

OcTAVE@IMH Job Exploration Program

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Introduction

- Shifting market trends and vocational appetites of persons with mental health conditions (PMHCs) towards white-collar jobs resulted in need to provide job exploration and placement services in these industries.
- Historical vocational appetites had resulted in existing services to be centred in blue-collar industries.
- Hence, there was little to no targeted support for PMHCs looking for professionals, managers, executives, and technicians (PMET) jobs.
- Patients either receive one-to-one support from OcTAVE@IMH occupational therapists (OTs) (which takes up significant time in the OTs' schedules) or look for a job on their own (which may not be tailored to meet their needs).
- Furthermore, COVID-19 disrupted healthcare delivery.

Solutions

- A telerehabilitation Job Exploration Program was developed to provide the needed virtual job exploration and placement service for PMHCs looking for white-collar jobs along with managing the challenges and restrictions posed by COVID-19.
- The program is underpinned by the Career Construction Theory, which helps assess and identify the patients' set of specific attitudes, beliefs, and competencies that shape their problem-solving strategies and coping behaviour.
- These constructs from the theory helps PMHCs secure and sustain employment, due to the ability to use these insights on PMHCs' functioning and needs to match with the job and environment requirements.
- The virtual platform allows the OTs to provide group therapy sessions when COVID-19 restrictions had prohibited physical group gatherings. It also allow patients to attend sessions at their convenience and comfort of their home, while minimising risk of transmission between staff and patients.

Definitions

Telerehabilitation. The application of evaluative, consultative, preventative and therapeutic services delivered through Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Self-awareness. The level of insights that participants have regarding their own personality, interests, skills and dislikes.

Career-awareness. The level of understanding that participants have regarding employment (includes their attitudes towards work and life experiences).

Preparedness. How adept are the participants in their job search, resume writing and interviewing skills.

Materials and online communication platform used were beneficial for achieving objectives.

It can get draining when it comes to completing tedious task!

Usage of Zoom platform:

- Convenient!
- User-friendly
- Allowed clients to build rapport with trainers and fellow participants in the comfort of their home

Content can be too high-functioning for some clients

Feedback

Helpful in boosting self-confidence!



Results

- In terms of confidence level to apply for jobs, there was a significant improvement in the scores for intervention group ($M = -2.857$, $SD = 0.793$); $t(20) = -16.514$, $p < .001$.
- For employment preparedness, there was a significant increase in the scores for experimental group ($M = -3.381$, $SD = 0.865$); $t(20) = -17.919$, $p < .001$.
- On patients' ability to manage anxiety, there was a significant improvement in the scores for experimental group ($M = 2.905$, $SD = 0.944$); $t(20) = 14.1069$, $p < .001$.
- In terms of motivation to apply for job, there was a significant improvement in the scores for intervention group ($M = -3.048$, $SD = 0.498$); $t(20) = -28.066$, $p < .001$.
- There are also zero patient defaults for the programs, and job placement rates for patients looking for white-collar jobs have increased. Currently, 9 patients are placed out and 15 have found their own jobs.

		Paired Samples Test						Significance		
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Pair 1	In terms of confidence - In terms of confidence	-2.857	.793	.173	-3.218	-2.496	-16.514	20	<.001	<.001
Pair 2	In terms of preparedness - In terms of preparedness	-3.381	.865	.189	-3.775	-2.987	-17.919	20	<.001	<.001
Pair 3	In terms of anxiety - In terms of anxiety	2.905	.944	.206	2.475	3.334	14.106	20	<.001	<.001
Pair 4	In terms of motivation - In terms of motivation	-3.048	.498	.109	-3.274	-2.821	-28.066	20	<.001	<.001

Conclusions

Patients and their next-of-kin involved in the program have provided feedback that the program is helpful and provides patients the confidence to find jobs and meaningful time use during the COVID-19 lockdown.

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