



Addressing the Service Cliff: Occupations-Based Program for Adults with Special Needs



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Description of DCE Site: ETHOS Therapeutics

- Community-based for-profit company
- provides *one-to-one therapeutic services* to **adults with developmental delays and mental health disorders**
- Locations: Lancaster and Simi Valley, California
- services are funded and accessed through the **North Los Angeles County Regional Center (NLACRC)**
- Mission and Vision:** provide quality therapeutic services for successful community integration, independence, and self-sufficiency by promoting education, training, hard work, and opportunity

Summary of Needs Assessment

3 Needs Identified

- Occupation-Based Curriculum
- Staff Training
- Resources & Advocacy

Literature Review

Themes:

- Successful programs emphasized...**
 - Internal locus of control
 - Strong support from family/caregivers
- The Service Cliff:** lack of service provision after a person passes the IDEA Act age threshold (22 years old)

Gaps

- Lack of research on effective interventions** catered to adults with special needs
- Major **underrepresentation** of the wide range of diagnoses that are encompassed by the term 'adults with special needs.'

Student Learning Objectives

- The capstone student will help improve independence and day program participation for adults with special needs by **developing and implementing a six-week group program**.
- The capstone student will facilitate improved independence of clients at ETHOS by **completing individual consultations**.
- The capstone student will **facilitate improved teamwork and collaboration among professionals** in the interdisciplinary team at ETHOS.

Project Description and Implementation

Focus Area: **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

16 Participants



1 dropout

1-hour sessions x6

- targeting ADLs, IADLs, and various performance skills
 - Effectiveness measured by pre-post assessments
- 6 *volunteers for consult* with 1 dropout
 - One day per week of consultations** in addition to weekly groups
 - Made recommendations and tracked progress through qualitative data collection
- Staff training and in-services** implemented on *'Interprofessional Collaboration'*
 - Effectiveness measured by pre-post assessments
- Sustainability Plan:** *scholarly deliverables were left with ETHOS Therapeutics*, and the capstone student will remain on ETHOS Staff to provide continued support to the existing day program

Evaluation and Outcomes

Figure 1: Comparison of Pre and Post Assessment Scores

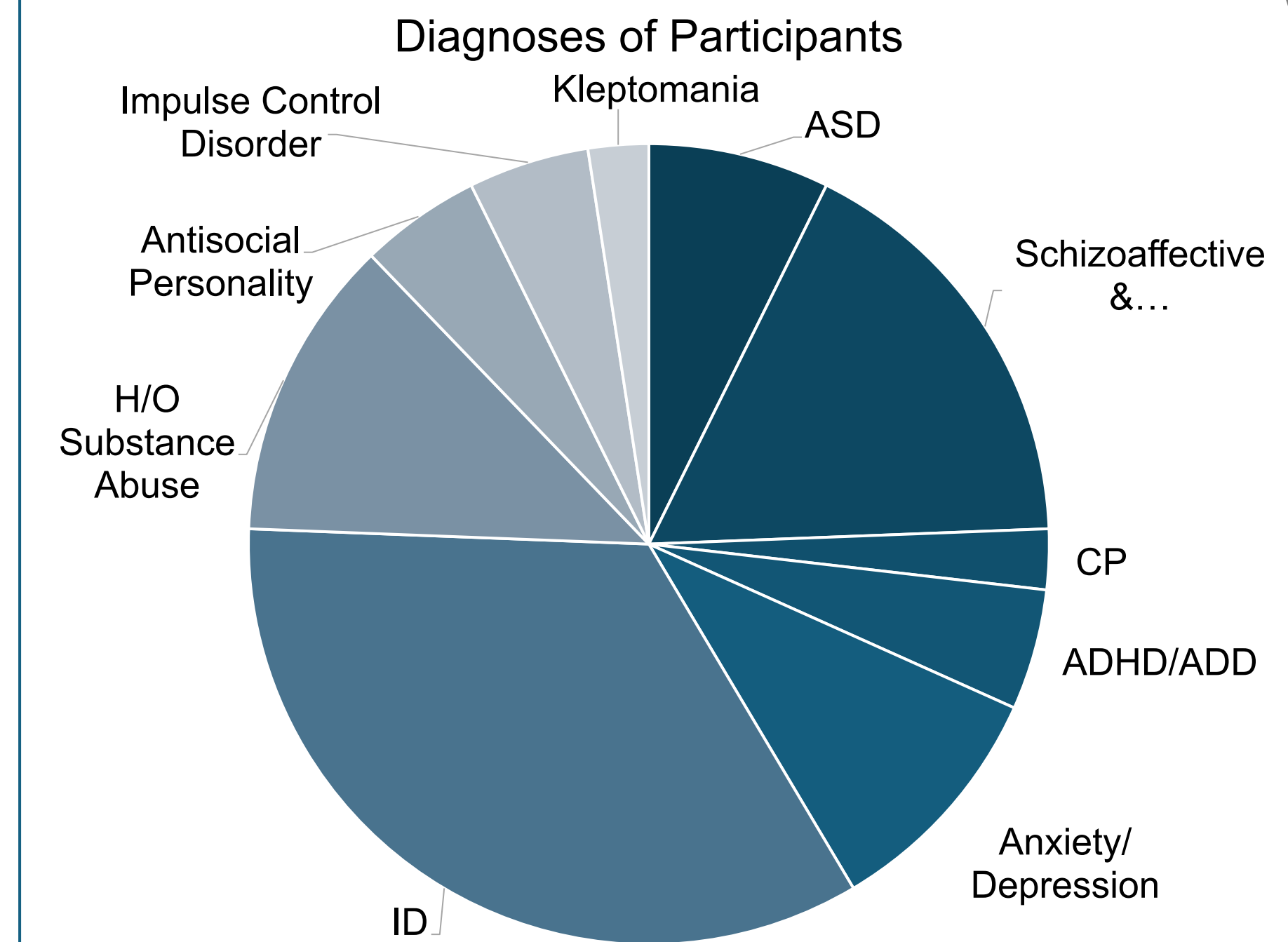
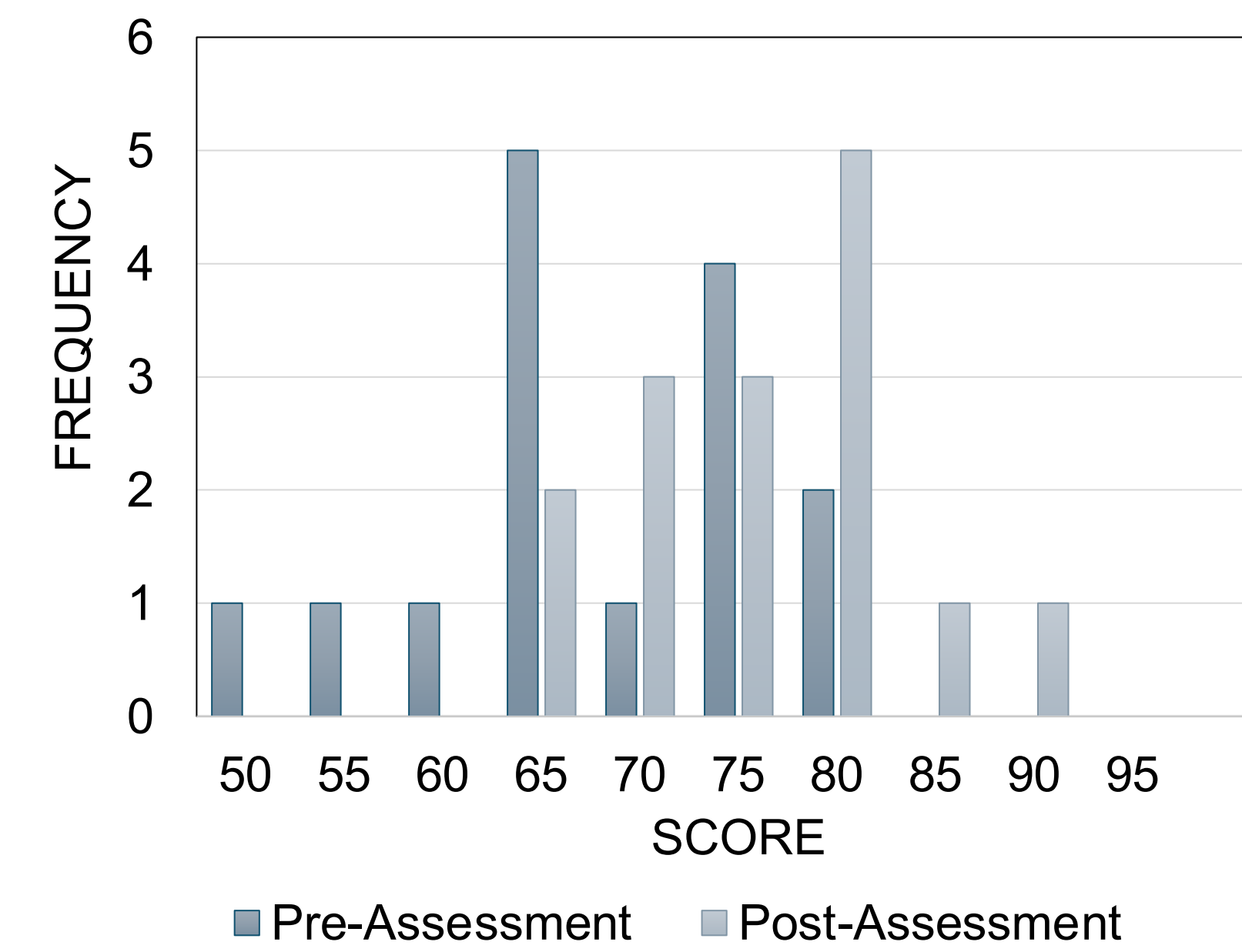


Figure 2: Consult-Improvement Relationship

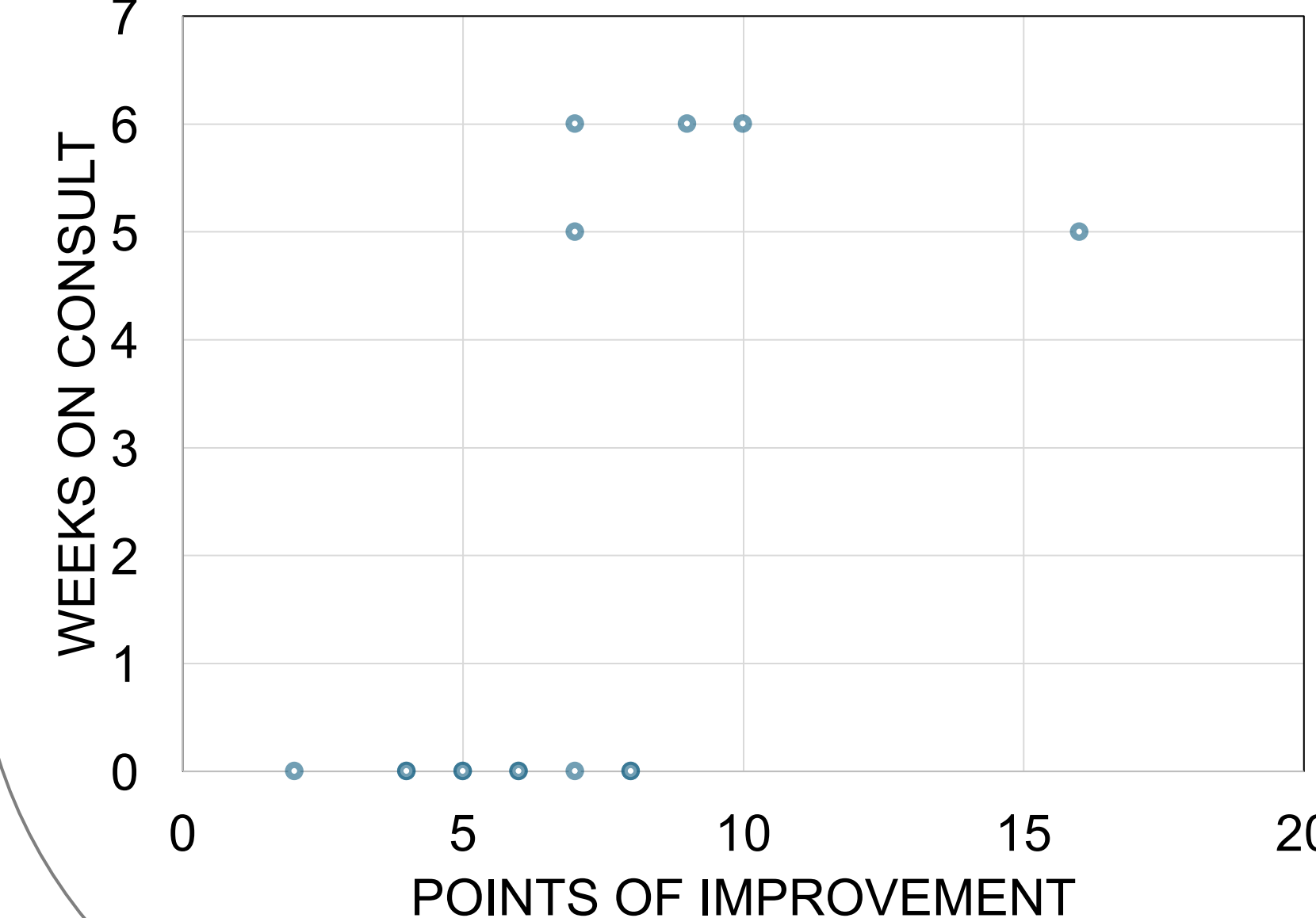
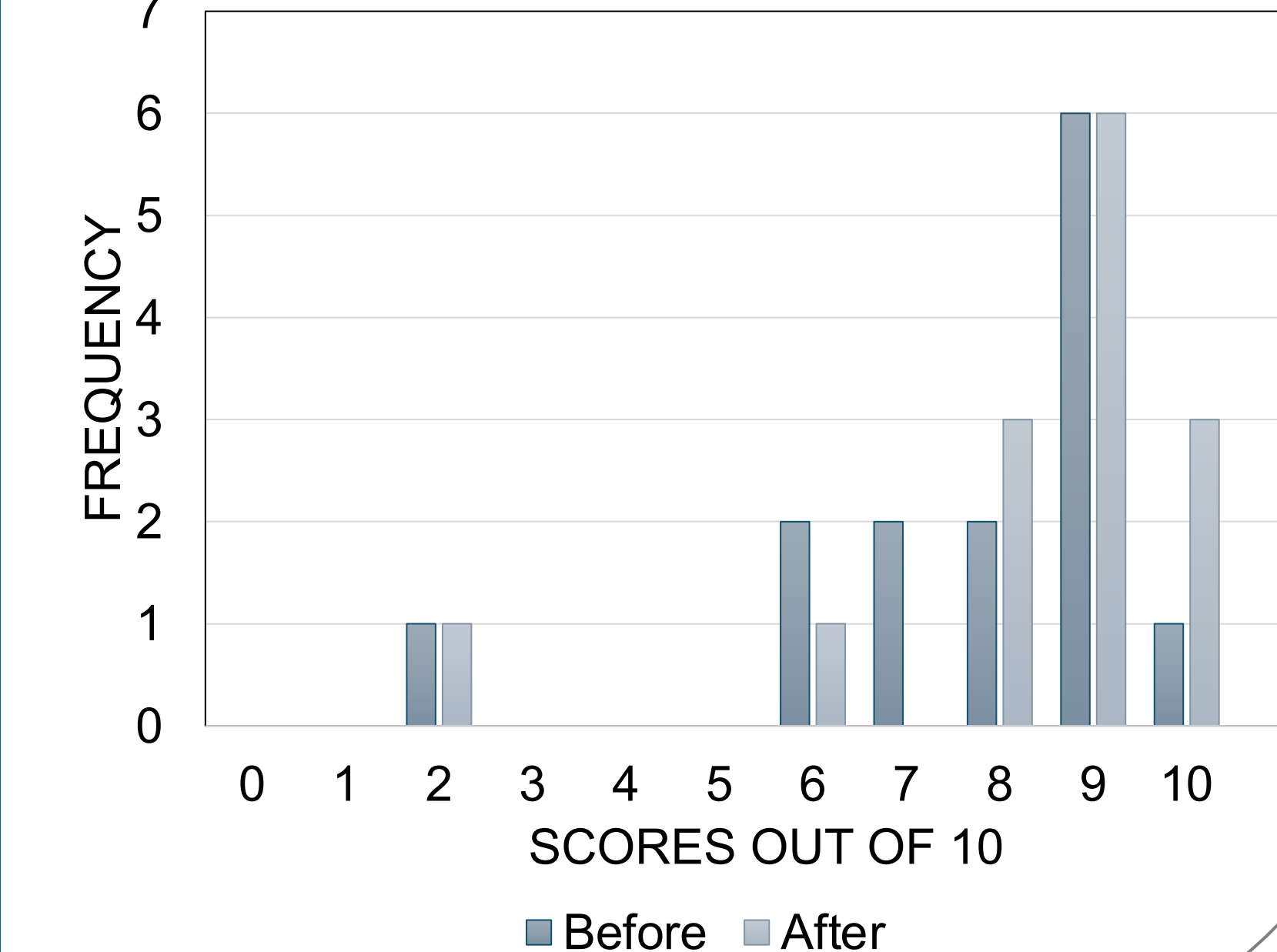


Figure 3: Score Frequencies Before and After Staff In-Service



Evaluation and Outcomes

The *clear increase* in the frequency of scores of 80 and above between the pre- and post-assessment administrations **demonstrates the success of the group protocols**. The *consultations* also proved effective; the five participants with complete consultations showed a **higher bracket of improvement** than those without. Many different theories were borrowed from other OT settings to develop the program. **This suggests that those theories may be used effectively for adults with developmental disabilities** and should not be overlooked as valuable information in supporting the independence of such clients. It also suggests a **need to research and develop new theories explicitly catered to adults with developmental delays**.

The **in-service materials successfully fostered improved interprofessional collaboration**, as evidenced by the data collection and observation by the capstone student. **There was an increase in the frequency of perfect scores (10 points)** from one person to three people. Materials that were identified as confusing were adjusted for quality use by ETHOS.

This capstone project serves as a call to action. *The hope is to see OT respond openly to new opportunities in the field and continue the research to begin filling the gap.*

Summary of Deliverables

The *occupations-based curriculum, referral form, screening tool, in-service materials, and pre-post assessment tool* remain with ETHOS Therapeutics to **provide continued support**. The program manuscript outlines the findings and **supports the goal of advocating for adults with special needs**.

References

