Exploring Primary Contact Occupational Therapy Hand Clinics: The pull of an occupational perspective

Samantha Burley, Ruth Cox, Amelia Di Tommaso and Prof. Matthew Molineux

Contact: Samantha.burley@griffithuni.edu.au
Overview

- Background to the study
- Research aims
- Methodology
- Results
- Limitations
- Study implications
Background

Ø Allied health professionals are emerging into advanced scope roles

Ø Medical substitution role: occupational therapists assess and manage patients on the waiting list to see an orthopaedic surgeon
Scoping review findings

Informal discussion as an occupational strategy

Bottom up approaches

Focus on assessment and evaluation

Inconsistent terminology

Research aims

- Primary Contact Occupational Therapy Hand (PCOTH) clinics
- Aimed to explore, from an occupational perspective, the practice of occupational therapists working in PCOTH clinics
- Ethnography
- Ethics approval granted
Data collection

Initial interview with each participant

Observation totaling 60 hours, observing 51 patients and 48 occupational therapy sessions.

Documentation review of each patients’ progress note in the medical record.

Final interview with each participant

Data analysis

- LeCompte & Schensul (1999) – item, pattern and constitutive stages
1. Bottom up approach to an occupational perspective
2. An occupational perspective via informal discussion
3. Occupational therapists’ expectations of patients
4. An occupational perspective on autopilot
5. Blurred professional identity
“we need to make sure we’re assessing all the things the [orthopaedic surgeons] would assess.”

“…finding out … about the person as a whole and what’s important to them and what their occupations are is an added bonus in terms of what we offer over what the orthopaedic surgeon would offer.”
“I find it more useful to say, ‘okay, how is your work going? How is your housework going? Are you back at soccer yet?’”

An occupational perspective via informal discussion

“… you just get on autopilot, and you don’t understand why you’re asking the questions that you’re really asking.”

An occupational perspective on autopilot

“we try and give a more holistic treatment than what the orthopaedic surgeons do…”

Blurred professional identity

Occupational therapists’ expectations of patients

Ted’s story
Limitations

- Impact of the researcher.
- Specific context of PCOTH clinics.
- Participation in the research may have directly or indirectly impacted the organisational culture of the clinics.
Study implications

- Outcome measures utilised to inform practice
- CMOP-E (Polatajko et al., 2013)
- Professional development
- Supervision that includes critical reflection on practice
- Critical reflection on our unique contribution and emerging practice areas
- More research to explore patients’ perspectives
References


Questions

For further information or questions email
samantha.burley@griffithuni.edu.au