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Investigation of Eligibility and Discharge Criteria under Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)

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Introduction:

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is the primary federal law for providing education to infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities. Occupational Therapist play important role in providing services to children in schools (Nanof, 2007). However, there are no clear guidelines interpreting (IDEA) for admission and discharge from OT services in school system (Opp, 2007).

Objectives:

The purpose of this research study was to develop and distribute a questionnaire to pediatric occupational therapists. The information gained from the questionnaire was used in developing written guidelines for eligibility and discharge criteria for occupational therapy services in school-based practice.

Methods:

This research involved a mail survey to 500 pediatric occupational therapy practitioners. Data collected were analyzed using computer based statistical program.

Results and Practice Implications:

This study provided information from experienced OT practitioner in developing possible guidelines that can be implemented for eligibility and discharge criteria for occupational therapy services in school-based practice.

Conclusions:

Occupational therapists will be able to use this information in properly applying eligibility and discharge criteria in school system on individual basis based on the feedback from the current experienced clinical practitioners.