

Allied health professionals and occupational therapists



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INTRODUCTION

The following essay discusses occupational therapists as Allied Health Professionals and who they work with. Occupational therapists work with many Allied Health Professionals. Two of these Allied Health Professionals will be discussed further in this essay to understand the interdisciplinary team and the importance of communication between these Allied Health Professionals. Occupational therapists work with many allied health professionals such as psychologists and physiotherapists to provide support and treatment for patients such as those who have suffered from a stroke (Willis, Reynolds, & Keleher, 2016). This essay also discusses crucial communication skills and the impact this has on patient outcome.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROFESSION

The aim of occupational therapy is to allow clients to participate in everyday activities (occupations) which are relevant to them. Each client has different needs and activities which they like to do each day, therefore, the aims and goals for the client is individualized and specific for them. To help the client engage in these different 'occupations' independently the occupational therapist adjusts their environment or even the activity to allow the client to maintain their level of independence. Clients have different views for certain activities such as shopping, some find it like a chore but others may find it enjoyable (What is occupational therapy?", 2017).

Occupational therapists can work in a variety of areas such as with children, rehabilitation and aged care, acute care, injury management and mental health. Children may require help to achieve milestones which are important to their development such as hand-eye coordination. Occupational therapists help aged care clients and in rehab to improve daily life after a surgery or after a health event such as a stroke. In acute care, occupational therapists assess the clients function and needs and then monitor their development. Through changing the work environment and creating a work program this allows injured people to return to work safely. Occupational therapists are also able to create strategies to help the client cope with their mental health issues and also help to improve their confidence and self-esteem (" What do occupational therapists do?", 2017).

Occupational Therapist work in a client-centred framework. This is where the occupational therapist works with the client to set aims and identify issues which affects their occupational performance. Occupational therapists work with clients from a variety ages from newborn children to people in their very elderly years (Willis, Reynolds, & Keleher, 2016).

BEGINNINGS OF UNDERSTANDING AN INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM

Physiotherapist

Physiotherapists aim to help their patients develop, maintain and restore their maximum movement and functional ability of the body. They use their problem-solving skills to assess the situation, interpret the findings and then analyze the findings to plan an individualized treatment for the patient.

Physiotherapists help anyone from premature babies to the elderly in <https://assignbuster.com/allied-health-professionals-and-occupational-therapists/>

palliative care environments. Physiotherapists mostly work in hospital environments in a variety of clinical fields. Examples of these clinical fields include musculoskeletal, cardiorespiratory, women's health, neurological and many other clinical fields (Willis, Reynolds, & Keleher, 2016).

Physiotherapist help their patient with goal-setting, however, patients may feel they cannot achieve the goal and therefore, not participate in the process or the physiotherapist may not be as active in the process with their patient as they may feel their patient has communication issues which may hold them back. Goal-setting is a major aspect of physiotherapy; therefore, physiotherapists need to be able to achieve success goals with their patient. Physiotherapists may use approaches such as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed) to help their patient achieve the goal. Goal-setting in physiotherapy is much more than a physiotherapist asking questions and the patient answering, therefore, physiotherapists may use open questions to help gather information on the patient to help formulate a goal (Schoeb, Staffoni, Parry, & Pilnick, 2014).

Psychologist

Psychologists aim to help people achieve a meaningful and happier life through assessing and diagnosing a variety of issues. Psychologists then develop many approaches and treatments for their patient whilst also providing support and direction. Psychologist are often seen as only working in mental health however, they also work in many other areas like disability, family services, community, schools, education, health, sport, performing art and even corporate and business. Majority of the population at one point in

their life may require to see a psychologist (“ What is a psychologist?”, 2016).

There are many areas of psychology like general practicing psychologists, clinical neuropsychology, clinical psychology, community psychology, counseling psychology, educational and developmental psychology, forensic psychology, health psychology, organizational psychology and sport and exercise psychology (“ Areas of Psychology”, 2016).

Psychologists have a significant impact in general health care as they are able to engage in a variety of settings (examples of these are inpatient and outpatient in mental and traditional health care settings). Psychologists were able to engage in areas such as the assessment such as telling someone they have cancer or another terminal illness, intervention such as cardiovascular and liaison where they are able to provide care during death and when a patient is dying (Puente, 2011).

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM

This interdisciplinary team is able to work together to provide different skills and support for the patient. An example of this is a person who has had a stroke. For someone who has had a stroke, occupational therapists assist the patient to improve daily activities. A physiotherapist is able to help the patient with their function such as balance, gait, and movement of the body. Psychologists are able to support the patient with any cognitive impairments. Stroke can be a cause of adult disability therefore, a psychologist who works in a disability area can a patient overcome the cognitive thoughts which occur with reduced function and movement. Through working together these <https://assignbuster.com/allied-health-professionals-and-occupational-therapists/>

health professionals are able to provide an interdisciplinary team who will aim for the best patient outcome (Langhorne, Bernhardt, & Kwakkel, 2011).

Two crucial skills that will be required as an Occupational Therapist part of an Interdisciplinary team such as the one provided will be mutual understanding and communication. Allied Health professionals such as Occupational Therapists need to interact and communicate uniquely with the individual such as the patient or another health professional which may be part of the interdisciplinary team. Health professionals part of an interdisciplinary team need to develop mutual understanding where each person is able to connect and understand one another. Mutual understanding between health professionals allows for effective communication where the interdisciplinary team are able to negotiate and discuss in detail the patient's treatment plan (O'Toole, 2012).

Health professionals of an interdisciplinary team need to adjust their communication according to the receiver. Each health professional needs to adjust their language to suit their target audience as different words have different meanings to each health profession. The choice of communication is able to provide respect to the other individuals which further enhances mutual understanding and provides effective communication. Health professionals also needs to recognize other health professional's strengths and skills within an interdisciplinary team to collaborate and provide success patient-centred care. (Suter, week 1 readings) Together this communication skills are crucial to create effective communication which is linked with positive and successful patient outcomes (Suter et al., 2009).

CONCLUSION

Communication is a vital importance in an interdisciplinary team, which if effective can lead to successful patient outcome. An example of an interdisciplinary team composed of an occupational therapist, physiotherapist and psychologist explores these health professional's collaboration to provide support and treatment for a stroke patient. This scenario is able to show the significance of communication in health professions and the collaboration of a variety of allied health professionals to provide successful patient outcome. Occupational therapists, physiotherapist, and psychologist use different methods and strategies, therefore, effective communication in this interdisciplinary team to increase positive patient outcome.

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