Evolution of Occupational Therapy Practice: Life History of Lance Norman, MOT, OTR/L, CHT
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Introduction

• The purpose of this life history study was to gather information regarding the history and evolution of occupational therapy (OT) practice in North Dakota and Wyoming.
• A life history study in qualitative research identifies and documents health patterns of individuals and groups. It allows the researchers to explore a person's experiences (micro history) in relation to a specific time frame (macro history).
• The life history of Lance Norman and his influence in developing OT in North Dakota was one of 29 stories explored.
• Lance has transformed OT in North Dakota and Wyoming for the last 27 years. The emphasis he places on academia and best practice is evident in the new and innovative techniques he brings to the area. Lance has had a prominent role in hand therapy and continues to make an impact in the field by fulfilling administrative duties today.
• It is anticipated that the life history process will be a powerful means to identify the development of OT from Lance's perspective.

Description of the Participant

Since imparting on his journey as a therapist, Lance has led an impressive career in the field of OT. He has served as an adjunct faculty member at the University of North Dakota instructing in Physical Agent Modalities and an adult physical disabilities seminar class. The importance he places on scholarly pursuit is evident, and reflected by an extensive list of continuing education courses that span the last 25 years. Lance also holds membership of organizations at a local, state, and national level. The following is a brief timeline of Lance’s journey and development as a practicing occupational therapist:

1990: Lance received his bachelor's degree in OT from the University of North Dakota.
1991-1992: Registered OT (OTR) at Washoe Medical Center, Reno, NV.
1992-1994: OTR at United Hospital, Grand Forks, ND.
2000-2004: Certified Hand Therapist (CHT) at Altru Health System, Grand Forks, ND.
2004-2008: CHT at Axis Clinic in private practice, Grand Forks, ND.
2006: Earned his Transitional Master's of Occupational Therapy (TMOT).
2008-2013: Director of Rehabilitation at RiverView Health, Crookston, MN.
2013-Present: Vice President of Clinics and Ancillary Services at RiverView Health, Crookston MN.
1997: The Balanced Budget Act made significant cuts to Medicare, creating a cap of $1500 per person for outpatient OT services.
1991: Lance had pursued and accomplished his TMOT by this point in time, having attained his degree in 2006.
1992: By 2008, all schools became compliant with ACOTE's requirement of advancing the entry-level practice in the field of OT to a master's degree.
1994: Lance received his baccalaureate degree in OT from the University of North Dakota.
2000: Lance has transformed OT in North Dakota and Wyoming for the last 27 years. The emphasis he places on academia and best practice is evident in the new and innovative techniques he brings to the area. Lance has had a prominent role in hand therapy and continues to make an impact in the field by fulfilling administrative duties today.

Literature Review

• In 1997, the Balanced Budget Act made significant cuts to Medicare, creating a cap of $1500 per person for outpatient OT services.
• Throughout the duration of Lance's career, the OT practice framework was revised multiple times.
• However, due to Lance's close tie with academia, the transition of the references used in his practice were not challenging.
• By 2008, all schools became compliant with ACOTE's requirement of advancing the entry-level practice in the field of OT to a master's degree.
• Lance had pursued and accomplished his TMOT by this point in time, having attained his degree in 2006.
• This again emphasizes the value he places on academia.

Methodology

• Qualitative study using a life history approach.
• The participant was assigned from a list developed by course instructors through a purposive sampling method.
• No specific gatekeeper issues-initial contact was made by course instructors.
• Informed consent was obtained.
• A semi-structured interview format was utilized.
• The interview was recorded, transcribed verbatim, and an open coding method was used to begin analysis.
• The face-to-face interview took place at the University of North Dakota's School of Medicine and Health Sciences building and was approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes in length.
• Trustworthiness was established through the two researchers debriefing and keeping a reflective journal.
• The Kawa model was used as the theoretical base to guide the research process.

Data Analysis and Findings

Initial analysis of the interview generated 26 codes, which emerged into three main categories. The three categories identified in the data analysis include: academics, professional practice, and administration. Each category further reflected 3-4 themes.

Academic themes:
• Lance emulates the notion that education is a life-long learning process.
• He recognizes the skill set needed to critique research articles as important.
• Competency is more valuable than one's level of degree to him.

Professional practice themes:
• Lance believes staying current with best practice by using evidence-based research is essential.
• A vital concept of practice to him is taking advantage of resources.
• He views mentors as an essential aspect of one's professional development.
• It is important to remain aware of all the opportunities in the field of OT.

Administration themes:
• A core value of Lance is to cultivate a positive culture within the workplace.
• He values the opportunity to network with other therapists.
• Lance is an advocate of staying current to remain competitive against other facilities.

Discussion/Conclusion

• Lance has a multifactorial role in the field of occupational therapy in North Dakota and Northwest Minnesota that encompasses academia, professional practice, and administrative duties. He continually strives for best practice by taking advantage of opportunities, and guiding the next generation of therapists to help the profession grow and develop.
• The macro history of OT influenced Lance’s personal experience as a practicing occupational therapist. Alterations in legislation, shifts in educational requirements, and establishing OT as a reputable profession shaped Lance’s professional career.
• The Kawa Model represents different cross-sections within the timeframe of Lance’s career. Concepts of the model are symbolized by Lance’s personal attributes that helped him become a well-rounded therapist, utilizing resources throughout his career, barriers he overcame, and the necessary career shifts he underwent to make an impact on OT services within the state of North Dakota.
• This life history study contributes to the overall understanding of the history and evolution of OT practice in the state of North Dakota. There is a lack of research in regards to North Dakota’s influence in the field of OT, and further studies should explore this vital effect in order to develop and expand OT as a profession.

References