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## **A Model for Practice Development with Occupational Therapists**

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### **Introduction**

Structured practice development programmes can be a way of developing services and meeting the continuing professional development needs of the workforce (McSherry and Warr 2008). The use of conceptual practice models to develop occupational therapy practice has been suggested as one way for individuals to develop practice (Melton et al 2009). However, the existing literature does not adequately take into account the different responses that individual practitioners make to practice development initiatives. Individuals in different contextual situations may accomplish different rates and depth of engagement in a practice development programme.

### **Objective**

The aim of this research was to gain an in-depth understanding of the mechanisms which when activated within particular environmental contexts supported individual practitioners to engage in an evidenced based, practice development programme. Engagement in the practice development programme was conceptualized as the desired outcome.

### **Methods**

This paper will present a Realistic Evaluation (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) where mixed methods of data collection were used with occupational therapist participants. The context was a mental health practice environment where a practice development programme based on the Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner 2008) was taking place.

### **Results**

A brief summary of the research process and results will be provided to illustrate the context, mechanisms and outcomes established through the data analysis. This will also include detail of the construction of new practice development theory. In particular the empirically conceptualised model of 'Individual Practice Development' (IPD) will be introduced. This presentation is based on a completed PhD research study via City University, London. Ethical approval was achieved via both the University and the Local Research Ethics Committee - number 04/2005/75.

### **Conclusion**

Differentiated practice development needs to occur in order to maximise positive occupational therapy practice change. This will ensure that postgraduate educational programmes are relevant for individual occupational therapists.

### **Contribution to the practice/evidence base of occupational therapy.**

Thus through the IPD model occupational therapy leaders will be able to tailor learning interventions to assure quality and achieve best uptake of occupational therapy practice development programmes.