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Filling in the GAP: Occupational Therapy's Role in Interprofessional Geriatric Assessment Team

Ashley Halle, Phuong Nguyen

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Objectives:

- Advocate for the distinct value of OT in geriatric interprofessional care
- Articulate OT's approach in a consultation clinic
- Identify opportunities for OT in primary care services across a variety of health care models

The provision of primary health care for our aging population has become more challenging as individuals live longer with limitations that interact in complex ways. This is especially true when health status is further complicated by declines in cognition. Comprehensive interprofessional assessment clinics provide a mechanism to rapidly evaluate older adults through an integrated biopsychosocial-spiritual lens. The goal is to offer integrated cross-disciplinary recommendations that are culturally sensitive, personally relevant and result in achievable goals that support the patient's highest level of safe and independent / interdependent function. The value of comprehensive interprofessional geriatric assessment programs is clear.

Implementation of these interprofessional programs is fraught with barriers that require an informed and organized approach to maximize positive outcomes. We will present an overview of our program here at a US Academic Medical Center, including 4 key components. These are (1) existing program logistics/flow and future directions, (2) the strategies and mechanisms that led to successful intra-team cohesion and effectiveness, (3) how to create opportunities to teach basic principles of geriatric assessment and interprofessional team functioning to students from six health care professions, and (4) the value of Rapid Cycle Quality Improvement (RCQI) to improve processes and experience of care. We will utilize a case format to illustrate these key components.