

Lecture

Mental Health & Occupational Therapy: A Long-standing Relationship

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Abstract

According to World Federation of Occupational Therapists, occupational therapy is a client-centered health profession concerned with promoting health and well-being through occupation. Main ideas of the profession are developed around issues of independence, enablement of participation, sense of identity, everyday life, occupational engagement, quality of life and community empowerment. Mental health is historically at the core of the development of Occupational Therapy. Their relationship has evolved through the ideas of moral treatment in 19th century, to the therapeutic use of activities in early 1900's, and the consequent rehabilitation movement, the de-institutionalization processes and psychiatric reformation movement. The evolution of mental health care and treatment has developed greatly worldwide, with unique catalysts prompting new treatments in different countries. In Greece, the occupational therapy profession has a long-standing relationship to mental health with the gradual encompassment of occupational therapy into the mental health services evolving throughout the decades. Occupational therapy as a dynamically moving profession, is a central member of the inter-disciplinary mental health team. As the philosophical underpinnings of occupational therapy are perceived by the synergy of various professionals, the facilitation of interprofessional collaboration is at the heart of the occupational therapists' practice. What's next, other than to accept the ongoing challenge of integrating treatment inter-disciplinary approaches within the community and incorporate knowledge of these practices in inter-disciplinary academic courses.

