



Providing Occupational Therapy Intervention to a Visually Impaired Patient through Training and Resource Development: A Case Study



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OVERVIEW OF CAPSTONE SITE

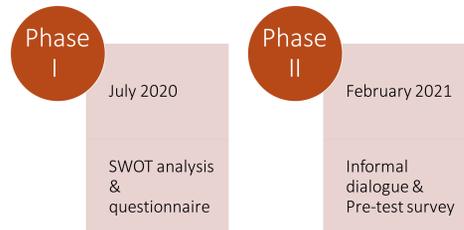
North Mississippi Medical Center (NMMC) is a non-profit hospital campus located in Tupelo, Mississippi. In areas of service, the hospital provides acute, diagnostic, therapeutic, and emergency expertise (North Mississippi Health Services [NMHS], 2020). The hospital system includes a 17-acre outpatient rehabilitation area in Tupelo, named Longtown Medical Park. Among the outpatient rehabilitation services offered at Longtown Medical Park are aquatic therapy, children's therapy, hand therapy, neurological rehabilitation, orthopedic rehabilitation, sports medicine, swallow therapy, etc.

- Staff: The staff includes an interdisciplinary team including occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, and other rehabilitation professionals.
- Mission: "To continuously improve the health of the people of our region."
- Vision: "The provider of the best patient- and family-centered care and health services in America" (NMHS, 2020).

LITERATURE SUMMARY

- 8 out of 10 low vision patients experience a severe or total handicap situation in at least one ADL they consider important.(Duquette, Loisel, Frechette, De'ry, Sene'cal, 2018).
- The role of occupational therapists is to enable individuals to become more independent in their daily occupations by enabling them to overcome obstacles or deficits. Low vision effects almost all activities of daily living and involves risk factors for balance problems, falls, injuries, and cognitive decline (Wittich, Jarry, Barstow, & Thomas, 2015).
- The unique contribution occupational therapists can provide to low vision patients includes drawing from all aspects of our training including activity analysis, neuroscience, and psychological adaptation (Warren, 1995).
- Current occupational therapists attempting to specialize in vision impairments have to rely on publications and teachings of related fields due to the limited OT literature on the subject (Wittich, Jarry, Barstow, & Thomas, 2015).

NEEDS ASSESSMENT



The Phase I Needs Assessment led to a proposed project of: to seek grant funding to provide new equipment or experiences that would allow the clinic to grow and improve. Due to administrative decisions and conflicting timelines of my capstone experience with pre-existing clinical developments, the initial project plan was no longer feasible.

A new need was identified through informal needs assessment process to benefit a personal need. Therapy practitioners and educational providers at NMMC were surveyed on their personal knowledge and experience with visually impaired patients through informal yet intentional conversations. Based on these interactions, I identified the need for an educational training resource on providing efficient and beneficial intervention to visually impaired patients. Further development of the clinical need was established following a pre-test survey used to identify stakeholders' familiarity with low vision rehabilitation in order to provide the most beneficial resource for the clinic.

References available upon request

PROJECT GOALS / OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the capstone project is to provide the practitioners at North Mississippi Medical Center with an educational resource in the form of a guidebook on implementing the most effective occupational therapy intervention to their low vision patients.

Objectives

- Recognize visual impairments and the role they play in a patient's participation in and performance of daily occupations
- Understand the purpose and importance of vision rehabilitation
- Distinguish occupational therapist's role in vision rehabilitation
- Provide therapy practitioners with training and resources needed to facilitate vision rehabilitation intervention with their patients

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & DISSEMINATION

To gain a better understanding of the information the guidebook needed to contain in order to best accommodate its intended audience, a pre-test was developed for practitioners and informal dialogue was used to gather information from the low vision patient that inspired the need for a guidebook.

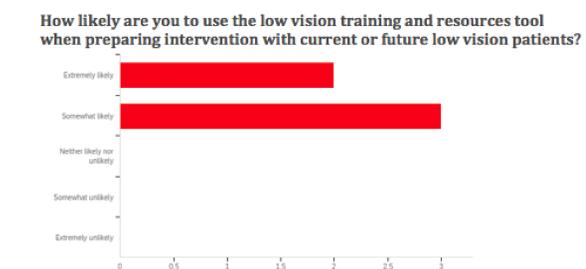
- Reviewed Existing Literature on Low Vision intervention to support new capstone project plan
- Developed a pre-test survey to identify the practitioners' familiarity with low vision rehabilitation
- Comprised a training and resource guidebook: Providing Occupational Therapy Intervention to Visually Impaired Patients
- Invited stakeholders to in-service presentation during the final week of the capstone experience

After establishing the components the training resource needed to incorporate, I was able to complete the guidebook based on existing research and client-centered practice. The guidebook encompasses brief descriptions of various visual impairments, ADL/ IADL performance tips to consider, home modification suggestions, an introduction to braille education, existing vision assessments and technology, information on Mississippi based support groups, and online resources available for continuing therapy education or patient/caregiver use. The guidebook was printed and assembled in a portfolio to be left with the Longtown pediatric clinic to use refer to when providing therapy intervention to patients with visual impairments.

The information within the guidebook was also offered to the stakeholders and therapy practitioners in the form of an in-service presentation. Stakeholders were invited to view an in-service presentation of my doctoral capstone project, if they chose to, during a lunch hour of my final week at the capstone experience. A PowerPoint presentation was used as a tool to deliver the research information and training guide to the audience. Following the presentation, the audience was invited to participate in a post-test satisfaction survey.

PLAN FOR PROJECT EVALUATION

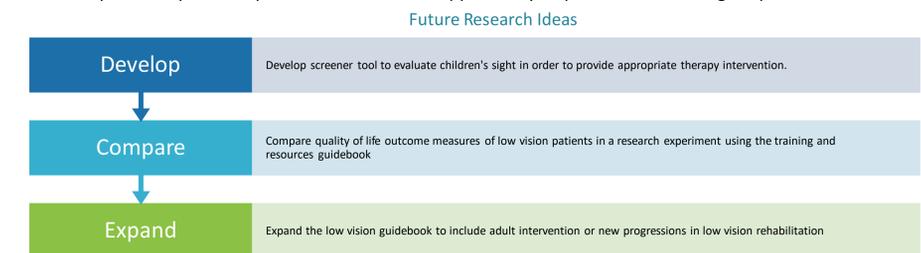
Five individuals participated in the online satisfaction post-test survey. One audience participant was unable to complete the survey portion of the in-service presentation due to schedule conflicts and time constraints. The survey included Likert scale satisfaction questions regarding the quality of the presentation material, how the material was conveyed to the audience, and the likelihood that the guidebook will be successfully implemented.



The post-test survey also contained questions requiring participants to rate their satisfaction with the student's performance in various areas of occupational therapy practice. The post-test survey was done in-person through a QR code provided by the student at the end of the in-service presentation and therefore no follow up or reminder emails were necessary.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

- The guidebook created will benefit current and future low vision patients at NMMC pediatric outpatient clinic.
- It will benefit practitioners at the capstone site by providing an accessible resource to guide intervention.
- Through the project, increased clinical skills in treatment of the low vision population.
- Through the capstone experience I deepened my communication and leadership skills by regularly planning and initiating meetings with the capstone mentor and other practitioners
- The capstone experience provided me with the opportunity to practice advocating for patient's needs.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Penny Rogers for organizing the capstone experience as well as being available for questions. Her flexibility and understanding is unmatched in these turbulent times. I would like to thank my faculty mentor, Dr. Ladner, for her availability to provide guidance and support whenever it was needed. Lastly, I would like to thank my Capstone Mentor, Jai Eschete, for guiding me, teaching me, and encouraging me so well throughout the experience.