

Occupational therapy interventions and outcomes for patients with multiple sclerosis in an urban inpatient rehabilitation setting

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Introduction: Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and related disorders are a family of progressive relapsing-remitting diseases that have a profound effect on the ability of patients to engage in everyday activities. While current research suggests that occupational therapy is useful for individuals with MS, evidences are mainly experiential especially in an inpatient rehabilitation setting. **Objectives:** To review and analyze existing client charts five years retrospectively to determine the relation between occupational therapy interventions and outcomes in an inpatient setting. **Methods:** Retrospective data analysis. All clients (i) had a diagnosis of MS or related disorders, (ii) stayed in the inpatient rehabilitation center, (iii) received occupational therapy services, (iv) established initial goals with their therapist, and (v) were re-evaluated on the status of the goals at discharge. Charts dates were from August of 2003 through August of 2008. Approximately 200 patient charts were identified. Two occupational therapy practitioners and a group of graduate students were involved in the data extraction in a standardized format. Intra-rater reliability was established. As of March 2009, 100 charts have been reviewed and analyzed. **Results:** Preliminary results suggest that a) The majority of the patients were female, in their mid-40s, retired for disability, and living at home either alone or with family or friends; b) Occupational therapy treatments for these patients were primarily directed towards self care, therapeutic exercise, and therapeutic activities; c) Out of the five types of occupational therapy intervention delivered, the least amount of time was spent on cognitive training; d) In general, all patients showed improvement in their FIM scores. The greatest improvements were seen in toileting, tub transfers, and bathing. The least amount of improvements were seen in cognitive skills (comprehension, expression, social interaction, problem solving and memory). **Conclusion and Implication:** The present is showing promises of generating evidence for occupational therapy services in clients with multiple sclerosis in an inpatient rehabilitation setting.