

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

- The purpose of this project was to gain advanced practice experience with the capstone site mentor regarding sexuality and intimacy occupations at a military treatment facility. The desired outcomes of the project include (1) increase competency and confidence to address sexuality and intimacy occupations and (2) disseminate materials and services to influence clinical adoption of sexuality and intimacy in occupational therapy (OT).
- Sexual activity and intimate social participation are outlined within the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process* (AOTA, 2014).
- Occupational therapists are hesitant to address sexuality and intimacy (AOTA, 2014; Sakellariou & Alado, 2006; Turner, 2012).
- Addressing sexuality and intimacy can improve client quality of life and wellbeing by promoting the ability to return to community activities (Sale et al., 2012)

METHODS

- Increasing competency and confidence:
- Observation and client care sessions with debriefing and documenting of experiences to follow
 - Engagement in program development tasks for increased understanding of creation and implementation of programs
- Dissemination of materials and services:
- Obtaining 3-D printed model of clitoris for increased staff and client understanding of pleasure, pain, positioning, and female orgasm
 - Needs assessment data collection and analysis to inform inservices
 - Three inservices provided to staff members within the PT and OT departments at military treatment facility regarding addressing sexuality and intimacy
 - Assistance provided with retrospective program evaluation case series publication preparation
 - Creation of educational handouts for practitioner use to increase understanding of various topics regarding sexuality and intimacy
 - Creation of prospective research study Institutional Review Board protocol for future implementation regarding sexuality and intimacy

IMPLICATIONS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

- Occupational therapists can use the PEO and CFIR to guide therapeutic intervention and program development to increase inclusion of sexuality and intimacy in occupational therapy. Modifications to these conceptual frameworks include increased education and application of PEO and CFIR within OT regarding sexuality and intimacy.
- Providers identified a need for education, practitioner resources, and client resources to provide holistic care for their clients.
- Needs assessments are helpful for program development
- Inclusion of education within OT curriculums would help to mitigate the current gap in practitioner knowledge and allow for holistic, client-centered care for future clients. Sexuality and intimacy should be included as a part of the OT curriculum design and Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education Standards should be explicitly inclusive of sexuality and intimacy.
- Future project recommendations include:
 - Design of continuing education courses to provide additional information and resources on a wider scale or within varying locations

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

- Person-Environment-Occupation Model (PEO): (Law et al., 1996)
- Guided client evaluations, interventions, and discharge planning
 - Rationale for selection:
 - Supported by literature pertaining to sexuality and intimacy (McCarthy, 2018)
 - Holistic and client-centered
 - Future application:
 - Explicit application of PEO as a theory for understanding sexuality and intimacy as meaningful occupations
- Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research: (The Consolidated Framework for Implementation, 2019)
- Purpose: identify barriers and enablers to implementation of results guided by evidence-based practice
 - Rationale for selection:
 - Evidence-based strategies to influence clinical-adoption
 - Future application:
 - Understanding of framework within OT to increase clinical implementation of evidence-based strategies

RESULTS / CONCLUSIONS

- Observation Codes and Themes:
- Inductive analysis revealed 14 themes; with the most common topics including: **communication, intimacy, desire and arousal, and pleasure.**
- Needs Assessment Data
- Inpatient OT's have greater confidence and comfort addressing sexuality and intimacy compared to PT technicians at the military treatment facility
 - However, OT's are inconsistently addressing this topic in practice with **71.4%** identifying they "**sometimes**" address sexuality and intimacy.
 - **42.9%** of inpatient OT's identified feeling **somewhat prepared** to address sexuality and intimacy and **14.2%** said they **do not feel prepared**. PT technicians reported they **did not feel comfortable** (58.3%) or **prepared** (58.3%) to address this topic
- Pre/Post-Assessment Data
- Following trainings, **more than half of participants felt more prepared to discuss sexuality and intimacy** (sexuality: 56.5%, intimacy: 52.2%)
 - **73.9%** of participants reported they were **likely** (39.1%) to **very likely** (34.8%) to **use the information** presented with future clients
- Handout Feedback
- Positive feedback received from practitioners; "Easy to read", "Those are great", "Perfect", and "Very professional"
- Prospective Research Study
- Drafted, revised, completed, and approved by site mentor

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