Broadening horizons: Benefits and challenges of role-emerging placements of student occupational therapists in AIDS service organizations

By
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Presenter disclosure

- **Presenter**: Rabeya Sharmin

- No conflict of interest.
HIV and rehabilitation

• The **changed** disease course of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection following the introduction of Highly Active Antiretroviral Treatment (HAART). (Bowyer et al., 2006; McReynolds and Garske, 2001)

• **Shifting** of service needs of people living with HIV (PLWH) from acute palliative care to rehabilitation care. (Worthington et al., 2008)
HIV and rehabilitation

• Rehabilitation in the context of HIV is unique due to the stigma and discrimination often experienced by PLWH. (Worthington et al., 2005)

• Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation (CWGHR) highlighted the importance of client-centered care for PLWH. (CWGHR, 2015)
OT in the context of HIV

• **Occupational Therapy (OT) services** emphasize the core value of client-centeredness. (Law, 1998)

• OT services have potential to:
  
  • Assist in overcoming challenges associated with daily life activities. (Beauregard and Solomon, 2005)
  
  • Improve the quality of life of PLWH. (Misko et al., 2015)
OT in the context of HIV

In spite of a demonstrated need for rehabilitation services, access to OT is a challenge for many PLWH.
(Tran, Thomas, Cameron, and Bone, 2007)
Placements of student OTs

Pilot projects (e.g. Role-emerging placement) in community organizations (e.g. AIDS service organizations) can increase the accessibility to rehabilitation services for PLWH. (Restall et al., 2016)
What is role-emerging placement?

• Placement in a setting without any established role of OT.
• The students become responsible for establishing the role of OT.
• Supervised by an assigned staff member of the setting and an offsite OT.

(Bossers et al., 1997)
“What are the **benefits and challenges** of engaging student occupational therapists in AIDS service organizations through role-emerging placements that focus on rehabilitation of PLWH?”
Setting and research design

• Students in the Masters OT program at McMaster University were placed in ASOs at four different locations in Southern Ontario, Canada for eight-weeks.

• This qualitative study employed:
  - Interpretive description as a qualitative research tradition. (Thorne et al., 1997)
Data collection and analysis

• All the participants participated in individual interviews within four-weeks of finishing the role-emerging placements of student OTs.

• Content analysis was used to identify themes from data. (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005)
Findings
Participants

*n=11*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student occupational therapists</td>
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<td>ASO staff</td>
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<td>Offsite OT preceptor</td>
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<tr>
<td>People living with HIV</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>
Figure: Benefits and challenges of role-emerging placements of student OTs in ASOs

Benefits

- Reinforcing professional skills
- Developing competency in providing rehabilitation services for PLWH
- Shining a light on the role of OT
- Empowering ASO services

Challenges

- Starting from grounding work
- Building relationships
Benefits

“A lot of questions that we received were about aging with HIV and changing health needs. There is a huge role for OT as the population is going to continue to age.” (P-4, student OT)

“I did not know what an OT was until I started talking to the student.” (Client with HIV-2)
Benefits

“Some of the training sessions she (student OT) started and she created tools and handouts, we can continue to use them in the future.” (P-9, ASO staff)
Challenges

“It is a bit more challenging for a role-emerging opportunity to maximize its potential within eight-week period”. (P-7, Offsite OT preceptor)

“That was hard to have information from the client and to encourage the interaction as they have faced a lot of stigma from other health care professionals.” (P-5, student OT)
Discussion
Benefits

Person-level benefits:

• Preparing student OTs for future practices in HIV and rehabilitation.
• Empowering skills and knowledge of ASO staff.
• Helping PLWH to understand the potential role of OT.

Organizational Benefits:

• Enhancement of ASOs services.
Challenges

Role-emerging placement in ASOs was associated with challenges due to:

- Time-limited nature of the placement
- Previous experience of stigma by PLWH.
Implication for HIV and rehabilitation

• Placements of student OTs in ASOs have value in increasing the competencies of the students as future rehabilitation professionals.

• Placements in ASOs can foster the integration of OT services in community organizations to maintain the optimum community responses for rehabilitation of PLWH.
Acknowledgement

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References


THANK YOU!