

# Occupation-Based Wellness Program for the Forensic Mental Health Population



Ashlyn Pochop, OTD/S; Laura Ferrari, OTD, OTR/L; Kathryn Duke, OTD, OTR/L



## Center for Graduate Studies – West Coast University, Occupational Therapy Doctoral Program

### Description of DCE

Gateways Hospital and Mental Health Center is a non-profit organization located in the heart of Los Angeles, California. Gateways Hospital serves the community, individuals, and families who struggle with mental health conditions. Gateways Hospital offers multiple programs all with the goals of delivering specialized care to vulnerable populations, and offers programs that include residential, outpatient, hospital, homeless services, along with a wellness center, and forensic programs.

State Transitional Residential Program (STRP) that falls under the forensic community programs offered at Gateways Hospital. STRP serves individuals who have criminal records and are diagnosed with mental health conditions. The STRP program is the highest level of care offered in the outpatient setting after hospitalization at a state hospital.

### Needs Assessment

Statewide Transitional Residential Program (STRP) serves a vulnerable population that needs skilled occupational therapy services to provide basic life skills to increase the success of the client's reintegration into the community.

Three themes were identified from staff and client surveys

- Socialization
- Development of Skills
- Women's Health

### Key Points from Literature Review

**Problem statement:** Incarcerated individuals who have mental health disorders are part of a vulnerable population that is often overlooked and forgotten about while serving their time. These individuals are being released into the community without the proper skillset to allow for successful reintegration.

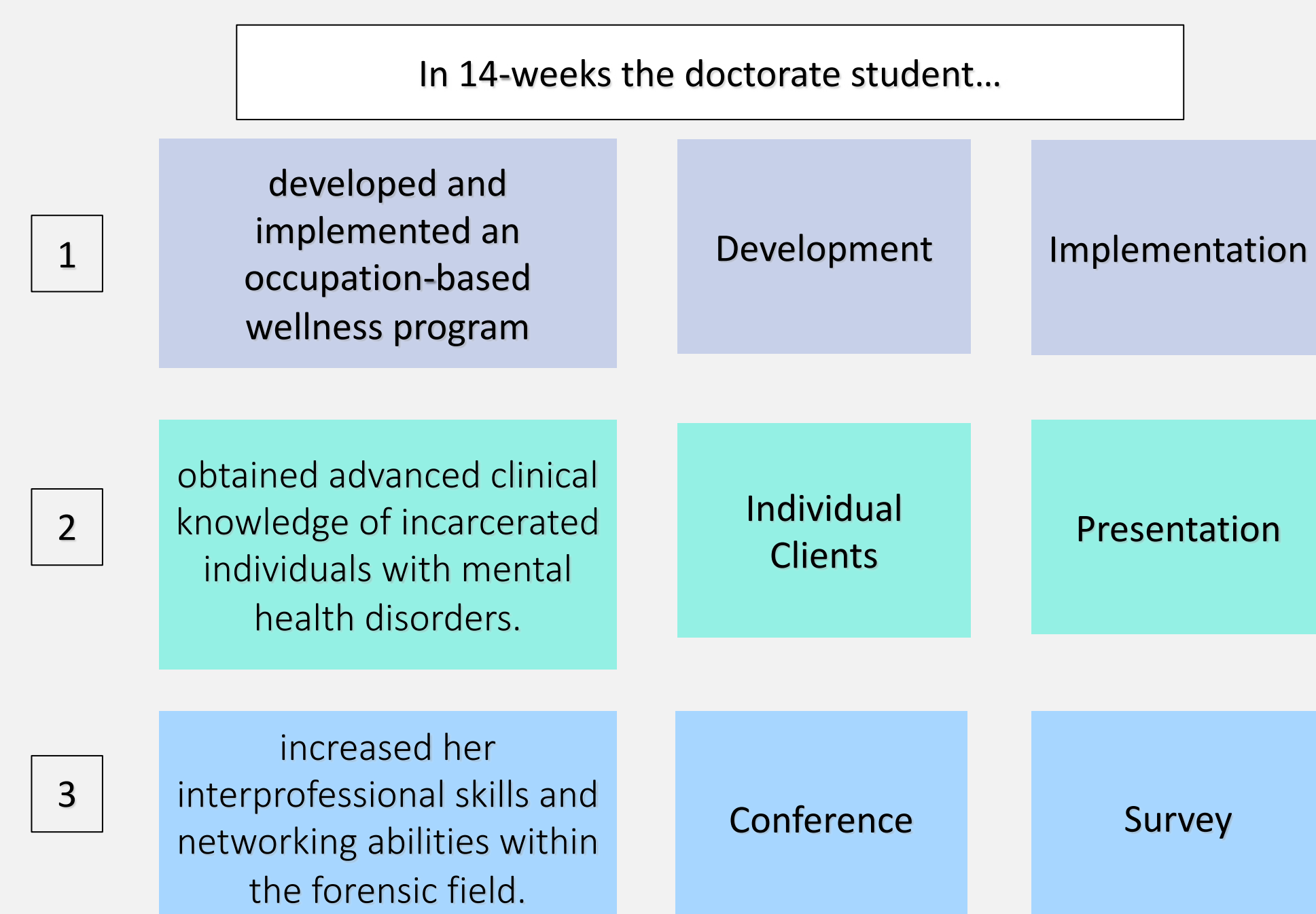
#### Themes

- Occupational Deprivation and it's impact (Whiteford et al., 2020)
- Occupation-based treatment and client centered care (Birken et al., 2021; Crabtree et al., 2016)
- The few programs that do exist the results are beneficial for the population (Wagenfeld, & Atchison, 2014; Morley & Fulton, 2020; Gibson et al., 2011)

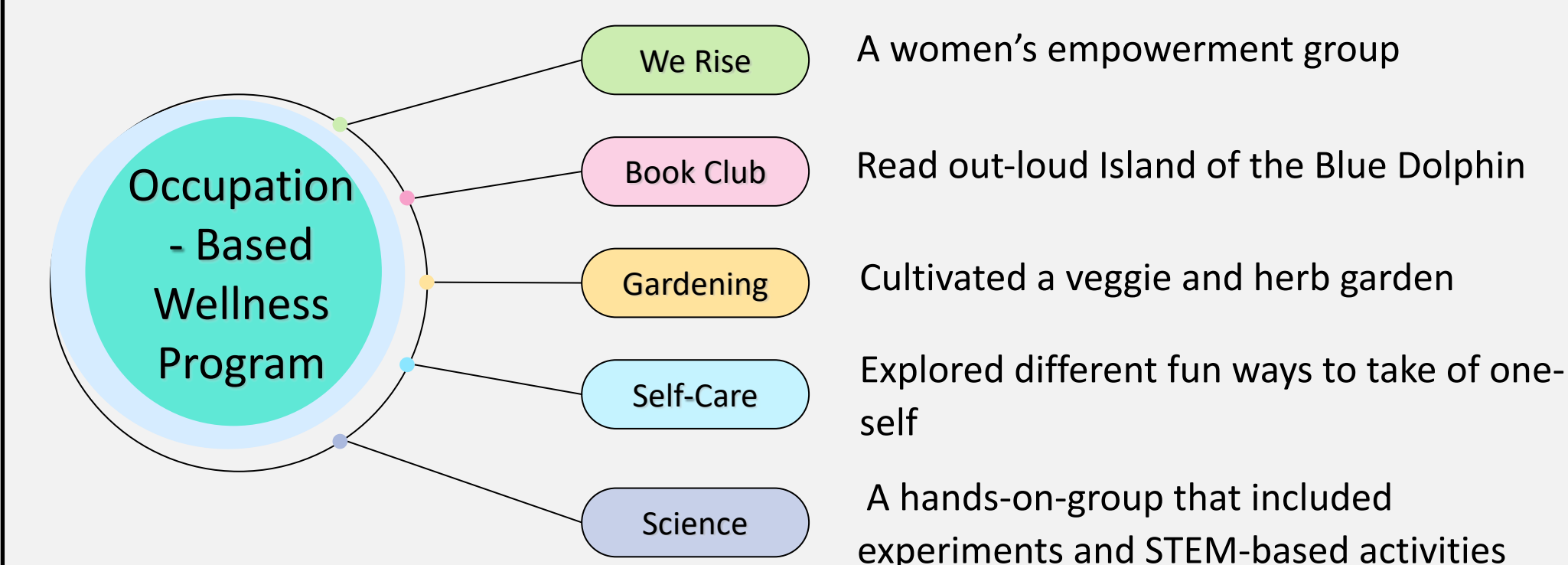
#### Gaps

- One major gap that stood out from the research was the scarcity of occupation-based programs provided to his vulnerable population (Morley & Fulton, 2020; Wagenfeld & Atchison, 2014)
- Lack of occupational therapists in the forensic mental health field (Birken et al., 2021; Crabtree et al., 2016)

### Learning Objectives



### Project Description and Implementation



#### Program Objectives

1. Increased quality of life for the participants
2. Increased coping skills, communication skills, and self-efficacy skills
3. Development of clinical expertise skills through program development and implementation for the doctorate student

#### Implementation

1. 15-week program
2. The participants were allowed to choose which group, they wanted to attend with no limitations on how many groups the attended.
3. Each group was held once a week for an hour except for book club which was held twice a week

### Evaluation and Outcomes

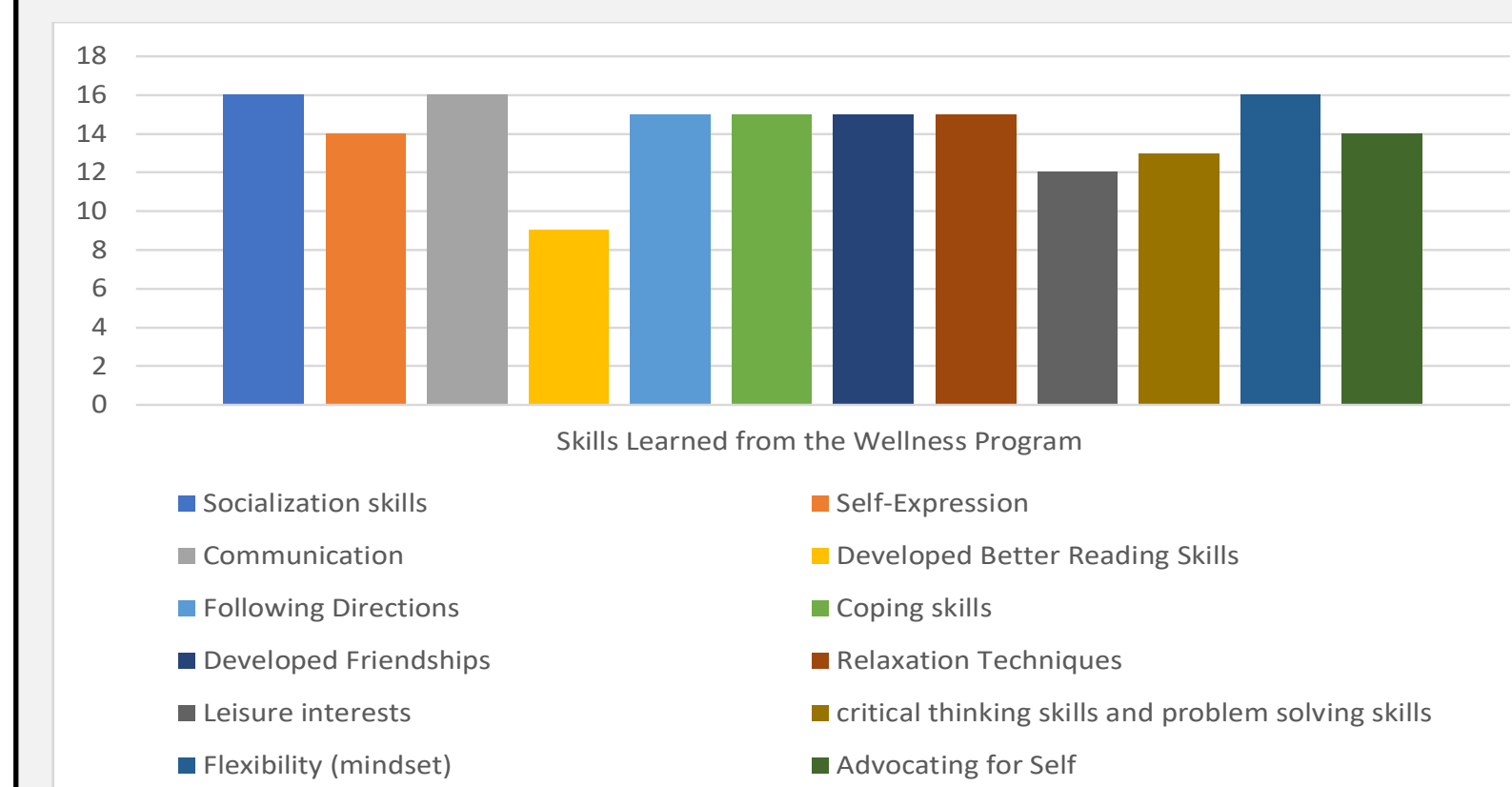
#### Self-Authored survey

N = 17; Females = 6; Males = 11

Qualitive data:

mentally-prepared meaningful-activities  
learning-experience communication-skills  
growth time-management  
self-expression coping-skills  
socialization independence  
success community-reintegration  
self-advocacy good-decisions  
building-friendships

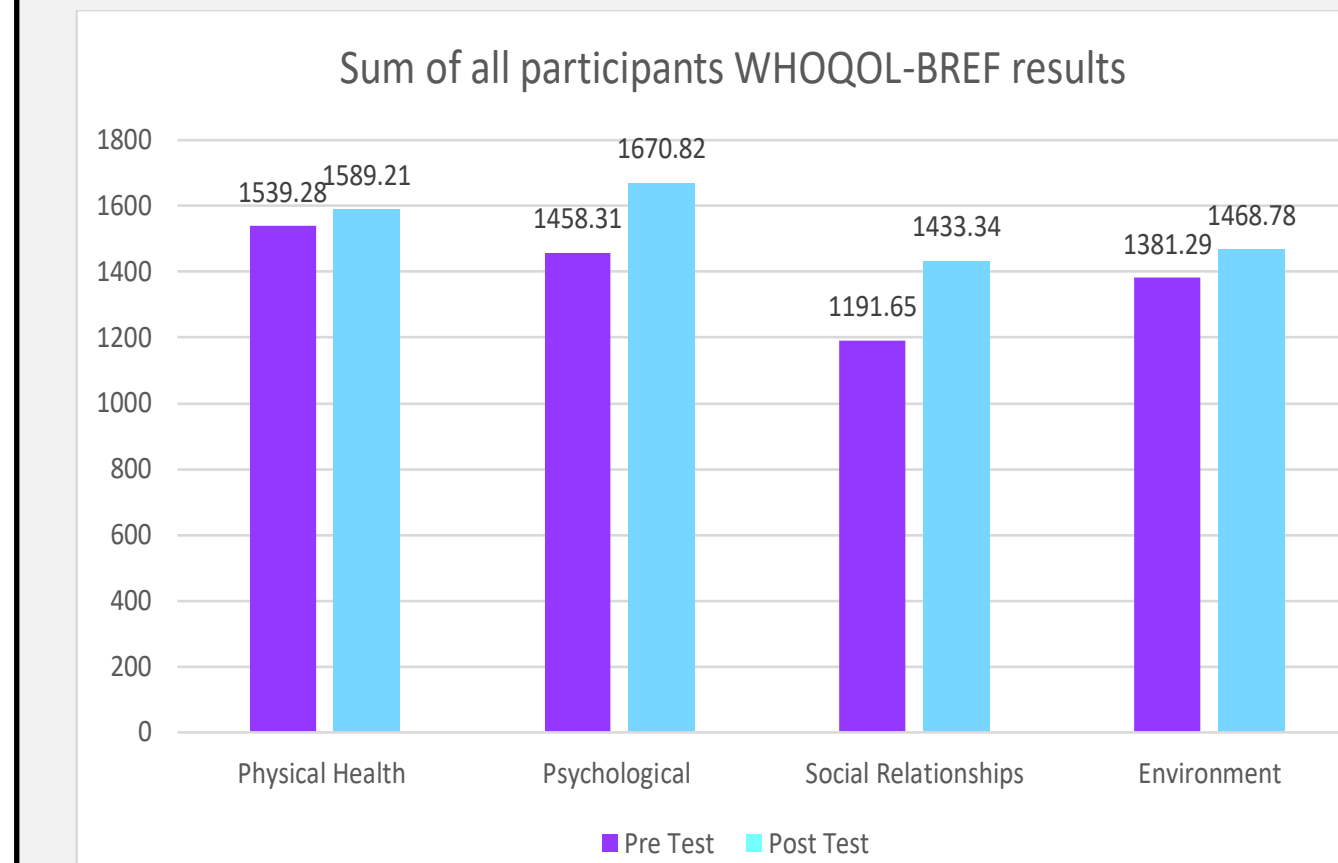
*\*The word-cloud to the left shows common words that were pulled from the participants answers to the open-ended questions on the self-authored survey.*



*\*This table shows the skills developed and or improved on from the program and how many participants believed they showed growth in that skill.*

#### WHOQOL-BREF

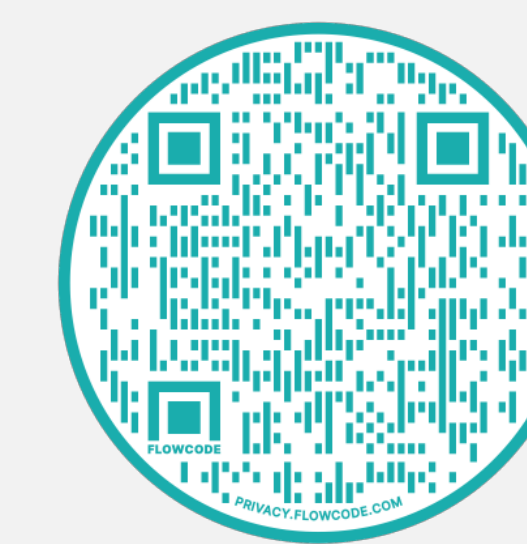
N = 20; Females = 8; Males = 12



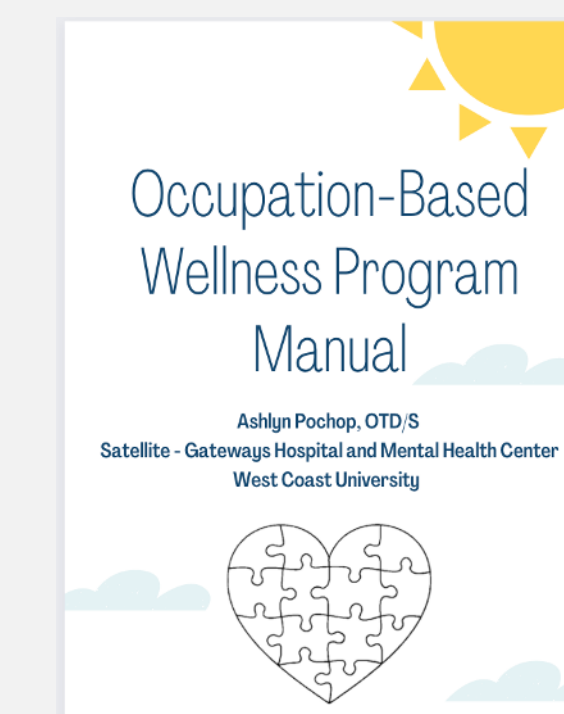
*\*The occupation-based wellness program had a total of 45 participants. Due to the nature of the facility with the comings and goings not every participant was able to fill out a pre and a post test.*

### Scholarly Deliverables

Please scan the QR code to access the scholarly deliverables.



The program manual consists of a layout for each group with the supplies needed and the instructions for the different activities.



### Conclusion

- The occupation-based wellness program improved the quality of life and provided the participants with life skills they believe will benefit them when they are out in the community.
- The occupation-based wellness program showcases the importance of programs alike to be developed and or continued within the forensic mental health field and the positive impact that occupational therapy can have within this vulnerable population.
- Throughout the five groups the three main themes from the needs assessment were woven throughout each group.
- The program provided the clients with the opportunity to practice meaningful occupations that many of the participants haven't been able to practice or have never been exposed to due to their long history of being detained in state hospitals, prisons or jails thus decreasing occupational deprivation

### Acknowledgements

Thank you to Laura for giving me the opportunity to design and implement the occupation-based wellness program at STRP. Thank you to Dr. Duke and the rest of the Occupational Therapy staff at West Coast University for all the encouragement, knowledge, and support. Lastly, thank you to my friends and family for always believing in me and pushing me towards a brighter future.

### References Available Upon Request