ACTIVITY REPORT

Activity title: 7TH OT DAY CELEBRATION IN RWANDA
I. Introduction.

Rwanda Occupational Therapy Association (RWOTA) is a professional entity of Occupational Therapists (OTs) in Rwanda that is entirely responsible to take the lead in professional matters and to express and interpret the needs and views of the members of the profession for the benefit of the community. RWOTA ensures that its members offer the best quality services in their place of work, follow professional code of ethics, and works to standardize the profession, and serves as a voice for the profession and advocates for its members to ensure the provision of quality care and safe practice environments. It is an important bridge that connects OTs to Occupational therapy service consumers, policy makers, partners and other health professionals. OT Day celebration has been celebrated every year since 2015 and it is a way to raise awareness of the profession.

The World OT Day was first launched on 27 October 2010 by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT). Since then, it has become an important date in the occupational therapy to promote and celebrate the profession nationally and internationally. The theme for the year 2021 World Occupational Therapy Day is “Belong. Be you.”

RWOTA celebrates occupational therapy day every year by doing different activities. This year it was celebrated individually by members at their respective working places where they organized their own way to celebrate it and at the end of the day an online meeting was held via google meet where all occupational therapists and students were gathered together to celebrate it.

II. Objectives

- To celebrate OT day
- To know understanding of OT profession by clients
- To know understanding of OT profession by other professionals working together with Occupational Therapists
- To continue raising awareness of OT profession
- To showcase the critical importance of Occupational Therapy service in health care delivery

**Outcomes of the activity**

- To know the level of understanding of OT profession by other health professionals working together with Occupational Therapists.
- To know what needs to be done to continue raising awareness of OT profession.
- Welcoming and motivating OT students and new graduates.
- Increased Awareness, understanding and added value of Occupational Therapy profession to the respective bodies.

**III. Methodology**

- Plane papers distribution to clients and other professionals to talk about OT profession
- Presentation at working places
- Different activities done together
- Online meeting

**IV. Content**

**PART 1. CELEBRATION OF OT DAY AT WORKING PLACES**

1. University of Rwanda (UR)/College of Medicine and Health Science/Occupational Therapy Department

The Occupational therapy department at the University of Rwanda has developed sub-theme focusing on the role of occupational therapy in Interprofessional collaboration in mental health setting. The year two OT students were requested by their lecturers to prepare the posters presentation focusing on the role of OTs in Interprofessional collaboration.

By 27th October 2021, each student among thirteen has made his/her poster presentation in front of panel of three lecturers at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Remera campus. Each presenter was asked some questions related to the poster presented to evaluate the understanding of OT student on the theme of the year, role of OT in interdisciplinary collaboration, and format
of the posters. All OT students were appreciated for their contribution to the celebration of OT day, the first three students with good posters were given free OT materials to be used in their studies.
Occupational therapy students at the University of Rwanda, College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Remera campus

Occupational therapy lecturers with Occupational Therapy students during the World OT Day 2021 celebration at the University of Rwanda.
2. OT DAY IN THE COMMUNITY

This was done in the community with the youth with Down syndrome at kicukiro district

The theme of this year” Belong. Be You”. Was intended to promote the power of diversity and inclusion as we work together to build community and resilience.

The chairperson of RWOTA Murebwayire Epiphanie and USANIWABO NIYIMBERA Joyeuse a fresh graduate have chosen to join the youth with Down syndrome in the community and cerebrate the day together.

PART I. PLANNING BEFORE STARTING THE ACTIVITIES

The main aim of being with the youth of Down syndrome was to assess their inclusion in activity participation pattern in the community.

Planned games and exercises are important for every one including youth with down syndrome, it boost our health and happiness, wellbeing and fun, it addressed the Social development and
strength it allows them in the use of their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, and physical cognitive and emotional strength.

**The game was grouped in 4 different parts:**

1. Self-introduction by Throwing a ball
2. Fetching water game
3. Agakoni
4. Game of searching the said number
5. Activity of picking egg with the spoon

**PART II . ANALYSIS OF THE ACTIVITIES/GAMES**

1. **Throwing a ball and then say your name /Self introduction**

Down syndrome is one of the conditions that lead to speech problems and communication.

This game was on the circle where there is only one person in the middle who introduces the activity by saying her name and throws the ball to another and asks Him/her to say the name.

This activity helped the team to know each other even if we were in a game.

Therapists also get opportunity to analyze articulation in words, socialization, processing skills, attention and concentration, ball throwing ability, spherical grasping abilities.

2. **Fetching water game**

This activity was done in form of competition where there 4 people that have cups each one and other 4 people that have an empty bottle each one and there are also 2 basins filled with water
The competitors were standing at equal distance.

Therapists also get opportunity to see the gross motor skills, organization and processing skills, coordination as everyone has to scoop water and run quickly in order to fill the water first in that empty bottle.

3. **Agakoni**

We were divided into 2 groups with 2 different sticks and the instructions was given which is to run so that the other member of your group could not touch you with a stick and you have to do it quickly so that you give the stick to only your group mate until the whole group members take their turn.

This activity requires good gross motor skills, organization and processing skills, in hand manipulation, attention and it is intended also to improve communication and socialization skills.

Therapists also was a facilitator for those that are inactive so that to encourage them to participate in activity.
4. **Game of searching the said number**

This also a good game because most of children with Down syndrome have intellectual disability and it has been difficult for them to choose the right number. There is a table where were different numbers from zero up to 10. Therapist said a number to choose and they pick it themselves from the table also assistance was given for example if it is zero, **Therapists shows zero and then ask them to pick it again.**

From this activity different skills were observed including eye hand coordination, visual discrimination, fine motor skills like pinching, memory because they studied numbers at school, organization and processing skills, figure ground perception, form constancy.

After that they have to put numbers that has holes inside into a sling and this is also good for visual screening and eye hand coordination.

5. **Activity of picking egg with the spoon**

There is a basket where there are eggs and spoon. every participant has one egg on a spoon and they took it into a distance and they have to make sure that it will not fall down. This activity also is good for attention, gross motor skills, eye hand coordination and it also requires good organization and processing skills.

As it is shown in **figure 5** you can see it.
”Belong. Be you” which is intended on promoting the power of diversity and inclusion as we work together to build community and resilience, through this game activity could be achieved as it address the needs of human holistically and we have seen it could be good for them to participate in sports like in car free day sports as this activity is an inclusion activity aimed at living no one behind.

Also awareness about our profession was done and the readers of Rwanda Down syndrome association understood the role of OT in youth with Down syndrome, they said that If they get a budget they will employ an OT to address different areas that the youth needs support in improving their independence to better inclusion in the society.

In general, the day went well as our purpose have been achieved.

The last activity was sharing lunch as also time for interaction
3. GAHINI REHABILITATION CENTER

Gahini Rehabilitation Center Occupational Therapist cerebrated the day through listening to and getting the views from different people in the setting either professionals or the clients.

Below are the people’s view about the Occupational therapy service in the setting

In summary they appreciated the good work which is being done by OTs, and clients were suggesting to have more OTs.

4. KING FAISAL HOSPITAL

At KFH R, Occupational therapy day was cerebrated in number of ways within the setting.
Many activities were conducted and the list of them are compiled into one topic of Occupational therapy awareness:

1. Occupational therapy awareness at KFH R.
2. Occupational therapy in social media
3. Occupational therapy scientific time (Interprofessional chats on OT)

Occupational therapy handouts distribution
On occupational therapy day at KFH R, OT day was celebrated with objectively to raise the level of awareness of OT works and practices. Seventeen OT handouts were randomly distributed among patients and caregivers as their take home info about the new profession. The content of handouts included what the OT is, what OT does, How and what OT helps the patients.
1. **Occupational therapy in social media**

Occupational therapy day was also celebrated on social media by publicly posting OT – patient testimonial on the role played by OT in his hand recovery following nerve injury. This info was posted at KFH R’s social Medias and the feedback reactions were all of encouragement and appreciating the role of OT among other rehabilitation teams.
2. **Occupational therapy scientific time (Interprofessional chats on OT)**
Interprofessional discussions were held on an-in-service chats with team of Physiotherapists, speech language pathologists, clinical psychology, nurses and other professionals with their all wishes were to have “happy OT day”.

5. **LOVE WITH ACTIONS**
- On this day of world occupational therapy cerebration ;Occupational therapy department at LOVE WITH ACTIONS provide appropriate paper based technology training to rehabilitations team at the center, where they studied to make glue, cardboards, cutting and joining pieces for fabricating special chair. This important actions were guided by senior occupational therapist KARANGWA JEAN PIERRE.

- Occupational therapy department also have donated a special chair made in recycled cardboards to one student from KARAMA primary school who has physical disability with difficulties of long sitting in normal school desk in the way of improving his school performance and environmental learning accessibilities and OT visited him at school.
Occupational therapist also participated in GOOD CHEPHERD ACADEMY of LOVE WITH ACTIONS in partnership with teachers and teacher’s assistants to facilitate student in different stimulations function activities by using sand pool in the way of improving their motor planning, fine motor, grasping, reaching out, problem solving, socializations… and Bubble fun for oral motor stimulations and visual tracking training for some children.

6. HEROES DAYCARE CENTER

At Heroes the day was celebrated; before noon in Heroes day care center as an occupational therapist who is working there, I worked with children to promote independence and teach them the new skills through activities like puzzle games activity, color discrimination activity, clay games activity and helps those who have problem with high spasticity that can’t do any activity to reduce it using different techniques like traction.

In the afternoon we plan a presentation with staffs/workmate (Physiotherapists, Special Need teachers and Assistants) to explain more about Occupational therapy services and the role of OT for children we work with every day at Heroes ‘day care center by raising awareness of the profession.
7. CENTRES HANDICAPES SAINT FRANCOIS D'ASSISSE / RUSIZI

- Briefly this institution called *Centres Handicapes saint Francois D'Assisse* / Rusizi
  This institution receives pediatric clients, most of the clients' age is around 3 to 8 years old.
  It had physiotherapy services only before but now I am working as occupational therapist
  it mean there are both physiotherapy and Occupational therapy services.

- The day was celebrated by doing different activities highlighted here below:

  We had discussion about the OT role with team of physiotherapist whom we are working
  together in the Field and we got the feedback that OT services is really well understood.

  Hand splinting OT has fabricated the Dorsal hand splint for child who is deformed on his
  wrist joints in order to correct deformity and prevent Further deformity.

  Playing with children who were inpatient at Centre in order to facilitate han

- coordination, age appropriate motor Learning through play.
PART 2. ONLINE MEETING OF ALL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND OT STUDENTS

At the end of the day the online meeting was held via google meet it joined all occupational therapist and occupational therapy students, during the meeting discussion was about OT day and explaining more about the 7th day OT celebration Theme; ‘belong be you’. After The team watched WFOT president Message of the day. It proceeded on presentation of what has been done by OTs at their respective working places, way forward and welcoming the new students and graduate in the association.

V. Challenges & Recommendations.

Challenges:

- Inadequate knowledge of Occupational Therapy by other professionals
- Not enough Occupational Therapists
- Online meeting

Recommendations:

- Increase awareness of Occupational Therapy
- Advocacy to employ more OTs
- Next time to have a physical meeting

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