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Factors Influencing Satisfaction and Efficacy of Services at a Free Standing Psychiatric Occupational Therapy Clinic

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As the number of mental health occupational therapy practitioners continues to decrease, efforts must be made to explore evidenced based models for service delivery. Although mental health occupational therapy continues to lag behind other areas of practice, within the United States, the decline has resulted in fewer numbers of therapists entering this practice area and outside professionals taking over responsibilities traditionally falling within the scope of occupational therapy.

The present study utilized Patton's (1997), Utilization-Program evaluation to explore client and therapist satisfaction and perceived efficacy of services at uniquely designed free-standing psychiatric occupational therapy clinic in the United States. Surveys were administered to 36 clients and 9 therapists, and followed up by qualitative interviews with 6 therapists. Results indicated distinctive features of a free-standing occupational therapy clinic, the importance of client-centered care, and high satisfaction and perceived efficacy from both clients and therapists. Key areas of focus included the importance of conscious use of self; the development of the therapeutic alliance; and the importance of choice, flexibility and community in the therapy environment. Results of the study will be discussed along with consideration of the pros and cons of mental health occupational therapy specialty clinics.