

Project Description & Site

Areas of study: 1) Education 2) Advocacy 3) Clinical Practice

Population: OT practitioners, educators, and students

Site: Riverview Health Rehab & Fitness

Description: The main objective of my doctoral capstone project was to increase competence in occupational therapy practitioners by developing educational materials and content to support the nontraditional professional practice area of aquatic therapy.



Needs Assessment | Literature Review

Needs Assessment: Although there are many aquatic therapy resources available to practitioners, there are a lack of resources specific to OT. The aquatic environment can be used to treat a wide range of diagnoses, but it is continued to be underused as a treatment modality in occupational therapy.

Literature Review: The current literature supports that improvements in the ability to independently complete ADLs, functionality, QOL, and decreased fall risk are all proven benefits of engaging in aquatic therapy. There are many aquatic interventions that can meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, injury, or illness. The functional gains made in the water can successfully transfer onto land, thus improving static and dynamic balance, among other factors.

Christ | Scholarship | Service

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” Hebrews 13:16

“Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.” Proverbs 3:27

Project Completion and Outcomes

Outcome Measure 1: Student will demonstrate in-depth knowledge in aquatic therapy practice as evidenced by the completion of education plan designed to support occupations performed “on land” following participation in an aquatic therapy program.

Related learning objectives: Completion of 5 CEU courses, 2 occupation-based case studies, and 11 educational resources

Outcome Measure 2: In order to demonstrate in-depth knowledge in aquatic therapy from an occupational therapy perspective, the student will create a website for occupational therapy practitioners to use for the purposes of educating on this unique area of practice.

Related learning objectives: Formal PPT presentation for current OT students, in-service presentation for staff

Mission & Vision Statements

Mission Statement: To create educational content and resources in which occupational therapy practitioners utilize to become more frequent providers of aquatic therapy services.

Vision Statement: Occupational therapists who safely and effectively practice aquatic therapy to promote optimal occupational performance among clients.

Deliverables

- #1: Education plan content (5 examples of aquatic therapy treatment sessions)
- #2: 5 CEU certificates of completion
- #3: 2 Written case studies
- #4: 11 Educational resources for OTPs/clients
- #5: Website for OTPs
- #6: PPT presentation for OTD students



Future Implications for OT

Impact on OT: Educational materials to advocate for and promote an increase in the frequency of OTPs providing aquatic therapy services.

Impact on Career: I will continue to advocate for more OTPs to consider implementing aquatic therapy into practice, when applicable. I hope to continue to share my educational materials with others in the OT community.
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KEY REFERENCES *Full reference list and image reference list available upon request
Devereux, K., Robertson, D., & Briffa, N. K. (2005). Effects of a water-based program on women 65 years and over: A randomised controlled trial. *Australian Journal of Physiotherapy*, 51, 102-108. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0004-9514\(05\)70038-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0004-9514(05)70038-6)
Franken, L.E., Mische Lawson, L.A., & Santalucia, S. (2013). Aquatics: Promoting quality of life, health, and wellness. *OT Practice*, 18(6), 16-20, 22. <https://doi.org/10.7138/otp.2013.186f2>
Noh, D. K., Lim, J. Y., Shin, H.I., & Paik, N. J. (2008). The effect of aquatic therapy on postural balance and muscle strength in stroke survivors: A randomized controlled pilot trial. *Clinical Rehabilitation*, 22, 966-976. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269215508091434>
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