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Applying OT Process and Clinical Reasoning Skills to Develop an Alternative OT Practice: 25 Year History of a Work in Progress

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INTRODUCTION:The presentation highlights successful implementation of an alternative model of occupational therapy in an urban American setting, through application of the "OT process", leadership skills and clinical reasoning. Developed in response to labor resource deficits, negatively impacting geriatric and pediatric patient populations; expanding to (1) inclusion of physical therapists, speech therapists and special educators, (2) sponsorship of foreign therapists and (3) a continuing education division to enhance the practitioner's clinical and management skills. Spanning 25 years, the company has a client base encompassing several municipalities, hundred of facilities and produces over forty educational events each year.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Participants will be able to:

1. Recognize a community's need for therapists: identify how this alternative therapy practice met that need.
2. Implement a business plan using clinical reasoning skills, leadership skills and the OT process.
3. Employ OT skill sets to proactively identify trends in the therapy market place.
4. Identify the steps needed to develop entrepreneurial endeavors in their own countries and cultural communities.

DESCRIPTION/REPORT:Working as occupational therapists in the 1980's, we responded to reimbursement changes relating to OT services and the associated increase in market demand for therapists. Implementing the OT process clinical reasoning and leaderships skill, a business plan was developed to address the therapy void identified within the underserved urban populations resulting in the creation of our company, Therapeutic Resources. This model's plasticity allows for continued expansion of products and markets served.

RESULTS/DISCUSSION

How can this model be applied in different countries, cultures and health care settings?

How can practitioners identify opportunities within their communities?

How can practitioners apply their OT skills to an entrepreneurial endeavor?

CONCLUSION:

Revealing creative application of an alternative therapy practice to professional peers will motivate others to venture out and create additional alternative practices impacting multiple markets and patient populations.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE PRACTICE:

Secured a viable option for clinicians challenged by the traditional 35-40 hour work week in the United States through the development of flexible employment opportunities; thereby extending the lifespan of their marketability and the availability of seasoned clinicians to the underserved urban communities.

