Iseult Harding, Laura Power and John Hastings

Background:

Retirement is a significant transition and life stage, with the number of years spent in retirement increasing. Retirement is a multi-dimensional and unique occupational transition that creates significant changes in an individual's occupational life. The aim of the study was to gain insight into the lived experience of the transition to retirement, from an occupational perspective within an Irish context.

Method:

Ethical approval was granted for the study. The study was qualitative in nature using a phenomenological approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and demographic surveys. Data analysis included verbatim transcription with open and axial coding. Thematic data analysis was used with the constant comparative method to capture categories and themes.

Results:

Eight people were interviewed ranging in age from 48-years to 67-years. All had retired in the previous three years. Four core themes that illustrate retirement as a multi-faceted and subjective life transition emerged: a) factors influencing retirement, b) the structuring of time, c) transforming occupational identity, and d) the social context surrounding the transition to retirement.

Conclusion:

Findings propose that the transition to retirement alters a person's occupational identity, owed to the transformation of a person's occupational engagement, temporal structure and environments. This study illuminates the role that Occupational Therapy is equipped to play in enabling a person prepare for a meaningful retirement e

Learning Objectives:

Explore:

- The transition to retirement in an Irish context.
- How retirement influences one's occupational life.
- Occupational Therapy's role in the transition to retirement.

Exploring retirement as an occupational transition amongst retired women who are primary and secondary school teachers in Ireland.

Martha Hume, Claire Considine, Leah Moran and Dr. Clodagh Nolan

Background:

The Irish population is ageing at a rapid rate with one in five Irish people expected to be over the age of 65 by 2030. Retirement is expected to be experienced by more people and for a longer duration of time. Therefore it is essential that we explore retirement as a life stage in better understand what influences it. This paper aims to explore the life transition of women teachers into retirement.

Method:

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach using semi-structured interviews. Participants were recruited using purposeful sampling through the main retirement teachers associations. Ethical approval was granted from the School of Medicine at Trinity College Dublin. Data was analysed using Braun's and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis.

Results:

Seven individuals consented to participate in the study and all were retired between 1 and 4 years. Four main themes emerged from the data: 1: "Who am I?" This theme captures the battles of transitioning to retirement 2: 'The Freedom, Just the Freedom' relates to how these women enjoyed their new freedom. 3: 'The girls' relates to the importance of staying connected and ensuring young people are still part of their lives. 4: 'What do I do now?' relates to how these women prepared for retirement and how they now fill and structure their time.

Conclusion:

Adjustment to change is easier when individuals are supported to pattern time effectively – the participants in this study found structure and female social support as being critical to their success in transitioning into retirement.

Learning Objectives:

1. Factors that enable and hinder women teachers' transition to retirement.
2. Issues facing women in building their capacity for retirement.

Ann Beckett Award Winners – A review

Andrew Semple and Jennifer O'Mahony

Background

The Ann Beckett Award Committee is a sub-committee of the AOTI with a purpose to showcase interventions that demonstrate core principals of Occupational Therapy. This annual award has been presented each year since 2004 at the AOTI annual conference and is the most prestigious award given in Occupational Therapy in Ireland.

Method

The winners of the Ann Beckett Award will be discussed under the following headings: empowerment of clients; clients' enjoyment; outcomes for clients; involvement of clients; fostering integration and community awareness; sustainability of the intervention; originality; promotion of occupational therapy; educational value for occupational therapists; relevance to occupational therapy principles.

Results

The winning entries highlight trends in innovative, practical Occupational Therapy intervention, over a wide range of settings. This presentation will emphasise the diversity of effective Occupational Therapy intervention, and display the practical skill set of Occupational Therapy practitioners over an eleven year period.

Conclusion

There is much to be admired in the practical skill set of current Occupational Therapy practitioners. This presentation will give a unique perspective of Occupational Therapy intervention. It demonstrates the diversity of the profession, while underlining the core principles which make Occupational Therapy such a powerful and unique treatment medium.

Learning objectives

Through shedding light on the innovative, practical work of Occupational Therapists in Ireland, an opportunity is provided for practitioners to reflect on their own work. In considering award winning Occupational Therapy projects, practitioners may be inspired to incorporate more fully into their own practice these core principles of Occupational Therapy, thus advancing the profession.

Ann Beckett Award Winners 2016: Discover/Recover Theatre Project and Mental Health Schools Workshops

Mairead Connaughton, Paula Lowney and Niall O'Muirí

The Occupational Therapy Department within the Wexford Adult Mental Health Services embarked on a project to create a forum for the sharing of local individuals stories with lived experience of mental health difficulties both from a therapeutic view point but also as a means of using the medium of storytelling to reduce stigma, increase awareness in relation to mental health difficulties, and to promote help seeking. The outcome of these workshops was a play, based on the stories, written by Niall O'Muirí, a Community Psychiatric Nurse entitled **"A Face in the Crowd"**. The play was performed over four sell out performances in the Wexford Arts Centre between December 2015 and January 2016.

The stories told in "A Face in the Crowd" had a powerful educational function, and following consultation with a group of teens, it was clear that there was value in establishing a model that could be applied to a greater number young people. And so began the development and Pilot of the Discover/Recover Workshop Series. Throughout its development we were aware of the accessibility and educational potential of medium of drama and story-telling, in particular in relation to increasing understanding of the complex nature of mental health difficulties and exploring strategies to manage their own wellness.

In November 2016 we offered an adaptation of the project in the form of a

1. Professional drama piece performed live (approximately 50mins duration).
2. Supported by mental health education workshop and printed materials based on the drama content delivered by mental health professionals (approximately 30mins duration).

Following an extensive pilot that incorporated consultation, focus groups, developing and trialling the content in video format, workshops with young people following live performances of "A Face in the Crowd" in a number of local Secondary Schools, we are pleased to report that, based on robust evaluations from over 250 students that this project had ability to:

- Facilitate learning in relation to mental health difficulties.
- Raise awareness in relation to mental health difficulties and recovery in a safe and meaningful way.
- Promote the concept and role of seeking relevant supports to recover from mental health challenges and crisis.

The model of engaging with the stories at a live professional theatre performance followed by an opportunity to attend a mental health education session/workshop has great potential. The stories explored in "A Face in the Crowd" and the educational potential of these could have far reaching benefits. We believe there is value in reaching out to other communities in Ireland, enabling people from all walks of life, young and old, to engage with the material. We feel the stories, the themes and learning opportunities are transferrable nationwide.

“Building your knowledge towards Best Practice when working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender clients in all areas of Occupational Therapy practice”.

Mark Brown, Odhran Allen, Jane Freeman, Vanessa Jordan, Niall Kirrane.

Based on research data, it is estimated that approximately 1 in 10 Irish people identify as LGBT – this means that 1 in 10 of *every* OTs clients are likely to identify as LGBT. *Why is this important?*

While a client-centred occupational therapy approach with LGBT clients will primarily focus on the person’s health condition or occupational difficulties, it should also recognise and respond to any LGBT-related needs. This workshop aims to assist OTs in understanding issues affecting LGBT people, and how and why these are relevant to our professional practice in all clinical areas. Learning will take place through an overview presentation of research, language, and concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity. We will introduce guidelines for best practice when dealing with LGBT clients, and how we can integrate these guidelines into our daily practice, and build a framework for LGBT inclusion in our services. Participants will then learn how to apply this knowledge using some sample case scenarios.

The emergence of a Hand Function Clinic in Limerick Primary Care service

Maria Escueta

Background

There are no existing hand therapy services within the Midwest area. A high number of Primary Care OT referrals relating to hand function were received. In response to this demand, a number of therapists up skilled in the area of hand function assessment and intervention. To make this a systematic process in Limerick PCCC, we developed a pathway and evidence based protocols to streamline referrals relating to hand function.

Method/Intervention

The Hand Function clinic aims to provide an intensive, clinic based Occupational Therapy service for clients experiencing hand function difficulties. The service aims to assess the impact of specific hand disorders on a person's ability to manage their ADL's. The intervention primarily aims to maintain and/or improve a client's participation in meaningful roles, tasks, and activities and provide education and support. Examples of interventions: off the shelf splinting, education on joint protection and energy conservation, relaxation techniques and demonstration of assistive devices. The DASH and self rating scales are utilised as outcome measures.

Outcomes

Since 2014, 225 referrals received for clinic. Over 90% attendance at monthly hand Function clinic. Clients are reviewed post initial hand function assessment. Group-work is also offered. The majority of referrals to the clinic are appropriate. Clients with complex conditions are signposted to more specialist services. Feedback questionnaires were completed by clients and positive outcomes reported. The DASH is utilised as an outcome measure and significant improvement for clients is evidenced.

Implications

Reduced waiting times for clients. Effective treatment strategies resulting in improved functional outcomes.

Learning objectives

- Process of establishing new ways of service delivery within the primary care setting
- Innovative caseload management
- Gain information in conducting hand function assessments and interventions in the primary care clinic setting.
- Insights into types of assessment used and evidence base for same.
- Insights into evidence based interventions relating to hand function difficulties.

Family wheelchair summer camps (HSE Excellence Award Finalist)

Margaret Waweru-Kihara and Cathriona Reilly

Background

This is annual fun-filled family event that addresses OT clinical goals and is open 4-18yr independent wheelchair users, powered and manual, and their family, and runs for 4 days, 10am -3pm.

Methods / Intervention

Activity analysis is done to determine what activities would meet the goals of the group and we also have adult wheelchair users who mentor the kids.

All the meals and snacks are prepared by the group as part of their Activities of Daily Living Skills training and

All participants are provided with wheelchairs to participate in the wheelchair based activities.

Outcomes

The camps have been a huge success in terms of the meeting clinical goals. The attendance has increased annually, with 73 participants in 2016, and our subjective analysis which is based on our observations indicate achievements in areas such as increased activity participation, mastering of independence skills, increased self-esteem, improved use of wheelchairs and follow-up friendships. Local IWA has now commenced wheelchair-based sports for kids

The participant's responses have been very positive, such as;

"This was an enjoyable experience and proves that independence is possible" C D" (Participant)

"Hats off – 1st really inspiring and fun camp for all children promoting independence while living with a disability". CC (Parent)

Implications

The camp was one of the 7 finalist at the HSE Excellence Awards, out of 467 projects. This provided a national forum to showcase the role of OT, and the HSE has now set aside funds to roll out the project nationally.

Learning Objectives

Successfully applying the principles of Community based rehab principles, family-centred approach in an intrinsically motivating environment.

The lived experience of disability during the transition to adulthood – A study of young people with hemiplegic cerebral palsy

Michelle Spirtos and Robbie Gilligan

Background

As young people with hemiplegic CP transition to adulthood they are engaged in many of the same activities as their able-bodied peers. Yet previous literature has demonstrated that this can be a challenging and complex time in the lives of young people with physical disabilities (Stewart, 2013).

Method/Intervention

A narrative inquiry approach was utilised. Twenty-five young people between 18 years and 29 years participated in in-depth, multiple interviews.

Outcomes

The results highlighted the physical and psychological impact of hemiplegic CP on the participants lives, with the visibility of their physical impairment being the most challenging to them. The majority of the participants have had little contact with others with a physical impairment and it is the participants who have a disability association who have begun to integrate disability into their concept of self. Within social interactions the participants employ strategies to manage their physical disability. Critical moments in their past including their interaction with intervention services have influenced their attitudes to disability.

Implications

This insight into the lived experience of disability during the transition to adulthood is valuable for informing practice with children, adolescents and adults who have experience of disability.

Learning Objectives

- An insight into the lived experience of disability during the transition to adulthood
- An understanding of the physical and psychological impact of physical impairment during this stage in the life course.
- An understanding of the potential influences of experiences during childhood and adolescence on young people's concept of self.

The meaning and experience of employment for individuals with Asperger Syndrome in Ireland

Niamh Crowley, Jeanne Jackson, Mary Sharkey

Background

The number of individuals entering adulthood with Asperger Syndrome (AS) is rising. Employment plays a key role in peoples' lives and is an area of concern for occupational therapists. However, adults with AS are underrepresented in the working world and are faced with challenges finding or maintaining employment. Little is known about the meaning and experience of employment for Irish adults with AS, their experiences of employment and how best to support them. This study aimed to explore the meaning and describe the experiences of employment for adults with AS.

Method

A qualitative phenomenological study was conducted using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to describe the employment experiences of adults with AS. Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews with adults who were in paid employment and had a diagnosis of AS (n=4). Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and analysed using IPA. Ethical approval was granted. Credibility and trustworthiness were strengthened through member checking, supervision, a reflective diary and an audit trail.

Results

The five themes that emerged from the data were: finance, daily time use, personal development, the challenges and factors that can enhance employment success. These themes are supported with direct quotations from the participants.

Conclusion

Employment is vital in the lives of individuals with AS and contributes positively to their wellbeing. However, traits associated with AS present challenges in the workplace. Adults with AS can identify factors that promote their participation in employment. Recommendations for occupational therapy practice and future research are discussed.

Learning objectives

- Delegates will learn of the impact of Asperger Syndrome on participation in employment and the current state of employment for these individuals in Ireland.
- Delegates will be able to describe the findings of the research that outline the meaning and experience of employment for adults with AS.
- Delegates will have an opportunity to reflect on the emerging role for occupational therapy in supporting the rising numbers of adults with Asperger Syndrome in Ireland.

World War One: A catalyst for the development of the discipline of Occupational Therapy

Stephanie Moloney, Judith Pettigrew, Katie Robinson

Background

The First World War was central to the development and formalisation of the profession of occupational therapy internationally. American occupational therapists, named *Reconstruction Aides*, engaged injured soldiers in therapeutic occupations for purposes including: physical rehabilitation, psychosocial benefits, diversion, and to prepare them for future vocations (Bloom Hoover, 1996). Lena Hitchcock was an occupational therapy reconstruction aide stationed in France (Pettigrew et al., 2017). Hitchcock recorded her experiences in her memoir, titled, 'The Great Adventure'. This paper will examine Hitchcock's experiences of delivering occupational therapy alongside soldiers' experiences of receiving occupation-based therapy in Base Hospital 9 in France during World War One.

Method

A historical documentary research methodology was used incorporating a case study approach. Primary and secondary sources including Hitchcock's memoir and a published history of Base Hospital 9 (Brown 1920), were analysed using thematic analysis.

Results

Three themes emerged following analysis: (i) therapeutic occupations and interventions used by the aides, (ii) injured soldiers' experiences of occupational therapy and (iii) relationships between the occupational therapy and physiotherapy reconstruction aides.

Conclusion

This research contributes to understandings of the experiences of occupational therapists and soldiers during World War One. The findings support the therapeutic use of occupation as a means and end for therapy, an important implication for contemporary practice.

Learning objectives

- Participants will appreciate the enduring influence on contemporary occupational therapy practice of early beliefs about the therapeutic use of occupation
- Participants will gain knowledge about early occupational therapy practice and a pioneering occupational therapist
- Participants will become aware of the shared history of occupational therapy and physiotherapy

Are we seeing the bigger picture? Are occupational therapists screening vision in older adults in our Medicine for the Older Person Day Hospital?

Paula Lynch

Background:

The quality of an older adults vision worsens due to age-related eye conditions such as age related macular degeneration and cataracts. With an ageing population, there is going to be a marked increase in the frequency of vision impairment & low vision (LV) in older adults. Eye conditions lead to significant functional implications including, depression, increased risk of falls and fear related activity restriction. LV can also cause difficulties in personal, domestic and instrumental activities of daily living. National and international guidelines recommend that older adults (particularly those with a history of falling) should have an assessment of their vision and that occupational therapy (OT) should be offering patient education for clients with LV. OT should also be completing home safety assessments and modification to optimise the visual environment to reduce fall risk. We should also be offering liaison with LV services.

On completing a literature review we identified a gap in our outpatient medicine for the older person service. We completed a clinical audit to investigate whether we are screening vision as part of our comprehensive geriatric assessment (CGA).

Method:

A retrospective audit on CGA forms was completed using a paper count method. Data including age, sex, low vision diagnosis, vision screening, falls history and LV services (NCBI) and community occupational therapy referral was collected.

Outcomes:

- Of 64 outpatients (16 male; 48 female) 0% had a visual screen completed by an OT as part of their CGA.
- 45% (n 29) had a recent fall.
- 38% (n 24) had a diagnosis of LV – of which 46% had a recent fall.
- 81% (n52) wore glasses.
- OT referred 30% (n7) of those with LV to the NCBI and only 46% of those with a LV diagnosis were referred for environmental assessment by a community OT.
- OT completed no education in self-management with the clients with LV.

Implications/Learning Objectives:

Vision is not being routinely screened for in our OT service. Our patients are not being offered education in self-management strategies and referred to NCBI and COT. Using this information, a visual screening pathway has been developed for pilot in day hospital.

Learning Objectives:

1. Awareness of the importance of visual assessment in older adults
2. Methods of vision assessment in occupational therapy
3. Occupational therapy interventions in low vision.

Effectiveness of an occupational therapy wellness programme for older adults living in long-term care.

Ruth Usher, Monica Devine

Background

This study evaluates the impact of participation in a 12-week occupational therapy (OT) wellness programme in long-term care (LTC) on residents'

- Performance and satisfaction in daily tasks
- Confidence
- Mental well-being
- Overall life satisfaction.

This was based on 'Lifestyle Matters' (Craig and Mountain, 2007), an occupation-based health promotion programme for older people, and focused on enabling participants to undertake new or neglected activities, make lifestyle choices and undertake personal goal-setting.

The delivery of similar occupation-based wellness programmes has been found to be effective for community-dwelling older adults; however there is a need to explore applicability in a range of settings.

Method

A small-scale randomised, wait-list controlled design was used.

Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM); Generalised Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE); Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) and Life Satisfaction Index (LSI-Z) were used as outcome measures. Data collection occurred at three time-points (baseline, immediately post-programme and 12 weeks post-programme).

A qualitative focus group explored the experiences of participants following programme completion.

Results

There were improvements in Occupational Performance and Satisfaction, Self-efficacy, Anxiety and Depression, and Life Satisfaction for the treatment group over time, but not for the control group.

Improved Confidence/Self-efficacy, Peer Support, and Goal Attainment were some of the perceived benefits described by focus group participants.

Conclusion

As an exploratory study, results confirm the tangible benefits that older people living in LTC can obtain from a health-promoting, occupation-based intervention. Further study is required with a larger sample size.

Application to Practice

The delivery of the programme was feasible and its benefit to participants was observed.

Exploring perceived societal changes in Ireland and their influence on occupational engagement through the eyes of older adults

Mary Lucey, Roisin O'Shea, Patrick Hynes

Background

There is an increasing focus on the ageing population in Ireland. Literature highlights many of the barriers associated with growing old, retirement transition, and societal changes in general. What is not addressed by literature is the impact societal changes have on occupational engagement of older adults. This study advances understanding of the perspectives of older adults in Ireland in relation to how changes in Irish society over their lifespan have impacted their occupations through aiming to explore perceived societal changes in Ireland and their influence on occupational engagement of older adults.

Method

A qualitative phenomenological study was utilised. Data was collected through a focus group and nine semi-structured interviews. The focus group and interviews were audiotaped, transcribed verbatim, coded and analysed through thematic analysis.

Results

Three key themes emerged following thematic analysis:

- a) "Everyone helped each other, everyone knew each other" (Community togetherness).
- b) "Everything was done by hand" (Advancements leading to less labour intensive occupations).
- c) "Oh yes major, major changes, a different lifestyle altogether" (Changes in social norms).

Conclusion

The findings demonstrated that there have been significant changes in the occupational engagement of older adults in Ireland. Societal changes have influenced their occupational engagement both positively and negatively. Due to limited literature, exploring links between societal changes and occupational engagement of older adults in Ireland is essential to ensure that the voice of the older population is heard. This will also educate Occupational Therapists and Occupational Scientists, allowing them to gain a greater understanding of older adults.

Learning Objectives

- To provide a greater understanding of the impact that societal changes have on the occupations of older adults in Ireland.
- To develop a greater knowledge on the occupations of older adults in Ireland

Peer Supervision: What it means to managers

Sarah Lee

Background

This research evaluated the impact of peer supervision on Occupational Therapy(OT) and Speech and Language Therapy(SLT) managers. All had participated in a Peer Supervision workshop and peer supervision meetings.

Method

Qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Two focus groups were held. Data was analysed thematically. Key findings were circulated for member checking. A survey was developed based on these key themes, and forwarded to all managers who had completed the peer supervision workshop. Common findings across the survey and focus groups were identified. Ethical approval was granted by the Research Ethics Committee of Sligo General Hospital.

Results

Three key themes were identified; The Uniqueness of Peer Supervision, Skill Development and Well Being. The support managers gained from peer supervision was unavailable to them from other sources. It provided both support and challenge, was more accessible, reliable and structured, and a forum in which managers felt at ease to be honest. Managers developed greater competencies, especially in people management. Many approached staff supervision differently following the training. In addition, peer supervision supported well-being. Many felt lighter and less stressed, with some stress reduction attributed to changes in thought patterns.

Conclusion

This study highlighted the value managers place on peer supervision. For many managers the support gained from peer supervision was unlike any other support they had access to. The results support the need for further peer supervision training and access to peer supervision networks.

Learning Objectives

Identify the unique value of peer supervision as a means of support for OT and SLT managers.

The Use of Hippotherapy as a Treatment Strategy in Occupational Therapy

Sarah Beasley, Strides Therapy Clinic and Laura Power, Strides Therapy Clinic

Background

Strides Therapy Clinic was founded in 2014 and is the first Occupational Therapy clinic in Ireland to incorporate Hippotherapy in practice. Hippotherapy originated in Germany and Austria and is today used extensively across Europe, America and Canada. Hippotherapy is an Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech and Language treatment strategy using evidence based practice and clinical reasoning in the purposeful manipulation of equine movement to engage the sensorimotor, neuromotor and cognitive systems to achieve functional outcomes (American Hippotherapy Association, Inc., 2015). Strides Therapy Clinic facilitates people from 12 months through to adulthood with a variety of impairments, including but not limited to:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Developmental Delay
- Genetic Disorders
- Chromosomal Abnormalities

Methods/Intervention

Hippotherapy is used as a standard treatment strategy in combination with other Occupational Therapy practices. The Hippotherapy Conceptual Framework and Occupational Therapy Models of Practice and Frames of Reference guide the practice and development of the service. Outcomes are measured using standardised and non-standardised assessments, client satisfaction surveys and feedback forms.

Outcomes

Some functional outcomes include increased:

- Arousal and attention
- Bilateral integration and midline orientation
- Body awareness
- Dynamic postural stability and endurance
- Communication skills

Implications

Implications identified from practice and research include:

- Need to develop Hippotherapy awareness, training and education in Ireland
- A multidisciplinary approach to practice
- Hippotherapy research in an Irish context

Learning Objectives

- Increase knowledge of Hippotherapy
- Gain insight into why Hippotherapy is relevant to Occupational Therapists and other health professionals
- Explore the future of Hippotherapy

OPTIMAL, a self-management intervention for cancer survivors

Lauren Boland, S. Cuffe, C. Grant, K. Bennett, D. Connolly

Background

Cancer survivors experience problems such as fatigue, anxiety and depression (Shneerson et al. 2015). This can result in social isolation and decreased activity participation (Foster & Fenlon, 2011). OPTIMAL is a six-week, occupational therapy led, self-management programme designed to develop self-management skills and knowledge. Each session comprises of an education and an individual goal-setting component. A randomised control trial is underway to examine the effectiveness of OPTIMAL for cancer survivors on activity participation and quality of life.

Methods/Intervention

This study employed a mixed methods approach using an RCT and focus groups. Eligible participants are up to two years post-treatment. Self-reporting questionnaires are completed at baseline and three months post-intervention. Qualitative data are collected through focus groups post-intervention and at three month follow-up to assess the feasibility and acceptability of the intervention. Ethical approval was obtained from the SJH/AMNCH Research Ethics Committee.

Outcomes

At present, 64 participants have been recruited and three OPTIMAL programmes have been facilitated. Data collection for the third programme is underway. Preliminary analysis from the first two programmes indicates improvements in anxiety, depression and activity participation post-intervention. Three month follow-up data indicates sustained improvements in activity participation in addition to increased self-efficacy and quality of life with focus group data supporting this. Group security, peer support and goal setting were identified as key components for improving confidence and self-efficacy.

Implications

Early indications are that OPTIMAL appears to provide a direct benefit to cancer survivors by increasing activity participation and empowering participants with self-management skills and knowledge.

Learning Objectives:

Attendees will be able to

- Gain an understanding of cancer survivorship
- Understand the impact of the after effects of treatment on daily activities and quality of life of cancer survivors
- Understand the role of occupational therapy and the OPTIMAL programme in providing cancer survivors with self-management skills and knowledge

The Experiences of Work for People with Multiple Sclerosis and the Occupational Therapy Role.

Eilis Mc Manus, Caoimhe O'Connor, Tadhg Stapleton and Claire Dolan

Background

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a progressive neurological condition that is often diagnosed during prime working years. It is the most common cause of disability among young adults. 70% of cases occur between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 8,000 people in Ireland are affected by MS. The majority of people with MS (PWMS) are in employment and have financial responsibilities at time of diagnosis. Approximately 54% of PWMS in Ireland are unemployed (MS Society of Ireland 2012). Long term work absence, work disability and unemployment have a negative impact on health and wellbeing. Research has proven that return to work is less successful the longer people are absent. Lack of work roles can lead to isolation, poorer health and wellbeing. Occupational Therapy (OT) can play a key role in addressing work needs (College of Occupational Therapist 2010). Limited studies have been carried out in Ireland on the work experiences of PWMS and the OT role. It is anticipated that findings from this study will inform the development of the MS OT service in St James's Hospital.

Aim: To explore the experiences of work for people with MS and the role of the OT in addressing their work needs.

Method

A convenience sample was selected from 7 service users attending the OT MS service. Data was collected using a semi-structured interview guide. Interviews were recorded on a Dictaphone. Content was transcribed verbatim. Key themes were identified and analysed using a thematic approach.

Results

Factors that hinder work:

- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Unsupportive employers

Factors that support return to work and maintaining work roles

- Early discussion of needs
- Participant's resilience
- Supportive employer

Meaning of the worker role

- All participants expressed a desire to work and valued the role.
- Values included: Financial, socialisation, sense of routine, self-identity and self-efficacy.

Current OT MS service

- All described a positive and valued experience with OT.
- Support provided included: emotional support, information, advice, practical help in finding work, training and remaining in work roles.
- OT was identified as the key person from MDT to discuss their work needs

Key areas for OT service development in supporting work roles

- Increase employers' knowledge on MS and impact on work roles
- Job retention including advice to adapt work roles
- Address work needs from time of diagnosis
- Retirement and transfer to new roles
- Fatigue management, self- image and confidence

Conclusion

This study provides evidence of the positive role OT plays in addressing the work needs of PWMS. Key findings will help guide the future development of the OT in this service in addressing these needs.

Experiences of adults with inflammatory arthritis who have completed an occupational therapy led vocational rehabilitation programme: A qualitative study

Trish Fitzgerald

Background

The 'Working Successfully with Arthritis' (WSA) programme is an occupational therapy led Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programme. This programme was developed to support employed adults with Inflammatory Arthritis (IA) experiencing work instability. This study explored the subjective experiences of participants who completed the WSA programme.

Method

A qualitative study was conducted. Purposive sampling was utilised to recruit participants via the WSA programme. Semi-structured 1:1 interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Thematic analysis was used to synthesize the data and summarise the findings. Ethical approval was granted through Oxford Brookes University and University Hospital Waterford.

Results

Seven participants were included in the study. Key findings identified changes in the physical work environment, work role and working hours had a positive impact on work participation. Barriers to accessing support in the workplace included fear of the implications of disclosing their condition to employers. Increased knowledge of reasonable accommodation legislation and peer support during the programme were identified as a motivation for participants to disclose their condition and request support to maintain work participation.

Conclusion

The WSA programme was perceived by all participants as having a positive impact on maintaining work participation. The findings of the study revealed the potential for VR programmes to promote positive experiences for participants and reduce work instability. It also identified the need for service-development in an area of clinical practice requiring progression in Ireland.

Learning Objectives:

Develop insight into patient's perspectives of the impact of IA on work participation.

Understand the benefits of engaging patients in a group process when delivering VR interventions in practice.

Inclusive Research in Ireland

Aoife Barry, Nancy Salmon

Background

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities outlines the accountability state parties have to involve people with disabilities in research that affects their lives. Inclusive research has developed to move people with intellectual disabilities away from the traditional role of research subjects, towards a more power-balanced research collaboration that can create individual and societal change.

Method

This study employed a qualitative methodology guided by critical disability theory. Participants included seven individuals with an intellectual disability, two supporters and five academics who all had experience of inclusive research. Semi-structured individual interviews ($n=9$) and one focus group ($n=5$) were carried out to explore experiences of engaging in inclusive research in Ireland.

Results

Thematic analysis using Atlas.ti software supported the identification of three key themes: 'Meanings of inclusive research', 'Importance of inclusive research' and 'Power relations within inclusive research'. Advocating for change at policy level was a common motivator for participants to engage in the process. Experiences of power imbalances were highlighted, in particular barriers imposed by academic standards.

Conclusions

Definitions of inclusive research in Ireland occur along a continuum. An inherent power imbalance exists between expectations of inclusive projects and academic research standards across all disciplines, which can disrupt inclusive research agendas. Recommendations to share power and incorporate aspects of inclusive research into occupational therapy practice are described.

Learning Outcomes

- Audience members will be introduced to key concepts of inclusive research
- People attending the session will understand how inclusive research is currently practiced in Ireland
- Audience members will consider how aspects of inclusive research may be applied within practice-based research and quality audits.

Moving: A Graphic Novel of the Search for Home

Nancy Salmon, Emma Burns and Aoife Barry

Background

Although the policy discourse internationally is commonly steeped in the language of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, enacting the commitment to community living is complex.

Methods:

This presentation is embedded in three international case studies of deinstitutionalisation that draw upon the experiences of self-advocates with intellectual disabilities, practitioners and policy makers.

Results:

To demonstrate the commitment to open access to the qualitative research findings, a graphic novel was compiled based on the experiences of 32 people with intellectual disabilities moving from institutions to community living in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Nova Scotia, Canada. These accounts highlight pivotal moments and relationships that enabled people with intellectual disabilities to move and also to live well in their communities. This e-book offers a unique format where intersections and tensions across diverse cultures where choice, friendship, meaningful participation and fragile systems are examined in a vibrant visual format.

Conclusion:

The medium of visual storytelling is a culturally grounded approach to sharing research findings across the three countries involved in this study. The graphic novel is a powerful tool to promote discussion among people who share the experience of moving home—creating a unique space where images are privileged over words.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Audience members will understand pivotal moments in the transition to community living from the perspectives of people with intellectual disabilities living in 3 countries.
2. People attending this session will have an opportunity to reflect on non-traditional approaches to sharing information with clients, families, carers and team members.

Audience members will be consider how to share findings from their own service evaluations with colleagues and cli

An Exploratory Study of Discharge Planning Home Visits within an Irish Context- Investigating Nationwide Practice and Nationwide Perspectives.

Aisling Davis, Patricia Mc Clure

Background

Discharge planning home visits are a routine part of occupational therapy clinical practice. However there is a dearth of evidence to support or refute their efficacy and limited policies or standards to guide clinical practice. This study aims to investigate current clinical practice during home visits and the value that occupational therapists' attribute to home visits within an Irish context.

Method

A survey questionnaire was developed from current literature and was piloted on a sub sample. 52 target sites including acute, rehabilitation and convalescence settings were contacted via a gatekeeper for participation. A total of 122 participants completed an electronic or postal survey. Quantitative data via likert scales and was analysed using the SPHINX package. Thematic analysis was used for qualitative data.

Results

Quantitative data identified time spent per visit, departmental and hospital size, number of visits and report writing times e.g 89% complete 1-5 visits per month and 74% spend between 1 hour to 1 hour 30 mins per visit. A 50% compliance rate was found for 37 out of 43 suggested areas of assessment during visits. Rich qualitative data identified clinical criteria for home visits e.g being medically fit, off baseline status, living alone, prolonged admission and safety concerns and identified ways to improve practice such as having increased time, NOK present, collaboration with MDT and by standardising assessment, policies and documentation.

Conclusion

Findings conclude that discharge planning home visits are routinely carried out by occupational therapists and that there is consistency in clinical practice within an Irish setting. Occupational therapists value home visits as clinical assessments and have identified risks during practice, benefits of visits and ways to improve practice.

Learning Objectives

- A reflection of clinical practice during home visits in the Republic of Ireland.
- Expand the knowledge base regarding current practice on DPHV and OTs' clinical reasoning regarding home visits.
- Guide policies regarding home visits and could serve as a comparison in order to standardise practice and justify the need for home visits.

From hospital to home; a complex case review

Mary Galvin and Sharon Leahy

Background

This case report outlines the role of Discharge Liaison Occupational Therapy (DLOT) in relation to the complex discharge of Pat (pseudonym). The role of *DLOT* is to facilitate a seamless transfer of care from hospital to the home, through a collaborative approach with the patient, family, interdisciplinary team and community services.

Method/Intervention:

Pat is a 56 year old male who sustained a C4 ASIA A spinal cord injury following a farming accident in May 2015.

Presenting impairments: tetraplegia, neurogenic bladder and bowel, pain in neck and shoulders.

Presenting functional status: Mr.P is unable to stand, walk or transfer and is a dependent wheelchair user. He requires maximum assistance of two for all personal activities of daily living. He requires the assistance of two for hoisting. He is on a daily bowel programme at ward level.

Barriers to a home discharge: large care package, extensive housing modifications, transportation, level of injury/complex needs and rural home location.

Facilitators to a home discharge: supportive family/strong community network, pre-morbid health, age, access to *DLOT* and financial means.

Outcomes

Mr. P had an admission of 185 days in rehabilitation. Mr. P was facilitated to go for weekend leave after 77 days with *DLOT* input.

Implications

- The importance of family support for a complex home discharge and need for involvement throughout the home modification process.
- Web based design tools such as IDAPT are useful in practice to expedite discharge planning where home modifications are required (see image below).
- Informing the AOTI housing advisory group on the housing specification required for this level of injury.

Learning Objectives

- The need for updated Occupational Therapy Irish housing guidelines.
- The benefit of using web based design tools in practice; such as IDAPT.
- The role of OT in a home discharge for a tetraplegic patient in Ireland.

Poster Presentations

Dying to Talk – Facilitate Conversations on Planning Future & End-of-life Care for People with Dementia

Carmel Collins

Background:

End of life care (eolc) discussions are not a routine part of care despite the burdensome interventions and poor standard of eolc that people with dementia are at risk of receiving¹. Health and social care professionals (HSCPs) are often resistant to initiate eolc conversations for fear of upsetting the person, role uncertainty, lack of training and medical-legal concerns^{2,3}. It is the responsibility of all HSCPs who engage with people with dementia, to create an open culture where issues regarding eolc can be openly explored and discussed⁴.

Method:

This review was based on a comprehensive literature search using PubMed, CINAHL, Cochrane Library and Google Scholar. National/international reports, best practice guidelines and international health care policy were also included. A thematic framework approach was adopted in analysing the data.

Outcome:

This review identified four over-arching themes to support HSCPs' competence in delivering eolc discussions.

1. General communication skills which facilitate clear and sensitive discussions with people with dementia.
2. Environments that provides an open culture where staff are confident in facilitating eolc discussions.
3. Understanding the role palliative care can play in supporting the needs of people with dementia.
4. Model framework to address good practice when approaching eolc conversations.

Implications

HSCPs can play an important role in providing opportunities for people with dementia to openly discuss specific aspects of end of life care.

HSCPs can benefit with additional training to allow them to feel confident in engaging with eolc discussions.

Learning outcomes

1. To explore the challenges of facilitating end-of-life care (eolc) conversations to patients with dementia.
2. To identify mechanisms to support occupational therapists to engage in eolc conversations with people with dementia.

What is the role and effect of sensory interventions with adults in mental health settings?

John Doody

Background

Sensory interventions (sensory rooms with a reclining chair, weighted blanket etc.) are a relatively new form of treatment for adults in mental health settings. There is limited research available regarding their use with this population. This research project assesses the role of sensory interventions with adults in mental health settings by taking a systematic approach to finding and synthesising relevant literature on this topic.

Method

Qualitative and quantitative studies were critically appraised using the McMaster University critical review forms (Letts et al 2007; Law et al 1998). Systematic reviews were critically appraised using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme's systematic review form (CASP 2013). Following critical appraisal of the relevant literature, sixteen journal articles were included in this study.

Results

Common themes identified included the effects of sensory interventions on: (i) service users' quality of life; (ii) rates of seclusion and restraint; (iii) service users' autonomy and choice; and (iv) therapeutic relationships between service users and staff.

Conclusion

A consistent issue that was apparent is the limited amount of research available on sensory interventions use with adults in mental health settings. Although the literature is limited, studies appear to show positive effects of this treatment. This study provides an overview of how sensory interventions are used and valued in adult mental health settings and proposes that more research is required in this area.

Learning objectives

Delegates will gain an understanding of the types and roles of sensory interventions and the evidence base of their use in adult mental health settings.

Applying occupational therapy theory and knowledge outside the profession: Dr. Eamon O' Sullivan's Gaelic football training regime as experienced by players.

Meagan Healy

Background:

Dr. Eamon O' Sullivan (1897-1966) was a psychiatrist who pioneered occupational therapy services from the 1930s in St. Finan's Hospital, Co. Kerry. O' Sullivan was also a successful Gaelic (GAA) football trainer who trained eight winning Kerry All-Ireland teams. This presentation builds on previous research undertaken at the University of Limerick (Sheridan 2016) which revealed that the concepts and theories of Occupational Therapy influenced O'Sullivan's approach to football training. This study expanded Sheridan's work by interviewing former GAA players about their experience of O'Sullivan's training.

Aim:

This research aimed to explore the influences of occupational therapy on O' Sullivan's Gaelic football training regime by focusing on the training experiences of former GAA players.

Methods:

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with nine former Gaelic football players who trained under O' Sullivan. Data was analysed using Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis via Nvivo software.

Results:

The interviews with former GAA players identified themes in O'Sullivan's training regime that are core to Occupational Therapy, such as habit formation, individual roles, routine and regularity, balance and adaptation.

Conclusion:

By focusing on the occupational therapy influences of Eamon O'Sullivan's practice as a psychiatrist and a football trainer, the impact of occupational therapy beyond the profession can be explored.

Exploring the impact of a Constraint Induced Movement Therapy Protocol in a rehabilitation setting in the Irish Context.

Elaine Harrington

Introduction

Over 10,000 people experience a Stroke each year in Ireland. Stroke can often lead to hemiparesis which is one of the most pervasive disabling impairments (Carr and Shepard 2011). Approximately 30-40% of stroke patients are unable to use their more affected arm functionally after a Stroke (Kwakkel et al 1999). Constraint induced movement therapy (CIMT) is a rehabilitative technique used primarily post stroke to increase functional use of the neurologically impaired upper limb through massed practice while restraining the lesser involved upper limb (Fritz et al 2012). Training techniques and constraint combined with rewards can increase the spontaneous use of the upper limb (Taub 2012). The approach is proposed to reverse any learnt suppression of the movement in the affected hemiplegic upper limb and promote recovery (Ballester et al 2015). The aim was to review the effectiveness of CIMT during a stroke patient's sub-acute phase of recovery.

Methods:

A case study was completed on two patients who engaged in the CIMT protocol. The patients were a male and a female, >65 years old who had a stroke. CIMT information leaflets were provided and contracts were completed by the patient, carer and the nursing team. The outcome measures along with a questionnaire were completed pre and post CIMT. The CIMT protocol involved immobilisation of the upper limb for 90% of the day along with 3.5 hours of upper limb activities daily over a 14 day period. A daily log of the completed upper limb activities were tracked by the patient, family and nursing team. The patient also received 45 minutes of Occupational Therapy daily.

Results/Conclusion:

Outcome Measure	Case Study 1		Case Study 2	
	Pre CIMT	Post CIMT	Pre CIMT	Post CIMT
Fugl Meyer	106	122	16	72
Action Research Arm Test	45	57	35	48
Arm Activity Measure	50	10	37	7
Nine Hole Peg Test	273sec	38sec	96sec	45sec

As per above table, both case studies made significant gains in most outcome measures. The gains were also translated into the patient's perception of improved daily functioning. They reported that they were more able to complete everyday tasks.

Conclusion:

CIMT can be a very effective approach in upper limb stroke rehabilitation during the sub-acute phase of recovery however further in depth research is required.

‘Talk and Grow’; The impact of Sensory Gardening on children with Moderate/Severe Learning Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Fiona Ryan

Background/Aim

There is a growing body of research to support the positive influence of gardening on our well-being and quality of life along with it being a vital sensory and social experience. (Wagenfield & Atchinson 2014, Sensory Trust 2005, Page 2008). However little is known about the extent to which this research is translated into occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Nursing practice. The aim of the intervention was to develop life skills, social skills and health and well-being of each participant through the medium of gardening and developing an outdoor sensory garden within the school setting.

Results

The authors, an Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist and Clinical Nurse Specialist implemented and carried out an 8 week ‘Talk and Grow Sensory Gardening Group’ for children with Moderate and Severe Learning Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Outcomes were measured pre and post testing through clinician’s notes analysis, use of visuals and vocabulary along with feedback from school staff and caregivers. Improvements were noted in task analysis related to life skills such as planning and organisation, money management, health and fitness and independence along with sensory processing skills such as self-regulation and self-awareness. Visuals were utilised in order to measure and increase object and task identification and initiation. The program offered a rich multi-sensory and practical experience whilst promoting positive well-being and quality of life.

Qualitative study on sensory processing difficulties

Aine Henry

Background

Sensory processing difficulties (SPD) are increasingly recognised as impacting on children's ability to participate in school activities and are strongly associated with autism. Occupational therapists frequently collaborate with teachers to address SPD in the classroom through using sensory-based interventions, and adapting activities and the environment to suit individual needs. As teachers play an important role in implementing SPD interventions, this exploratory study aimed to gather initial data on their experiences of teaching children with SPD, as no research was located on the topic.

Methods

This qualitative study explored the experiences of seven recently qualified Irish primary school teachers of teaching children with SPD (and autism). The research aimed to gain insight into their views, their preparation for their role and the supports available to them. Consequently the interview guide contained open-ended topic areas to allow interviewee flexibility in order to facilitate the collection of exploratory data.

Results

Inductive thematic analysis revealed that teachers had not learned about SPD during initial teacher education and felt they needed more training and clinical supports to deal with SPD in the classroom. The benefits of in-context training and effective OT-teacher collaboration were highlighted. Poor systems of communication also emerged as an obstacle.

Conclusion

The research findings were considered from a systems level perspective, and the implications for service development to better address SPD in schools and improve OT-teacher collaborative practice were considered.

Learning objectives

- Gaining insight into the teachers perspective and their experience of sensory-based interventions in schools
- Advancing OT-teacher collaborative practice

How is work participation for those with inflammatory arthritis currently addressed in rheumatology services? Irish rheumatology clinicians' experiences and perspectives.

Yvonne Codd

Background:

Inflammatory arthritis strongly correlates with work disability. Treatment guidelines recommend work support but data are lacking on rheumatology clinicians' perspectives on work referral and extent of work support within current rheumatology services for this population.

Methods:

A questionnaire concerning work support provision was distributed via online survey to doctors, nurses and physiotherapists working in clinical rheumatology.

Results:

Response rate of 22% was achieved and total sample of 73 analysed. Respondents indicated that 71% of service users were of working age and the majority of respondents (95%) agreed that addressing employment retention was within the remit of rheumatology. 55% of respondents estimated that 25-49% of their caseload had work needs. Factors influencing addressing work included: client raising work concerns (94%), client reports work absenteeism (83%), client's work involved manual component (75%). Barriers to addressing work identified: limited time in clinical setting (92%); unfamiliarity with best practice for work support (91%); lack of perceived competency to assess work complexities (82%). Occupational therapy (OT) was identified as the most appropriate profession to address work (78%). However, 51% respondents reported not routinely referring to OT for work support due to: limited availability of OT (13% of responders having no access to OT); uncertainty regarding optimum timing for work intervention; uncertainty as to what OT offer.

Conclusions:

Addressing work was recognised as multifaceted. Work needs are addressed within current rheumatology services only when the client themselves initiate the issue. Opportunity exists to improve the quality of services to address work in line with guidelines by educating the multidisciplinary team about available work services and implementation of a clinical pathway for employment retention.

Learning Outcomes:

- Participants will be informed as to the profile and the extent of work need in this population in Ireland.
- Participants will have a greater understanding of the factors influencing addressing employment-related issues with this population.
- Participants will have a greater understanding of the challenges which pose as barriers to addressing employment and supporting employment retention.

Moving Forward: Towards the development of the wheelchair and seating provision process for people living with spina bifida.

Saileog Kennedy and Rosie Gowran

Background:

High-quality wheelchair and seating provision is essential for providing systems that are appropriate for users' needs. Appropriate wheelchairs and seating are crucial for the occupational participation, engagement and subsequently quality of life of people living with spina bifida. There is a lack of scientific literature dedicated to exploring the wheelchair and seating provision system from the perspective of people with spina bifida. The aim of this research was to better understand the experiences of people living with spina bifida of the Irish wheelchair and seating provision system.

Methods:

In order to study people with spina bifida's experiences, face-to-face (5) and telephone (1) semi-structured interviews were carried out with 5 people living with spina bifida and 2 parents of a child with spina bifida. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis using Nvivo software.

Findings:

After analysis of the interviews, 4 overarching themes emerged; who knows best, influences on decision making, who is responsible and meaning for participation in life.

Conclusion:

It is important to understand the importance of appropriate wheelchair provision for people with spina bifida as well as the impact that power dynamics within the system can have on enabling or inhibiting a person's participation.

Learning Objectives:

To understand the importance of appropriate wheelchair provision for people living with spina bifida.
To explore how occupational therapy may need to develop in this area and move from focusing on assessment towards having an active involvement in the entire process.

AOTI

CONFERENCE 2017

ASSOCIATION OF OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPISTS OF IRELAND

Looking Back, Moving Forward

Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Limerick
April 21st & 22nd 2017



Conference Partners Ltd,
Suites 11-13, First Floor,
The Hyde Building,
The Park, Carrickmines,
Dublin 18.

Tel: 01 296 8688

www.conferencepartners.com

AOTI

CONFERENCE 2017

Association of Occupational
Therapists of Ireland (AOTI)
Office 1 & 2,
1st Floor, Haymarket House,
Smithfield, Dublin 7.

Tel: 01 874 8136

www.aoti.ie

