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A Non-Pharmaceutical Approach to Chronic Pain: An OT's Perspective

Alison L. Brown

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, a.brown3@usa.edu

Kayla Collins

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, kcollins@usa.edu

Mary P. Shotwell

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, mshotwell@usa.edu

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A Non-Pharmaceutical Approach to Chronic Pain: An OT's Perspective

Alie Brown OTS; Kayla Collins MOT, OTR/L, EdD; and Mary Shotwell PhD, OT/L, FAOTA

BACKGROUND

The most common practice for chronic pain this is the use of pharmaceuticals (CDC, 2019). However, these drugs cannot fix or heal the problem but only temporarily soothe the pain, thus only being partially effective (Domenichiello & Ramsden, 2019). Occupational therapy can benefit their patients through non-pharmaceutical interventions such as adaptive equipment/strategies, aquatic therapy, fitness programs, and ergonomics to increase the patient's quality of life and independence while decreasing their pain levels (Hill, 2016).

PROBLEM

Occupational therapists are prepared to address the needs of chronic pain, but there is no relevant literature to provide evidence to the effectiveness of these non-pharmacologic techniques being used in occupational therapy practice.

PURPOSE

To develop an evidence-based manual for patients and clinicians to outline the benefits of a non-pharmacological approach to manage chronic pain symptoms and to provide informational sessions to various audiences on these types of interventions.

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Outcome objectives:

1. Develop and disseminate educational resources for practicing clinicians on non-pharmaceutical pain management techniques.
2. Provide at least three informational sessions to varying audiences demonstrating the benefits of OT on chronic pain, focused on educating participants on non-pharmaceutical pain management techniques.
3. Conduct a needs assessment on chronic pain experienced by residents living at Melbourne Terrace Rehab
4. Create an evidence-based resource manual documenting the role of OT in reducing chronic pain through non-pharmacological pain management techniques.
5. Review and revise the material presented in the client informational sessions based on participant feedback.

METHODS

- Four informational sessions with various audiences
- Performed a needs assessment at a skilled nursing facility
- Outcome was an evidence-based manual to present to the site

PROJECT

Manual and Information Sessions

General Topics of Manual:

1. Chronic Pain
 - a) Symptoms
 - b) Statistics
 - c) Definitions
2. Pharmaceutical
 - a) Opioid Crisis
3. Occupational Therapy
 - a) Who, What, When, Where, and Why
4. Adaptive Strategies and Adaptive Equipment
5. Aquatic Therapy
6. Fitness Based-Programs
7. Ergonomics
8. Activities

Manual Purpose:

The manual was created as an evidence-based resource to advocate and educate readers on occupational therapy's role in chronic pain. The content provides interesting and useful information about each component of this capstone. The manual is interactive, informative, and can be utilized by both patients and clinicians.

Informational Session Focus:

What occupational therapy's role is in chronic pain, what their interventions look like, and how this can affect many different populations of people.

Four Informational Session Audiences:

1. Patients
2. Nursing Staff
3. Therapy Staff
4. Students

A Non-Pharmaceutical Approach to Pain Management: An Occupational Therapist's Perspective

By Alie Brown, OTS

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