The digital age of occupational therapy (OT) home visits

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BACKGROUND

Emerging trend in using technology as a means to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the occupational therapists in a variety of settings

Balancing available resources

Omnipresence of telehealth in occupational therapy home visits

Case study

Studies supporting the use of digital technologies to improve access to services, prevent unnecessary delays, and facilitate coordinated care.

Case study

Studies supporting the use of digital photos taken by family members or home visits via telehealth is comparable to conventional home visits in certain situations.

Case study

Studies in rural Australia concluding that telehealth technology into practice may enable therapists to provide home-based therapy while overcoming the barrier of distance in rural and remote areas.

Case study

World Federation of Occupational Therapy supports telehealth as an appropriate service delivery model for occupational therapy, and may improve access to occupational therapy services.

AIM

- Providing the best care for our patients, utilising resources and technology effectively
- Clear guidelines and indication for inpatient home visits and the use of technology
- Support occupational therapists to complete home visits with complex patients

BASELINE

- High volume of home visits in some clinical areas
- Limited FTE on inpatient wards
- Home visits are time intensive

Snap shot of current literature

Increasing evidence supports the use of telehealth in improving access to services, prevents unnecessary delays, and facilitates coordinated care.

Home visit options

Establishing options for home visits that incorporate different health care professionals and modalities of telehealth that have inclusion and exclusion criteria to guide therapists in clinical decision making:

- Option 1: No home visit
- Option 2: Environmental questionnaire and videos/photographs
- Option 3 (without): TA home visit patient
- Option 4: No home visit by OT/video call family
- Option 5: TA home visit with patient
- Option 6: OT home visit

OUTCOMES

Environmental Questionnaire

An environmental questionnaire was developed with therapists and consumers for staff to give patients’ families or friends to complete with corresponding photographs and be returned back to the therapist.

Staff experience

Pre and post surveys were completed to understand staff experience.

The purpose of the pre-project survey was to gather initial information regarding therapist thoughts and perceptions of the questionnaire prior to the trial.

The post-survey aimed to understand the occupational therapist’s experience using the environmental questionnaire and digital photographs captured by patients and families.

REFERENCES


