

0143

Student Outcomes in an On-Line Post Professional Occupational Therapy Doctoral Program

Joyce Salls, Angela Hissong
Chatham University, Pittsburgh, PA, United States

Introduction:

The clinical doctorate (OTD) degree is relatively new in the occupational therapy profession. With the current emphasis on evidence-based practice (EBP) and professional leadership, post professional OTD programs have the potential to advance these skills in students through coursework focusing on the application of evidence-based practice, engagement in leadership, and participation in scholarly activities. To date, there have been no published studies on the outcomes of post professional occupational therapy doctoral programs.

Objectives:

To determine the outcomes of a post professional OTD program on graduates' engagement in evidence-based practice, leadership, and scholarly activities 10 months post graduation.

Method:

An online survey was sent to the 15 graduates of the first OTD cohort via e-mail. Thirteen of the 15 surveys were returned (87% return rate). Section 1 contained questions related to use of and level of confidence in accessing resources and implementing occupation and evidence-based practices (EBP). Section 2 contained questions related to subjects' participation in leadership activities and scholarly work. A section for additional comments related to outcomes of the OTD program was included.

Results:

100% of the graduates agreed that they felt confident in their EBP skills, with the majority stating that they "strongly agreed". Eighty-four percent responded that they regularly use online databases in their practice. More than half of the respondents reported designing or revising programs in their settings, and all indicated that their OTD education improved their skills in their worksite. Sixty-seven percent reported assuming new leadership positions since graduation. Responses to questions related to engagement in scholarship varied. A total of 17% reported submitting or presenting at a peer reviewed conference; 25% reported writing an article for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

Conclusions/Contribution to evidence base of the profession:

The majority of OTD graduates felt confident in their EBP skills, implemented new evidence-based occupation-centered programs in their worksites and assumed new leadership positions within 10 months post graduation.

This research suggest that post professional OTD programs may be instrumental in developing occupation centered and evidence-based practitioners who can serve as leaders and mentors for the profession.