

International University-Clinic Partnerships in Occupational Therapy: Theory, Research and Practice via an Actual Case Study

Joseph Cipriani, Orley Templeton, Lalitchandra Shah
Misericordia University, Dallas, Pennsylvania, USA

Introduction/Rationale: The WFOT Congress Theme of "Connected in Diversity: Positioned for Impact", can be operationalized via the development of international partnerships between academic institutions and areas where the provision of occupational therapy services is scarce. There is a growing amount of research and dialogue about the most effective and participatory methods to develop such partnerships, and this paper will present the results of one such partnership - between a university in the United States and an island wide community of services in Jamaica.

Objectives: The attendee will be able to:

- a) describe best practices for such partnerships, including concepts such as reciprocity, cultural competence, sustainability, and guided reflection
- b) apply the concepts to the creation of such a partnership, via reflection on the experiences of one such attempt, through an actual case study
- c) consider the possibility of such a partnership within their own professional practice and a host institution.

Approach: The authors will share in detail, known best practices plus a chronological review of the development of a three year partnership, including successes and challenges, with the overall focus being the opportunity to learn by both parties through a mutually respectful, and potentially transformative, relationship.

Practice Implications: Modern means of transportation such as air travel throughout the globe, and advanced avenues for communication via electronic technologies, provide an exciting opportunity to advance the benefits of occupational therapy worldwide.

Conclusion: The global practice of occupational therapy has significant implications for fostering social and occupational justice, and promoting health and well-being.