

Taking time for occupational storytelling with the Model of Human Occupation Screening Tool (MOHOST) in the assessment of neurological inpatient rehabilitation clients

Kylie Rice, Primrose Lentin
LaTrobe University, Melbourne, Australia

This paper reports on the value of taking time to gain an understanding of neurological clients' occupational life to guide therapy decisions and inform interdisciplinary team members of occupation-based occupational therapy practice. Storytelling was used in the assessment process to hear clients' occupational stories and share clients' occupational stories with other team members.

An action research study investigated an occupational therapy assessment process that used an occupational storytelling approach with the Model of Human Occupation Screening Tool (MOHOST) with neurological inpatient rehabilitation clients to determine if it: (a) helps the occupational therapist to better understand the client and their occupations, (b) assists the occupational therapist to identify meaningful occupational goals and therapy activities with the client, and (c) helps the occupational therapist communicate the information gathered to the interdisciplinary team.

The study participants included 18 neurological clients and 13 interdisciplinary team members from an inpatient rehabilitation unit in a large city hospital. The neurological client participants took part in the occupational therapy assessment process with the MOHOST, followed by two evaluation interviews. Two focus groups were held with the interdisciplinary team members to obtain their views. The occupational therapy colleagues emerged as a distinct participant group during the study.

Seven cycles of the action research process were completed to fit the assessment process to the clinical context. The ongoing analysis identified the following themes: the importance of sharing information, understanding the occupational therapy role, the value of goal-setting, appreciation of occupation-focused occupational therapy, agreement with principles guiding assessment process, communication with team, use of a structured assessment and timing to complete assessment.

Conclusions: Taking time to complete the MOHOST with neurological clients did assist in getting to know the client, identifying meaningful goals and therapy activities, and informing interdisciplinary team members of the clients' occupational circumstances. Occupational storytelling is an important part of the occupational therapy assessment process that focuses on the unique occupational experience of neurological clients. The use of the MOHOST can help the occupational therapist facilitate the clients' occupational storytelling and communicate the clients' occupational stories to other team members.