



A TRANSITIONAL LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM TO INCREASE INDEPENDENCE IN PEOPLE WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS



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SITE DESCRIPTION

Gateways Satellite Transitional Residential Program (STRP) is a forensic outpatient program in the greater Los Angeles area that provides court-mandated residential, day-care, and mental health therapeutic services for adults ages 18-64. Clients at this site have committed crimes when unmedicated and have either pled guilty due to reasons of insanity or are not competent to stand trial. This program aims to help the clients transition back into the community. Clients receive all therapeutic treatment in-house.

THEMES IN LITERATURE REVIEW

Impact of severe mental illness on occupation

- Lawton Instrumental Activities of Daily Living Assessment Scale:
 - more than 75% of the participants had difficulty with medication management, food preparation, and shopping
 - more than 50% had difficulty with finances and laundry
 - Over 25% of participants had difficulty with housekeeping and transportation (Samuel et al. 2018)

Effectiveness of Occupational Therapy and Life Skills Training

- The explanation of occupational therapy is the “doing” of activities compared to psychotherapy and skill training (Birken et al. 2018; Doug et al. 2021)

Combination of Life Skills Training with another skill

- Combined Occupational Therapy and Social Skills Training group showed a higher increase in occupational performance satisfaction within the areas of self-care, productivity, and leisure (Doug et al. 2021)

IDENTIFIED NEEDS

- Continuity of Care
- Skill development
- Program Development
- Community Exploration
- Leisure Exploration
- Medication Management

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- By week 3 of DCE, the capstone student will have conducted a needs assessment investigating what has helped and/or hindered clients' transition to their next level of care.
- By week 6 of DCE, the capstone student will have developed a six week transitional life skills program to address activities of daily living, community reintegration, and leisure exploration to meet the needs of the clients.
- By week 14 of DCE, the capstone student will have implemented and assessed the effectiveness of the transitional life skills program.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is a lack of evidence in using occupational therapy to increase independence in ADLs, IADLs, community navigation, and leisure exploration when transitioning into the community from mental health institutions, especially in the United States. This leaves a population vulnerable to an increase in recidivism, suicide, criminal activity, and substance use, which results in a decrease in activities, wellness, and quality of life.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

1-3 Weeks:

- Conducted additional needs assessment
- Create a **Transitional Life Skills Assessment***

4-6 Weeks:

- Trial run of assessment
- Make corrections
- Administer assessment

7-12 Weeks:

- Development Group and Individual Protocols for the **Transitional Life Skills Program**
- Implement four weekly groups
- Implement weekly individual sessions

13-14 Weeks:

- Re-administer assessment
- Conduct exit interviews
- Make edits to the assessments and program

OUTCOMES

The graph below compares the pre- and post-assessment scores. The results from the pre- and post-assessment show an increase in seven out of 10 categories. The increase in scores can be attributed to the exposure, education, and practice the Transitional Life Skill Program offered. A decrease in lower body dressing was due to a participant's fall (unrelated to the capstone program), and a decrease in judgment and decision-making is understandable since two participants were observed having an increase in psychiatric symptoms and were later re-hospitalized. The overall averages of assessment scores increased by 1.4 points.

Category	PRE Assessment Avg.	POST Assessment Avg.
Personal Hygiene	4.3	4.6
Dressing	3.8	3.7
Housekeeping	3.3	3.4
Shopping	1.0	1.0
Money Management	3.1	3.3
Healthy Eating Awareness	2.5	2.8
Medication Management	0.9	1.0
Leisure Exploration	0.7	0.9
Time Management	2.6	3.0
Judgement and Decision Making	5.3	5.1

Number	Personal Hygiene (DCE)	Dressing (DCE)	Housekeeping (DCE)	Shopping (DCE)	Money Management (DCE)	Healthy Eating Awareness (DCE)	Medication Management (DCE)	Leisure Exploration (DCE)	Time Management (DCE)	Judgement and Decision Making (DCE)	Total (DCE)
10	4	4	2	1	3	2	1	1	3	6	25
10	4	4	4	1	4	3	1	1	3	4	30

This table provides a better depiction of the individual success made from the Transitional Life Skills Program. One client was able to increase skill ability, but decreased in judgement and decision making due to an increase in psychotic symptoms.

DISCUSSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

- This project brought insight to the populations needs and abilities:
 - They are able to learn new information and apply it.
 - The importance of occupational justice.
 - There is a need for continued care after being discharged from a mental health facility.
 - Understanding individuals abilities and limitations simultaneously understanding that skills fluctuate.
 - Life skills are constant and can always be improved.
 - Client appreciation for community exploration and for diving deeper into topics.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Basic ADLs to more advanced IADLs training
- Creating more sensitive mental health assessments for OTs to properly assess individuals.
- Additionally more research and education for OTs to implement life skills training into their therapeutic practices.
- Continuing educating this population is crucial.
- Benefits of health literacy for this population

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SCHOLARLY DELIVERABLES

Transitional Life Skills Assessment

Group Deliverables

Individual Deliverables

REFERENCES