Community development in an occupational therapy curriculum – Creating a logic model to conceptualize course design

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Enabling Occupation - Community

- Occupational therapy has a unique lens of occupation through which we engage with community members in community development (CD) to improve their health and well-being.

- **Community Development**: The process of organizing or supporting community groups in their identification of important concerns and issues, and in their ability to plan and implement strategies to mitigate their concerns and resolve their issues. (Labonte, 1997)

- Course objectives:
  - Develop **foundational knowledge about community development** practices in local, national, and international contexts
  - Connect CD to the concept of **occupational justice** and emerging roles for occupational therapists working in the community level
  - Understand and apply approaches for describing programs, services, or supports and the **impact** on the communities they serve
The logic model

**Inputs**
- Building academic-community partnerships
- Pedagogy design
- Course coordination

**Community Development**
- CD approaches – class 3,4,5,6

**Enabling Occupation - Community Concepts and theories:** class 1,7,9

**Outputs**
- Understand the population: class 8 & 9 Assignment 1
- Understand the environment: class 11 & 12

**Building OT student Knowledge & Skills**
- Program theory & management: class 2 & 10
- Private practice and business plan: class 13
- Leadership and system-level view: class 14

**Student learning outcomes**
- Satisfaction
- Course evaluation

**Community outcomes**
- Satisfaction
- Project sustainability

**Outcomes**
- Link to the program evaluation course

**Student community development project design and implementation**

**Community development conference**
- Student project presentation
Building academic-community partnerships

Pedagogy design

Course coordination

- Adult learning theory
- Interactive learning
- Hands on practice

Build infrastructure for coordination

Edmonton

Calgary
Enabling Occupation - Community Concepts and theories: class 1,7,9

Community Development
CD approaches – class 3,4,5,6

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Student community development project design and implementation
Community development conference - Student project presentation
- 2017: 30 projects
- 2018: 26 projects

**Populations**
- Homeless/poverty: 21
- Homeless youth: 5
- Indigenous youth: 2
- Mental illnesses and addictions: 11
- Women (legal issues/Domestic Violence): 6
- Mixed marginalized populations: 7
- Seniors: 1
- People with disability: 2
- Refugees: 1

**Projects**
- Asset mapping/community profiling: 19
- Health Promotion: 5
- Educate-the-educator: 6
- Empowerment education: 7
- Employment program: 7
- Partnership building: 3
- Programming: 6
- Environmental modification: 1
- Needs assessment: 1
- Community-based Participatory Action Research: 1

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**Outputs**

1. **2017: 30 projects**
   - Homeless/poverty: 21
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2. **2018: 26 projects**
Empowering Permanent Housing Residents to Pursue Employment
Cassie Carlson, Brianne Grane, Jaclyn Hutchinson, Kathryn Lambert, & Faith Whittingham

The Who
- The Mustard Seed is a faith-based organization that provides support to adults experiencing poverty and homelessness.
- First established in Edmonton in 1988, some of the Mustard Seed’s services include:
  • Meals and hampers
  • Personal hygiene and clothing items
  • Education and employment support
  • Supportive housing for chronic homeless
  • Counseling and spiritual development

The What
- Objective: develop a program to provide residents of Westwood Manor with employment education and skills
- Identified requirements of program:
  • Holistic – account for entire job process, from getting ID to maintaining a job
  • Sustainable: – able to be run by housing staff without support of students
  • Empowering: involvement of residents in program development and delivery

The How

End Project

Westwood Manor
- 20 suite permanent, supportive housing facility overseen by the Mustard Seed.
  • One staff member always on site
  • Residents are provided with own apartment suite and have access to weekly groups and special events, such as resident dinners
  • Facility is harm reduction focused
    • Many residents currently use substances

Needs Assessment
- Implemented to gain a better understanding into barriers and priorities regarding employment
- Strengths and barriers identified through discussion with key informants and residents
- On site meeting with Mustard Seed staff
- Focus group with Westwood Manor residents
- Six session work and job skills group facilitated on site by a Westwood Manor staff member
- Follows empowerment education approach
  • Focus on providing strategies and tools that will build residents’ capacities to find and obtain employment
  • Discussions and activities to encourage active problem solving and reflection

Asset Mapping
- Elements of asset mapping completed to identify suitable community employment resources
- All community resources located within areas easily accessible to Westwood Manor residents
- Resources found through internet and contacting other local organizations

Employment
- Key themes identified through collaboration with residents and staff, including:
  • emotional regulation, interpersonal skills, and exploring motivations/ goals
- Sessions follow the job application process
  1. What you need to get a job
  2. Identifying your interests
  3. Resume building
  4. Interview preparation
  5. First week on the job
  6. Maintaining a job

The Why

Community Development
- Residents face occupational barriers but do not have consistent access to OT services
- Focus on enhancing capacity of Westwood Manor residents to seek out and obtain employment
- Employment increases resident independence and community engagement
- Program is intended to be self sustainable
  • Can be delivered by any staff members, and scheduled according to resident needs
  • Ensures that future community members can also benefit from the program

Occupational Therapy
- Employment is a productive occupation that has been linked to higher levels of wellbeing
- Can provide structure, financial independence, social interaction and meaning/ purpose
- Many individuals who use drugs experience occupational imbalance in their daily lives
- Unemployment rate significantly higher among individuals who use drugs

References
I increased my knowledge of the subject areas in this course.

Assignments were challenging and worthwhile; they helped me to apply the course content to my own work/practice.

This course (learning experience) prepared me for future practice as an OT.

The course design and community project experience provided a positive learning experience.

Overall, the quality of the course content was excellent.

2018, Edmonton site, 44/94 respondents
The OT students made a positive contribution to my organization
I am satisfied with the way the OT students performed on the project
I am satisfied with the final deliverables the OT students developed
My organization will continue/apply the student project(s) in the future

2017 & 2018 community survey
Total agencies responded: 25
The logic model

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Conclusion

- Students showed **high satisfaction** with learning; Community agencies showed **high satisfaction** with student projects.
- We established *academic-community partnerships* with 26 community agencies.
- OT Students conducted 56 CD projects with marginalized populations.
  - The projects utilized established CD strategies. Important CD components such as empowerment and sustainability were evidently applied in each project.
  - Most 2017 projects are **sustained**.
- The logic model makes an explicit statement of the curriculum design and indicates precisely how each activity leads to desired student learning outcomes.
- This initiative demonstrates the application of CD approaches to enable social change at a macro level through increasing capacity in future OTs.
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