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Developing Educational Resources to Support the Use of the Hippotherapy Evaluation and Assessment Tool

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Developing Educational Resources to Support the Use of the Hippotherapy Evaluation and Assessment Tool

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Background

Hippotherapy has been proven as a beneficial treatment tool utilized by occupational, physical, and speech therapists. The treatment tool can positively affect the patient in all aspects, including physical, sensory, and emotional regulation (Carter et al., 2014). In 2011, a new assessment was created by Dr. Mary Shotwell known as the Hippotherapy Evaluation and Assessment Tool, or the HEAT.

Problem Statement

Few assessments can adequately address all areas of occupation addressed by hippotherapy, which led to the use of multiple assessments by therapists (Austin et al., 2013). The HEAT is a newer assessment designed for hippotherapy specifically and could serve as a holistic tool for therapists to use when evaluating patients (Austin et al., 2013). However, as the HEAT is relatively new, it is not yet widely employed by therapists, nor does it have official instructional guides.

Purpose

To create and disseminate instructional guides and resources for the HEAT.

Objectives:

1. Gaining experience with hippotherapy through shadowing at two therapeutic riding centers in preparation of creating materials.
2. Creating instructional guides, supplemental materials, and a website for the HEAT to be used for educational purposes.
3. Disseminating created materials to occupational therapists who work with hippotherapy and make necessary revisions to prepare materials for publishing.

Methods

Shadowing:

- 2 weeks spent at Bit-By-Bit Therapy in Davie, FL volunteering and learning about hippotherapy.
- 2 weeks spent at Walker Therapy Services in Gainesville, GA volunteering and filming clips of the HEAT in action.

Website:

- A website for the HEAT was created through WordPress to host all the materials.
- Includes prior research, information about the assessment, and an application to receive the materials.
- Available at HEATassessment.com

Administration Manual:

- Created as a written guide to further explain each aspect of the HEAT.
- Summarized the steps of administration, prior research, and grading of the assessment.

Detailed Score Form:

- Original form designed for the HEAT.
- Edited and reformatted for ease of use by therapists.
- Created for therapists new to the assessment due to level of detail.

Single Use Score Form:

- One-page form containing the scoring criteria for each of the procedures, but without the definitions or instructions.
- Created for use by therapists who are familiar with the tool and need a quick way to score.

Multiple Session Score Form:

- One-page form for therapists to track the client's scores for each domain and total scores over multiple weeks.
- Compatible with both the Single Use Score Form and the Detailed Score Form.

Video Training Modules

- Three videos approximately 40 minutes in length discussing the development, administration, and grading of the HEAT.
- Video clips filmed at Walker Therapy Services were included to demonstrate all procedures of the assessment.
- Designed for therapists new to the HEAT, and compatible with the Administration Manual

CE Credit Quiz

- 10 question quiz designed on Google Forms for therapists who have gone through the training modules and want to receive contact hours.
- A certificate of completion is automatically emailed to them after scoring 80% or above.

Dissemination

Three therapists who practice hippotherapy in their daily practice were asked to view the created materials and provide feedback:

- The therapists felt that the training modules may be good for those new to hippotherapy as well as the HEAT.
- They felt that all aspects of the written materials were easy to understand.
- An error in a definition was noted and replaced before the publication of the tools.

The hope is that this project will benefit therapists who may use the HEAT in their practice, open doors for future research in hippotherapy, and aid other therapists who may be creating their own materials for an assessment.



References

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