An Occupational Therapy Practice Guide for Sport-Related Concussion in Student Athletes

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Background

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2003) reported that of roughly 1.7 million traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) that occur each year in the United States, sports-related injuries account for nearly 20%. The inability to perform daily tasks due to concussion sequelae can often result in decreased participation, difficulty with school performance, and overall decline in quality of life (DeMatteo et al., 2018). Common practice in concussion management consists of return to activity, sport, and school, which highlights the significance of getting individuals back to engaging in all areas of their lives; and this is consistent with OT’s emphasis on participation.

Problem

The limited literature available on OT intervention for athletes with sport-related concussion (SRC), combined with the absence of clear practice guidelines on OT intervention for people with concussions, makes it difficult for OT practitioners to provide appropriate OT services to concussed athletes.

Purpose

To develop a practice guide on OT intervention for athletes following concussion.

Intent - To inform practitioners on:
• What to assess in concussed athletes,
• The impact of SRC on function,
• Guidance to address occupational participation and performance problems that result from SRC.

Methods

➢ Theoretical Framework
   - The Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance Model (PEOP)

➢ Review of the Literature
   - risk factors
   - concussion sequelae
   - attitudes and behaviors
   - current protocols/guidelines
   - assessments/interventions

➢ Experiential Components
   - OneRehab
   - Continuing education webinars and videos
   - Scholarly articles

Practice Guide

Guide Components

• Executive Summary
• Background
• Athletes & Concussion
• Risk Factors
• Sequelae
• Underreporting Amongst Athletes
• Current Protocols
• Role of Occupational Therapy
• OT scope of practice
• PEOP Model
• Evaluation/Assessments
• Interventions
• Case Study
• Conclusion

Discussion

• Although more research is warranted, the current literature does reveal that OT intervention is beneficial for improving several client factors among individuals with concussions.
• The developed OT practice guide informs OT practitioners of the contribution of OT in support of enhancing the occupational performance of athletes with concussions.
• This capstone project also highlights the importance of the role of OT for athletes with concussion and provides material support to OT practice.

References
