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Improving access to participation in occupation for children with severe and complex disabilities through seating interventions

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Introduction:

Children with severe neuromotor disorders often use adaptive seating systems, sleep systems and other equipment for the dual purpose of increasing their access to everyday activities and occupations, but also to prevent the development of secondary deformities, which lead to difficulties in accessing occupations in the longer term. Occupational therapists are heavily involved in the provision and recommendations for the technical interventions, there is little objective evaluation of the effect of postural management on the occupational performance of children and their families.

Learning Objectives:

1. For the participants to have a working knowledge of the most up to date literature and evidence around the provision of postural management equipment and the effect of the methods of provision and equipment itself on the occupational performance of children and their families
2. To discuss which outcome measures are available and useful in investigating the effectiveness of postural management with this population.
3. For the participants to have a working knowledge of the competing priorities between managing body functions and structures and participation in occupations for children with complex difficulties and their families.

Length of Time Required: 1.5 hours

Description of teaching methods

A mixture of didactic teaching, demonstration of assessment, focus and discussion groups will be used. Didactic teaching will be used for presentation of evidence and literature, followed by discussion in groups as to clinical implications of these. Demonstration of outcome measures will address the second learning objective and focus groups with specific questions will run to identify therapists knowledge of the competing difficulties, their attitudes and brainstorm possible solutions.

Clinical Implications:

By investigating current theory and practice, health care practitioners will be empowered to give advice to parents and children, enhancing family and child centred practice, and ensuring that the decisions the family make surrounding their child's positioning equipment and needs will give the best possible outcome.

(350 words including title)