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A Successful Start With New Start: Transitional Community-Based Services For Student Veterans

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A SUCCESSFUL START WITH NEW START: TRANSITIONAL COMMUNITY-BASED
SERVICES FOR STUDENT VETERANS

By

Sheena Kay Miller
Occupational Therapy Doctorate, University of North Dakota

Advisor: Janet Jedlicka, OTR/L, PhD, FAOTA

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Submitted to the Occupational Therapy Department

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For the degree of

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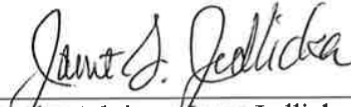
For questions regarding the product please use the following for contacting the author:

Sheena Kay Miller

sheenakmiller@gmail.com

APPROVAL

This scholarly project, submitted by Sheena Miller, OTDS in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Occupational Therapy Doctorate from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisor under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.



Faculty Advisor: Janet Jedlicka, OTR/L, PhD, FAOTA

4-14-23

Date

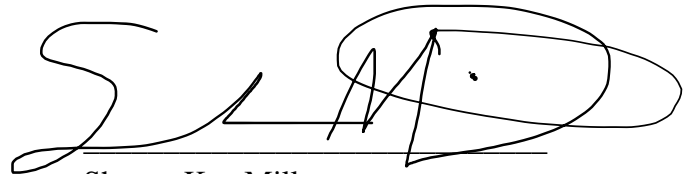
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Title: A Successful Start with New Start: Transitional Community-Based Services for Student Veterans

Department: Occupational Therapy

Degree: Occupational Therapy Doctorate

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Kay Miller', with a large, loopy flourish extending to the right.

Sheena Kay Miller
4/14/2023

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ABSTRACT

For veterans, integration into the community post-service poses a variety of unique challenges as they pursue many different opportunities. One of those opportunities sought out by this population according to the literature is higher education. It is estimated that approximately 900,000 veterans and their families had utilized the post-9/11 GI Bill as of 2018, with that number expected to only increase over time (Ulrich & Freer, 2020). Some of the unique challenges faced by this population include higher rates of mental health diagnoses, suicidal thoughts, and service-related injuries such as traumatic brain injuries (TBI) than their civilian peers (Eakman et al., 2019; Dutra et al., 2016; Ulrich & Freer 2020). Military and veteran students (MAVS) have further reported concerns of belonging, isolation, adapting to a less structured environment, and executive functioning skills needed to be successful in the higher education setting (Dobson et al., 2022; Gregg et al., 2016a; Tomar, 2014). These findings indicate the need to place focus on program development and advocacy efforts targeting student veterans transitioning to civilian life and life as a college student.

The literature identified it is crucial to form a program structure with consideration for military culture and the cultural competence of staff members (Thomas et al., 2018). Intervention strategies found effective include, creating ease of accessibility to needed services in the community, multi-faceted interventions, a multidisciplinary approach, endorsing autonomy in dealing with a variety of circumstances, psychological support, focus on executive functioning skills, assisting veterans with managing their roles, and supporting participation in meaningful occupations (Alschuler & Yarab, 2018; Dobson et al., 2020; Eakman et al., 2016; Gregg et al., 2016a; Kashiwa et al., 2017; Kinney et al., 2021; Moeck et al., 2022; Williston & Roemer,

2017). These identified intervention strategies were utilized to support this scholarly project and product development.

The purpose of this scholarly project was to focus on the unique needs of student veterans as they seek out higher education and integrate into the community. Through an extensive review of the literature, completion of an in-depth needs assessment, first-hand observational experience, interviewing stakeholders, and collaboration with the partnering agency, Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) at Colorado State University, it was determined efforts would be directed at quality improvement measures to the holistic programming for the success of student veterans. This resulted in the creation of a decision-making guide for practitioners outlining the sequencing and scope of services for programming to ensure the needs of student veterans are met and the best outcomes are achieved. Emphasis was placed on defining the scope of services, the clinical decision-making process through the utilization of occupational therapy theory, self-advocacy/self-determination, and facilitating connection to community services to increase the performance and well-being of student veterans. The anticipated result is that this guide will clarify the scope of services offered at the facility through support in the decision-making process for practitioners, thereby increasing the performance and overall well-being of student veterans. This scholarly project provides a unique perspective that the occupational therapy profession can offer to support successful community programming for student veterans while further supporting and expanding the profession's role in this emerging area of practice.

Chapter I

Introduction

Purpose Statement

Higher education is one of many opportunities veterans are seeking out post-service in hopes of developing a meaningful career path and financial stability. The literature finds that this population experiences less academic success than their civilian peers (Borsari et al., 2017). Evidence further displays that student veterans have unique and limited patterns of community and social participation as they are less likely to invest time in social activities non-academic in nature than their civilian peers, due to outside responsibilities and roles associated with being a non-traditional student (Eakman et al., 2019). Barriers to successful community integration can impact a veterans overall well-being, sense of purpose/identity, academic achievement, and life satisfaction (Kinney et al., 2020; Eakman et al., 2019). The number of veterans using the post-9/11 GI Bill is only expected to increase over time, magnifying the population with needs for individualized holistic services tarding supported education and community integration (Ulrich & Freer, 2020).

Further need for support is indicated by student veterans as they have identified several concern areas that include, belonging, isolation, relating to classmates, concentration, challenges adapting to a less structured environment, executive functioning skills, finances, and being a non-traditional aged student (Dobson et al., 2022; Gregg et al., 2016a; Tomar, 2014). There is also a need for attention regarding the mental health and well-being of this population. This is supported in literature indicating that there are increased incidence rates of suicidal ideation and mental health diagnoses including, depression, PTSD, and anxiety amongst student veterans



(Ghosh et al., 2020; Dutra et al., 2016; Ulrich & Freer, 2020;). The concerns reported have been found to be attributed to military collectivist ideals of obeying superiors and an associated stigma for seeking out mental health services (Dobson et al., 2022; Tomar & Stoffel 2014; Ulrich & Freer, 2020). Such health-related challenges can lead to difficulties in community integration, limit academic success, obstruct positive relationships, and limit participation in personally meaningful activities according to the literature (Eakman et al., 2019).

To best support these individuals, evidence has found that successful programming is geared towards multi-faceted interventions, a multidisciplinary approach, promoting engagement in identified meaningful occupations, supporting active community participation for successful integration, executive functioning skill building, social support, and increasing awareness to services available (Eakman et al., 2019; Eakman et al., 2016; Kinney & Eakman 2019; Misra-Herbert et al., 2015; Thomas et al., 2018; Ulrich & Freer, 2020; Williston & Roemer, 2017;).

Product Objectives

The objectives for this product demonstrate the need presented by the partnering agency where the doctoral experiential placement was completed. The overall goal of the product is to improve effective service delivery and outcomes within New Start Programming by increasing the confidence and competence of partitioners/supported education specialists in the clinical reasoning and programming processes. The objectives of the product itself center around subjective changes in confidence and competence of those utilizing the guide along with improvements in effective service delivery of New Start programming. These will be measured through an outcome measure created by the author and reviewed by the agency that looks at gaining subjective data. The questions on the measure are a mixture of open-ended and Likert



scale questions. The intended use of the data is to utilize it to make quality improvements to the guide as the needs of the program and population change to keep it as relevant and effective as possible. The goal and objectives for the product itself can be located in the supplemental instruction document to support the appropriate use of the guide, located in the Appendices of this scholarly project.

Theoretical Framework

The Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) model is an occupation-based model that was used as a guide throughout the scholarly project process (Bass et al., 2017). The selection of PEOP for this scholarly project was based on the emphasis put on the performance and participation of an individual and how the individual is directly involved in the goal-setting process (Bass et al., 2017). The constructs of person, environment, narrative [subjective experience], and occupational factors can take on a supportive role or serve as a barrier to overall performance and participation in meaningful occupations (Bass et al., 2017). As a result, well-being is directly impacted (Bass et al., 2017). The secondary theory utilized was the Self-Determination Theory to support the design and contents of the product (Fazio, 2017). It focuses on the three factors of competence, autonomy, and relatedness and that when these are satisfied one experiences intrinsic motivation and it can improve one's self-motivation and mental health (Fazio, 2017). Both theories played an integral role in assuring the product developed and the scholarly project as a whole, were both occupation-centered and met the identified needs of the partnering agency.

Significance of Product to Occupational Therapy Practice

James Graham, the Director of the Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) at Colorado State University (CSU) expressed a need for program quality improvement and



restructuring efforts to the supported education program called, New Start, that serves student veterans. Through his experience with the program and collaboration with other New Start staff members, the need identified was to clarify and streamline service-delivery processes to obtain positive and measurable outcomes along with re-establishing a clear purpose for services. In doing so it can support future funding sources while also strengthening the efficacy of New Start programming. The overall significance of the final service-delivery guide created for this scholarly product emphasizes the unique role of occupational therapy (OT) through the therapeutic use of meaningful occupations/activities and the OT process to support the success and performance of student veterans during community integration and higher education (AOTA, 2020; Eakman et al., 2019). It also emphasizes the role occupational therapy can play in program development efforts and in emerging areas of practice utilizing their specific skill set and knowledge.



Chapter II

Literature Review

Overview

The occupational therapy profession believes that "...active engagement in occupation promotes, facilitates, supports, and maintains health and participation" (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2020, p. 5). Occupations are the activities one does, and they give purpose to life (AOTA, 2020). The literature was analyzed with this overarching belief in mind to identify areas of need and gain an understanding of important factors of the student veteran population in support of this scholarly project. This literature review is broken down into the identification of supports and barriers to successful participation in the community and higher education, mental health/well-being considerations, and effective intervention and programming methods that support the well-being and performance of student veterans.

Theoretical Framework

The Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance Model (PEOP) was utilized to facilitate the literature review process, assist in the dissemination of findings, and guide program development efforts to support student veterans in community reintegration and higher education. PEOP is a client-centered framework that focuses on a top-down approach to support the individualized goals a client sets to enhance their performance and participation in meaningful occupations, and overall well-being (Bass et al., 2017). It is a systems perspective model that centers on how the interaction of all parts will influence occupational performance and participation (Bass et al., 2017). Those constructs include person factors [intrinsic factors], environmental factors [extrinsic factors], and valued occupations (Bass et al., 2017).



For purpose of this literature review, findings are organized by each construct of PEOP and how they are either a support or a barrier to student veterans' occupational performance and participation. Analyzing each of these will assist in effective programming efforts to enhance the participation and performance of identified meaningful occupations by student veterans. Effective programming and subjective impacts are also analyzed. To categorize these factors as a support or a barrier, it is important to outline what each construct and key component of the PEOP process is defined as. By placing a focus on supporting student veterans in increasing their performance in valued occupations, their well-being and transition to higher education are best supported (Bass et al., 2017).

PEOP Processes and Constructs

PEOP is made up of four stages that include, narrative, assessments and evaluation, interventions, and outcomes (Bass et al., 2017). The narrative is what "provides important background information from the client in a story format that best describes the perception of the current situation and is used to establish goals" (Bass et al., 2017 p. 169). During the narrative process, Occupational Therapists can learn about, "...perceptions and meanings, choices and responsibilities, and attitudes and motivations" (Bass et al., 2017 p. 169). Based on the unique experiences of this population, gathering a narrative of these factors will allow for insight into one's behaviors, attitudes, and motivations to best support the individualized goals and success of the individual (Bass et al., 2017).

Within PEOP, person factors are identified as intrinsic factors that include, "psychological, cognition, sensory, motor, physiological, and meaning/sense-making/spiritual characteristics that support or limit occupational performance" (Bass et al., 2017 p. 170).

Environmental factors, also known as extrinsic factors, refer to, "...culture, social, physical and



natural, policy, and technology characteristics that support or limit occupational performance” (Bass et al., 2017 p. 170). The construct of occupation is, the activities, tasks, roles, and things one wants and needs to do and heavily contribute to one's overall well-being (Bass et al., 2017).

The final construct that is considered the keystone of PEOP is performance, which focuses on the doing and how all factors above, interact with one another to impact, participation, one's quality of life, and ultimately their overall well-being (Bass et al., 2017). The use of PEOP with the student veteran population and program development efforts will support the performance in community reintegration and the occupation of higher education to increase the quality of life.

Supports for Occupational Participation and Performance

Intrinsic Factors

Several person factors that support the performance, participation, and well-being of student veterans, have been found. Student veterans possess a diverse set of experiences and come from a culture where military training and skills of resilience, work ethic, persistence, teamwork, self-efficacy, goal setting, and discipline are highlighted (Ford & Vignare, 2014; Moeck et al., 2022). Further traits identified, that are linked as a contributor to academic success include trust, leadership, self-discipline, and loyalty (Hinkson et al., 2021). In addition, a phenomenological study was done where student veteran participants described how discipline taught in the military, could be essential to the college experience through the establishment of routines based on the complex demands of higher education (Gregg et al., 2016a).

A study by Kinney et al. (2020), looked at factors to promote a veteran's overall well-being; encompassing life meaning (psychological well-being) and life satisfaction (subjective well-being) as it has been found that veterans face numerous threats to their well-being during



the transition to civilian life. The study was a cross-sectional design that examined coping ability, meaningful activity, and social support and if there was a direct relationship between participation and the life meaning of veterans attending college (Kinney et al., 2020). The study stated that although further research needs to be done, it did find that supporting veterans' engagement in meaningful activities, in turn, promotes their subjective well-being (Kinney et al., 2020). Further findings indicate that it is important to understand and consider veterans' perspectives to best support subjective well-being and community reintegration (Kinney et al., 2020).

Extrinsic Factors

Environmental supports for increasing the well-being and performance of student veterans have been identified in the form of social support, culture, and built environments (Bass et al., 2017). Social support, veteran-to-veteran peer-mentoring, veteran-only spaces to share similar experiences, and increased accessibility to services, have all been found to improve positive health outcomes, a sense of belonging, and support the academic performance of student veterans (Dobson et al., 2020; Kinney et al., 2021; Thomas et al., 2018; Tomar & Stoffel, 2014; Williston & Roemer, 2017). Two primary sources of support identified by Ghosh et al., (2019) are institutional and social support. Ghosh et al., (2019) further gathered data from interviews with student veterans where they described the importance of having staff available that are knowledgeable in navigating the bureaucratic system and its resources and having specialized training offered for staff on military culture and trauma to foster a positive experience for higher education success. This is supported by findings from Mendez et al., (2018) where it is stated that having supportive services and staff throughout the academic career of student veterans supports their success in reaching their goals. Lastly, the camaraderie and team culture of the



military was found to be a cultural support identified by student veterans and they felt if this was echoed on a college campus, they would have an increase in their sense of belonging resulting in a positive transition to the college environment (Mendez et al., 2018).

Occupational Factors

The literature discusses how engagement in meaningful occupations helps to enhance the well-being of student veterans as they transition to civilian life and higher education (Kinney & Eakman, 2019). Understanding the characteristics of these meaningful occupations will ensure effective program development efforts to support this population. Evidence by Eakman et al., (2019) discussed how active community participation in identified meaningful occupations could help support the community integration process for student veterans resulting in a sense of purpose, personal competence, fulfillment of roles, and overall satisfaction. A theme was found in the literature to identify the valued occupations and roles of the student veteran and to facilitate engagement are the largest supports for successful community integration and role as a college student. These findings support the need for programming that focuses on individualized support to foster the best outcomes. Additionally, occupational therapy possesses a unique skill set to promote the therapeutic use of activities that can benefit this population (Eakman et al., 2019).

It is important to further consider the student veteran's identity. Often student veterans consider their veteran status only a part of who they are, and they find many other identities including caregiver or spouse as equally important (Ghosh et al., 2019). The literature discusses that when individuals leave active service and become a veteran, this is a role exit, and many concurrent new roles and identities start to take shape, including that of a student (Ghosh et al., 2019). With that, student veterans are often considered "non-traditional" students. Various



definitions in the literature state that a “nontraditional” student is an individual that is typically older, may have family responsibilities such as a spouse or children and is potentially more financially independent than a “traditional” aged college student (Ford & Vignare, 2014; Moeck et al., 2022). Being a non-traditional student is found to be a subjective experience based on the life circumstances of the individual and it is found to be vital to the reintegration and higher education experience (Ghosh et al., 2019). The experiences they've had in other roles can help strengthen the new roles they will take on. The key is that services positively support student veterans during the transition to higher education to foster positive role changes.

Barriers to Occupational Participation and Performance

Intrinsic Factors

There was a saturation of evidence that explains student veterans being an “at risk” population for physical and mental health diagnoses compared to the general population but are less likely to utilize services (Moeck et al., 2022; Crossman et al., 2021). Some diagnoses may be in correlation to service-related injuries. These diagnoses and symptoms include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety disorders, depression, suicidal ideation, traumatic brain injuries (TBI), and service-related trauma (Borsari et al., 2017; Eakman et al., 2019; Eakman et al., 2016). Some of these diagnoses have been shown to have a negative psychological impact on academic persistence, engagement, and performance along with hindering the ability to have positive relationships and participate in personally meaningful occupations (Eakman et al., 2019; Borsari et al., 2017; Morissette et al., 2021; Williston & Roemer, 2017). An alarming statistic suggests that because of increased rates of mental health concerns in this population, the dropout rate may be as high as 88% during the first year (Ulrich & Freer, 2020).



Further evidence of intrinsic barriers is evident in a study that was done that yielded results of student veterans displaying substantially lower levels of psychosocial protective factors related to resilience and greater levels of health-related vulnerabilities in comparison to a sample group of non-veterans (Eakman et al., 2016). For reference, the author defined resilience as, "... relative resistance to an environmental risk or the overcoming of stress and adversity despite traumatic exposure" (Eakman et al., 2016, p. 1). In other words, there were lower levels of social support, meaningful occupations, and academic self-efficacy and high rates of mental health symptomology (Eakman et al., 2016). Ultimately this study supports the need for ensuring veteran-specific programming is in place that focuses on social support, as it has been identified as crucial to a positive experience for campus/community integration (Eakman et al., 2016). Cognition is another area that may be a barrier to performance based on reports in the literature that routine cognitive tasks such as attention, managing time, and memorization have led to difficulties with prioritization of school tasks, executive functioning skills, and overall well-being (Gregg et al., 2016b; Tomar & Stoffel, 2014; Ford & Vignare, 2014). Many of these individuals spent time learning military-based skills that are not always applicable in civilian life or higher education; leaving feelings of frustration (Dobson et al., 2022; Tomar & Stoffel 2014). These are important factors to understand as they all have an emphasis on the student veteran's self-concept and identity (Bass et al., 2017).

Extrinsic Factors

Several factors related to the environment contribute are barriers to performance for student veterans including physical/natural, cultural, and social factors (Bass et al., 2017). The structure and culture of the military versus the structure and culture of higher education can vastly impact the performance when transitioning from service to civilian life. Literature findings



suggest that there is often a collectivist culture within the military and an emphasis placed on, a hierarchical organizational structure with predominantly technical learning, and a strict structure to daily tasks (Borsari et al., 2017; Ulrich & Freer, 2020; Tomar & Stoffel 2014; Dobson et al., 2022). This structure further translates to how the "military often uses a standardized, step-by-step, 'hands-on' approach for teaching" versus college where it is more of an informal, autonomous approach with less structure provided (Borsari et al., 2017, pg 7; Dobson et al., 2020; Gregg et al., 2016a). The structure on a college campus may be foreign to student veterans and this has been attributed to difficulties with prioritization of tasks, a lack of focus, and difficulty with time management when trying to structure their schedule and balance familial versus student roles (Ford & Vignare, 2014; Gregg et al., 2016a). On top of balancing roles, it was found that though many benefits are available to assist student veterans through higher education there is a high report of difficulty locating them (Borsari et al., 2017).

Beyond structural and cultural barriers, there are also identified social support barriers. The ability to develop interpersonal relationships with those in the community and non-veteran peers is a challenging endeavor for this population (Eakman et al., 2019). It is reported that one of the most common challenges for student veterans is "social acculturation within the campus community" as this population is less likely to invest time in social activities outside of academia (Eakman et al., 2019). This could be attributed to further reports by the student veterans on a sense of social stigma and alienation from their non-military peers that lead to difficulties interacting (Dobson et al., 2020; Misra-Herbert et al., 2015). Oftentimes, student veterans have reported perceiving themselves to be at a different life stage with more established vocational, social, and family roles than that of the "traditional" college student leading to barriers in forming social connections (Borsari et al., 2017). Mental health conditions may further



contribute to a lack of engagement in interactions that would build social support (Eakman et al., 2019). These social connections can further be hindered by the misinformation about student veterans by their peers. Borsari et al., (2017) reported evidence of civilian peers asking inappropriate questions or being misinformed on things such as foreign policy. With these barriers, student veterans voice the desire for a social environment where there is a sense of camaraderie, brotherhood, and the ability to connect with those who have similar experiences (Dobson et al., 2020; Ford & Vignare, 2014; Ulrich & Freer, 2020).

Lastly, student veterans tend to experience increased rates of mental health diagnoses that affect academic participation in comparison to their civilian peers (Eakman et al., 2019; Borsari et al., 2017). This relates to environmental barriers as evidence suggests that some college campuses may not be fully prepared to address the complex mental health needs of student veterans, though a multidisciplinary approach and occupational therapy services could address this need further (Eakman et al., 2016).

Occupational Factors

Further analysis of the literature indicates some occupational factors that are or have the potential to be barriers to the performance and participation of student veterans. Social and community participation present barriers as it relates to occupation for this population. As mentioned in extrinsic barriers, social support was a barrier to performance, and as it relates, this is in correlation to the occupation of social participation. It was stated earlier that student veterans are less likely to invest time in social activities with their non-veteran peers which further relates to occupational barriers of financial strain, and familial roles and responsibilities impeding the ability to form social connections (Eakman et al., 2019). Furthermore, reports from student veterans on barriers to socialization are correlated to communication gaps with non-



military peers, difficulty with emotional regulation within social engagement, isolation, and effects from psychological distress (Lynn Plach & Haertlein Sells, 2013; Tomar & Stoffel, 2014; Williston & Roemer, 2017).

The student veterans' experience with formal education has created some reported difficulties with coursework and expectations in the classroom (Ford & Vignare, 2014). Many feel a lack of focus/concentration, study/time management skills as they juggle multiple roles and family responsibilities outside the classroom (Ford & Vignare, 2014). Further concerns with academia and integration, stem from reports of difficulties with the fast pace nature of college and the need to switch thought processes constantly (Gregg et al., 2016b).

Roles and identity are both a support and a barrier, as it is heavily influenced by the subjective experiences of each student veteran (Ghosh et al., 2019). Often, a student veteran is considered a 'non-traditional student' meaning they are usually over the age of 24, are financially independent, and may be married or have dependents (Ford & Vignare, 2014). This leads to potential barriers to performance and participation based on several factors unique to the individual. These include but are not limited to, managing multiple roles, finances, homework demands, a job, housing, childcare, and internal emotional conflict with potential health concerns (Alschuler & Yarab, 2018; Lynn Plach & Haertlein Sells, 2013; Tomar & Stoffel, 2014). In addition to these factors, student veterans may further struggle with losses of personal growth, relationships, and well-being as it relates to losing components of the military that gave their life meaning (Gregg et al., 2016; Kinney et al., 2020).

Mental Health, Well-Being, and Sense of Purpose

Understanding the factors influencing the overall mental health and well-being of student veterans will further support successful intervention strategies and approaches. One factor is



understanding military culture and its potential effects on the performance of student veterans. Student veterans were trained with a collectivist mindset where the standards are set to be strong and respectful, and emphasize the importance of teamwork so the group can provide safety and support (Dobson et al., 2019; Ulrich & Freer, 2020; Tomar & Stoffel 2014; Dobson et al., 2022). This translates to student veterans being less likely to ask for help when a problem arises and will attempt to solve it on their own; the belief is that this has contributed to the stigmatization of seeking mental health services as well (Dobson et al., 2019). It was found that less than half of veterans with a current mental health diagnosis will seek out mental health services (Williston & Roemer, 2017). This can become a concern as though not all student veterans will have a mental health diagnoses, they still experience higher rates of mental health concerns than nonveterans (Thomas et al., 2018). For example, high rates of student veterans report psychological distress, high frequencies of health risk behaviors, increased rates of suicidal thoughts, and symptomology of mental health concerns as approximately 24% of student veterans in a national survey experienced symptoms of depression (Alschular & Yarab, 2018; Morissette et al., 2021; Williston & Roemer, 2017).

These conditions have been shown to negatively affect academic performance and challenges with transitioning to the civilian context (Morissette et al., 2021; Williston & Roemer, 2017). In addition, taking on new roles, a sense of identity loss, losing a sense of community and camaraderie that the military offered, and the entire process of transitioning to civilian life has the potential to contribute to mental health diagnoses and challenges of this population (Dobson et al., 2019; Thomas et al., 2018; Moeck et al., 2022). Overall, mental health concerns are associated with an increase in drop-out rates, taking longer to graduate, impaired coping mechanisms such as increased alcohol consumption/substance use, and difficulties with



concentration and executive function (Ford & Vignare, 2014; Moeck et al., 2022; Morriessette et al., 2021). It is important to be aware of the cause and effect of mental health within the student veteran population. Focus will need to be placed on these concerns to ensure all of the needs of student veterans are met.

Effective Programming to Support Performance and Participation

There are several evidence-based effective programming strategies along with ample suggestions to support the student veteran population during community integration and their higher education journey. Literature aimed at occupational therapy (OT) emphasizes the importance of engagement in meaningful activities as it enhances academic self-efficacy (Moeck et al., 2022; Williston & Roemer, 2017). Further discussion emphasizes how this engagement in meaningful activity may positively influence individuals and increase motivation to engage in future occurrences (Eakman et al., 2019).

It is suggested that occupational therapists should take part in multidisciplinary teams to promote engagement in meaningful activities that align with one's values and facilitate self-advocacy and skills necessary for student veterans to be successful in the educational setting while also increasing performance (Eakman et al., 2019). Utilizing OT-specific skills to assess one's performance to support the transition of student veterans is also discussed (Gregg et al., 2016a). It is suggested to further gain insight into the needs of student veterans through measures such as the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) that further allow for client-centered goal-setting processes to take place (Gregg et al., 2016a). Further encouragement of meaningful activities that promote social participation has been found to increase overall subjective and psychological well-being and support the importance of community-based activities (Kinney et al., 2020). Occupational Therapy plays a significant role in effective



programming based on the literature to best support student veterans in their performance and participation.

Program Structure Emphasizing Military Culture and Community Connections

Suggestions in the literature regarding program development discussed the importance of forming programming around military subculture ideals as it helps support the success of student veterans and fosters understanding by staff (Thomas et al., 2018). The need to provide education to staff on military culture and its diversity can foster cultural competence and promote a socially supportive environment (Thomas et al., 2018) In a qualitative study, student veterans expressed that they don't believe various institutions understand the military culture or their unique challenges (Thomas et al., 2018). Another suggestion made by the literature is the creation of non-academic courses for student veterans that focus on things such as strategies for academic success, career planning, developing an academic plan, and connecting to community resources (Ghosh et al., 2020).

Thomas et al., (2018) suggests that framing focus on theory and resiliency methods that promote mental endurance, and 'combat fitness' versus focusing on problems can create a culturally relevant approach for the veteran population. These methods take on a strengths-based approach to increase performance, that is individualized to the student veteran population. Such programming efforts should look to cultivate community connections as it has been found that a high level of social support offers protective factors against poor mental health and positively supports academic success (Thomas et al., 2018).

Other evidence supports the idea of community connection and suggests that OT can develop partnerships with local and campus programs to assess resources available to optimize services and decrease the gaps in services to veterans to ensure collaborative relationships are



built with educators, mental health providers, learning support services, and Department of Veteran Affairs officials (Gregg et al., 2016b; Eakman et al., 2016). OT can also play a critical role in working with universities to identify crucial areas where the skill set of OT can best support student veterans to diminish distress amongst student veterans in navigating and participating in higher education (Gregg et al., 2016b).

Autonomy and Self-Advocacy

"An understanding of personal strengths, support needs, and disability characteristics is a foundational component of developing effective self-advocacy skills" (Kinney & Eakman, 2017). The greater self-advocacy skills a student veteran possesses is a direct correlation to higher grade point averages (Kinney & Eakman, 2017). Supporting student veterans in building the skills to have an understanding of what they need and what their strengths are will directly result in facilitating success in the classroom (Kinney & Eakman, 2019). One of those is, coping skills and promotion of autonomy as it has been shown to enhance mental functions that result in an increased sense of empowerment and intrinsic motivation for the individual (Gregg et al., 2016b). The evidence further supports the benefits of focusing on coping skills as they support participation in several areas of occupation. For instance, student veterans have reported the ability to cope effectively supports their community integration through engagement in activities (Kinney et al., 2020). Even more so, the ability to cope or possess resilience is strengthened with social support (Dobson et al., 2019). Ultimately effective coping is correlated to positive life meaning and satisfaction (Kinney et al., 2020).

Areas of Focus for Skill-Building

When considering effective interventions and strategies, several have been proposed in the literature. Literature has found that effective interventions to increase the performance of



student veterans include but are not limited to, multifaceted interventions, multidisciplinary approaches, emotional regulation strategies, executive functioning skills, social support systems, and assisting veterans to participate in community supports (Kashiwa et al., 2017; Ulrich & Freer, 2020; Williston & Roemer, 2017). A variety of executive functioning skills are utilized in the higher education setting making it important to address to foster success. Other ways to support student veterans include, timely access to health services, increased awareness of available services, stigma reduction, improvement in convenience to access services, routine screening, and peer support programs such as 8 Keys to Success, Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership, and VetSuccess on Campus (Misra-Herbert et al., 2015). Another structure that has been found to yield positive satisfaction among student veterans is Lifestyle Redesign to promote skills of time management, assertiveness, stress management, socialization, and routine management (Villez et al., 2015).

Throughout the literature, social participation has come up as an area of focus that supports positive community integration and the higher education experience. Some supports identified to foster social participation and positive health outcomes include, peer mentoring, supportive services to cope with psychological distress, adaptations to the environment, veteran-only spaces, and increasing accessibility to needed services (Dobson et al., 2020; Kinney et al., 2021; Thomas et al., 2018; Tomar & Stoffel, 2014; Williston & Roemer, 2017). Further establishment of social events that focus on networking, professional development, and outdoor leisure activities can also facilitate the participation of student veterans (Eakman et al., 2019; Ulrich & Freer, 2020; Villez et al., 2015; Williston & Roemer, 2017).

Further studies have been done on supported education programs that specifically target student veterans in higher education. It was found that focus is to be placed on areas of expressed



educational needs to build rapport, promote autonomy, facilitate empowerment over the role as a student, and utilize a holistic care lens to ensure needs are met (Crossman et al., 2021). A complimenting strategy to consider is to facilitate the development of individualized coping strategies in conjunction with life skills development to best support the process of adapting to the college culture, new habits/roles, and routines (Gregg et al., 2016b).



Chapter III

Methodology

Theoretical Framework

This scholarly project was created using the theoretical foundation of the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance or PEOP model (Bass et al., 2017). Research questions developed in searching the literature, utilized constructs and concepts of the PEOP model to ensure supports and barriers to performance and well-being related to the effects of person, environment, and occupation factors were analyzed, to support the development of the product. An example of a research question focused on what supports and barriers are present in relation to the higher education environment/integration into civilian life that impact performance and overall well-being for student veterans. PEOP was further utilized to support the overall focus of the final product. Emphasis was placed on the theoretical concept of how to maximize the overall performance and well-being of student veterans in creating service delivery guidelines for practitioners and supported education specialists. A secondary theory used for product development of this scholarly project is Self-Determination Theory (Fazio, 2017). The concepts of this theory including, autonomy, competence, and relatedness supported the restructuring of New Start's program mission/objectives, along with the design, structure, and goals/objectives for the final service delivery guide.

Project Timeline and Procedures

The planning for the project started approximately one year prior to the on-site placement. During this time discussion and brainstorming took place to compile potential ideas for the scholarly project. The author narrowed down an area of focus and expressed the desire to



serve the veteran population. Completion of a literature matrix to gather supporting evidence for the identified interest area occurred. Project ideas were discussed with a potential experiential site. Learning objectives, activities, and responsibilities for the author were established and confirmed with the partnering agency approximately two to five months prior to being on-site for the experiential placement. The needs of the partnering agency focused on program development and quality improvement measures for community programming serving the student veteran population.

A literature review was completed to gain up-to-date research about the population, their needs, along with effective programming and interventions. The PEO model was utilized to create research questions that guided the literature review and supported the creation of search terms to yield relevant results. Search terms used include the following: “(veteran OR student veteran OR student service members) AND (supported education programs OR supported education OR effective interventions OR interventions) AND (mental health OR well-being OR participation OR performance) AND (community OR reintegration OR integration OR transition). Inclusion and exclusion search criteria were also established for the search terms to yield accurate results. Databases that were determined to be appropriate for the nature of data being collected included, allied health sciences databases, governmental sites, veteran-focused journals, and research databases. Select articles that were found to be germane to the topic were used to locate additional articles via reference search. The literature review was completed two to three months prior to the on-site placement, apart from refinements during the on-site placement based upon the discovery of additional literature. The on-site placement with Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) at Colorado State University in the New Start Program for student veterans, began January 2023 for a 14-week term.



For the first three to four weeks on-site, an extensive needs assessment was completed to determine a specific deliverable that would meet the needs of the agency and the student veteran population. The needs assessment included, review of current program materials of the veteran supported education program, observation of program sessions, stakeholder interviews, collaboration meetings with on-site staff, and locating and collaborating with several community/campus programs that support the veteran population. Further efforts the author took part in were geared towards on-campus advocacy and marketing events for New Start services. At the conclusion of the needs assessment, in collaboration with the agency, a synthesis of findings led to the determination that the development of a service delivery guide would best serve the current need of quality improvement in New Start programming.

Weeks four through ten accounted for the program development phase where the specific components of the product were decided upon during collaboration sessions with New Start staff and the author. Prior to the creation of the service delivery guide, it was determined efforts would need to focus on restructuring the program mission, goal, and objectives along with resolidifying specific outcome measures to help frame New Start's distinct purpose. This would provide the overall framework ideas to create a guide that would best serve the desired needs of the agency. Once the program mission, goal, and objectives were solidified, the further components of the service-delivery guide could be decided upon. Through in-depth collaboration, it was decided that the guide would outline the appropriate sequencing and scope of services for programming that followed concepts from the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework to frame the processes (AOTA, 2022).

The objectives for the product were also created during this time. Product-specific goal and objectives, the author drafted potential ideas aimed to maintain congruency with the program



mission, goal and objectives. The author gathered feedback and suggestions from staff and made revisions as necessary. The final goal and objectives for the product were established. The goal and objectives center around improving effective service delivery and outcomes within programming by increasing confidence and competence of the practitioners to ensure all needs of the student veteran are met.

The guide further supported appropriate facilitation to community services to ensure all the needs of the student veterans are met and best outcomes are achieved. With PEOP theory in mind, it was anticipated that the overall well-being and participation of the student veteran would be best supported (Bass et al., 2017). It was made imperative by the New Start staff and agency that the product could be utilized for continued evaluation and quality improvement of programming, along with supporting self-advocacy, self-determination, and meaningful integration into the community and higher education environment of student veterans served. Additionally, the student author met with New Start staff weekly to gain feedback on the progress of the guide and synthesized the suggestions into the product design. The author continued to meet with community agencies including, the Veteran Affairs (VA) vocational rehabilitation and community mental health fellows, campus services/organizations for veterans, and supported further development of New Start programming through collaboration meetings with staff. The final four weeks of the on-site placement at CSU consisted of gaining staff feedback, making final edits to the guide, completing the remainder of the written portion of the scholarly project, and presenting the final product to the agency staff.

Ethical Considerations of Project

Since The Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) is an institution of Colorado State University, there are specific ethical guidelines that must be followed to ensure the protection of



personal information and are applicable to this scholarly project. The first one is, The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) which is a federal law that outlines standards created to protect one's personal health information from disclosure without consent from said individual (Centers, 2022). The second ethical guideline that must be considered is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which protects the privacy of all education records and outlines the rights and responsibilities of students at CSU (Colorado, 2012). To ensure these rights, all staff members, interns, and volunteers affiliated with CCP must fill out a HIPAA AND FERPA compliance form and go through proper onboarding training prior to working with participants or reviewing sensitive information.

Another ethical consideration is the exchange of information which entails gaining consent from participants to share personal information with community agencies. This is another effort to ensure the safety and autonomy of the participant. These are all important measures regarding this scholarly project as it relates to the New Start program offered at CCP. The final service delivery guide summary is in Chapter 4. The complete guide can be found in the appendices.



Chapter IV

Product

Product Goal and Objectives

The goal and objectives for the product were developed secondary to the restructuring of the overall New Start program’s mission, goal, objectives, and outcome measures. The restructuring for the program’s mission, goal, and objectives took place through collaboration between the author and New Start staff with a focus on current literature that captured what the staff envisioned services would best serve the population. It is important to discuss as it frames the context to which the product goal and objectives came to be.

The program mission that was created was, “Recognizing the unique and often invisible needs of Student Service Members and Veterans (SSM/V), New Start exists to motivate and equip individuals to pursue meaningful personal, academic, and career goals.” Four objectives were established for the New Start Program to help align with the mission and achieve individualized support focusing on self-determination to foster adjustment to civilian life and ultimately promote the well-being and performance of student veterans. The focus of the four objectives includes well-being/life adjustment, skill-building/academics, community access/connection, and goal setting/achievement. An example of an objective focus is, the New Start program will assist the student veteran in integrating effective skill-building techniques that will improve academic performance. The program mission, goals, and objectives, as well as the algorithm for service delivery/decision-making, are included in the appendices.

Product Overview

The product, *New Start Scope of Services & Service-Delivery Guide* was created utilizing concepts and processes from the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (OTPF) to support



not only the occupational therapy lens but the effectiveness of the product (AOTA, 2020). The final product consists of three components, the guide itself, the instructional overview for using the guide, and an outcome measure to gain feedback from those using the guide to support program evaluation and quality improvement for programming over time.

The guide is an eight-page document that focuses on the broad categories of service delivery including, intake, evaluation, intervention, and outcomes, along with a small section outlining the “referring out” process, specific to the agency. The OTPF influenced these broad categories with additions made based on program-specific needs (AOTA, 2020). Clinical reasoning questions were formulated by the author using the OTPF and PEOP (AOTA, 2020; Bass et al., 2017). These questions were created to support the practitioner in the decision-making process for appropriateness of services to decipher if the needs of the student veteran are within the scope of the New Start program, or if needed, assist them in locating other services that are better suited for their current needs. An additional page for each section listed in the sequencing of services was created. These additional pages serve as a “roadmap” of how to carry out services and stay within the scope of New Start programming. These pages provide more in-depth detail to ensure needs are met, promoting self-determination, and appropriately facilitating community connections to other services, as needed.

The instructional overview for using the decision-making guide contains a breakdown on why to use the guide, how to appropriately use each section, how it was created through the occupational therapy lens, and sustainability suggestions moving forward. The product evaluation tool is geared towards the practitioners and supported education specialists utilizing the guide. The tool contains a series of questions about confidence and competence in administering services using the service-delivery guide. Several questions use a 5-point Likert



scale with the addition of two open-ended questions to gain insight into the most helpful elements and elements that may require quality improvement efforts to continually meet the needs of effective service delivery.

In Appendix A, the reader can locate the complete product discussed in this section. In collaboration with the partnering agency and student author, it was agreed upon that the agency has full rights to the product and they are able to perform quality improvement efforts to the product, as the program and needs of the population evolve. The student author will not be responsible for changes made by the agency, following the publication of this scholarly project. If readers have any questions regarding the product and its use, they are encouraged to contact the author at the contact information listed on the copyright page of this scholarly project.

Partnering Agency and Program Needs

The author completed the doctoral experiential placement (DEP) in partnering with The Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) at Colorado State University (CSU). CCP is an affiliation of CSU focusing on providing a variety of services targeting supported education, supported employment, supported living, and sleep services to students and community members. The specific program the author was involved in is called New Start. This program is aimed at supporting student veterans as they integrate into the community and navigate higher education. The author had the opportunity to discuss the needs of the program with the staff and director of CCP. It was determined that program quality improvement measures were needed to re-establish the purpose of New Start and provide effective services to the population. The program did not have a set process in place for sequencing and the scope of services. From here, it was determined a service delivery guide would support the ground-level efforts in quality improvement efforts for New Start. The author had the opportunity to be involved with staff in a



variety of tasks related to re-structuring the program including the selection of program materials, advocacy efforts on campus, and re-creation of the mission, goal, and objective statements.

Application of Theoretical Framework

The student author used the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) model constructs to support the creation of the decision-making guide product (Bass et al., 2017). The reasoning for using PEOP is the influence person, environment, and occupational factors have on overall performance and how the participation in meaningful occupations of the individual directly impacts and is impacted by these factors (Bass et al., 2017). After examining the needs of the agency with the New Start staff, the author concluded that PEOP would be the best fit for the needs of the agency and this scholarly project based on performance being “front and center” of PEOP (Bass et al., 2017). PEOP states that overall well-being and participation are by-products of performance in occupations, and by having participation and well-being integrated into occupational therapy services/goals, it looks beyond immediate outcomes to a more holistic view (Bass et al., 2017). It was decided that the service delivery guide would frame New Start services to increase the student veterans' participation and well-being. This can be done by supporting and increasing their performance in meaningful, everyday occupations (Bass et al., 2017). PEOP also influenced the goal and objectives for the product itself by aiming to enhance the performance of delivery of New Start services by explicitly laying out effective sequencing and scope of services.

Self-Determination Theory was the secondary theory utilized in supporting the design of the service delivery guide and its components (Fazio, 2017). It focuses on the three factors of competence, autonomy, and relatedness and that when these are satisfied through intrinsic



motivation and self-regulation, it can improve one's self-motivation, and mental health (Fazio, 2017). Throughout the program mission, goal, and objectives, and within the clinical reasoning questions in the guide, elements were designed around this idea of how to enhance one's competence and support autonomy that in turn, supports their overarching goals and overall well-being. The services of New Start aim to embody self-determination to best support the longevity of the student veterans' well-being beyond higher education.



Chapter V

Summary

The purpose and goal of this scholarly project were to address the need for effective and holistic community services to support the overall well-being of student veterans as they integrate into civilian life and pursue higher education. This need was identified and solidified through discussion with the partnering agency, the Center for Community Partnerships (CCP), regarding support for the veteran-specific, New Start program. They identified the need for quality improvement efforts to re-structuring their current veteran-specific supported education services for those attending university. An extensive literature review, in-depth needs assessment, and interviews with stakeholders were completed to identify a specific product to develop to meet the need.

In the literature, findings to support successful programming discussed the importance of multi-faceted interventions, promoting engagement in identified meaningful occupations, supporting active community participation for integration, executive functioning skill building, social support, and increasing awareness to services available (Misra-Herbert et al., 2015; Thomas et al., 2018; Ulrich & Freer, 2020; Williston & Roemer, 2017; Kinney & Eakman 2019; Eakman et al., 2019). This led to the creation of the *New Start Scope of Services & Service-Delivery Guide* that outlines the sequencing and scope of New Start services to support practitioners and supported education specialists in the service-delivery process to ensure effectiveness and best outcome obtainment for student veterans. The secondary purpose stated by the agency is that it will support continuous program evaluation efforts in response to changes necessary to meet the needs of the population. The product is housed within a virtual program,



selected in collaboration with the author, that is easily accessible the agency and New Start staff members.

Strengths

Strengths identified for the product created include the use of theory, its content, thoroughness of collaboration with a variety of community partners, and product development occurring in collaboration with stakeholders. Occupation-based theoretical framework, PEOP, along with The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework, and finally the application of principles from the Self-Determination Theory were utilized to support the design, word-choice, goal, objectives, and purpose of the product (AOTA, 2020; Baum et al., 2017). The content of this product contains easy-to-follow diagrams that are color-coded for ease of readability. Sections are divided in a consistent way that is easy for the reader to understand. The content of the guide and instructional resource on the appropriate use of the guide clearly outlines the scope of services through a clear and concise mission, goals, and objectives to decrease ambiguity and increase the effectiveness of the product and of services overall. The product is housed in a virtual program that creates ease of accessibility to the agency allowing for responsive changes to be made to the guide as the program evolves.

In-depth collaboration with a variety of community partners occurred to learn more about the services provided, their mission and goals, and re-establish partnerships. This was done to support quality improvement targeting program and product development efforts related to ensuring unique services would be provided by CCP. Collaborating with community partners further supported product development in the creation of a specific page in the guide targeting the referral process when needs fall outside the scope of New Start. This product was created through extensive collaboration with stakeholders at CCP that had unique experiences in



program development, occupational therapy, and providing supported education services. The strength behind this is, there were multiple perspectives, ideas, and knowledge that contributed to assuring the final product would be useful to CCP.

Limitations

Limitations for the product created include, there have not been any trial runs utilizing the guide in practice, and it was developed for a specific site and stakeholders as part of the author's capstone project to meet requirements for graduation. There has been limited opportunity for staff members to trial this guide in practice during the author's 14-week placement. Further implementation will allow for the evaluation of effectiveness. The product includes some information only relevant to CCP. This includes the specific software the agency uses and community partners that are specific to the geographical location. Other agencies implementing this project would need to adapt the project to meet the unique partnerships in their community.

Implications for Occupational Therapy Practice

The purpose of this product is to support the confidence and competence of practitioners in providing appropriately sequenced services that are within the scope of the program to help ensure the needs of the student veteran are being met. Clinical reasoning questions were created to ensure services are within the scope of the program and terminology and concepts from the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (OTPF) were used. The Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) model which focuses on increasing performance by enhancing participation in identified meaningful occupations was used to guide the intended outcomes for student veterans (Baum et al., 2017). This supports the fact that Occupational Therapists possess unique qualifications for planning, implementing, and evaluating programming that encourages participation within meaningful occupations to support enhanced performance (AOTA, 2020).



This product may be used by professionals with a variety of educational backgrounds. It is vital to review the details of the entire product to ensure an understanding of concepts along with the intended scope and goal of services for appropriate implementation with other agencies. This product could also be adapted to other populations for supported education and community participation. Adjustments to details may need to be made to fit the geographic region, population served, or the agency's budget for such services.

Sustainability

The partnering agency intends to use the product for continuous program evaluation and quality improvement. The author created a product evaluation measure to administer to practitioners using the guide. This is in the Appendices. It contains questions centered around confidence and competence when using the guide, the ease of readability, along with what is least/most useful, about the guide. The results can be used for promoting sustainability during program evaluation by adjusting the guide to ensure the evolving needs of the agency and population are being effectively met. The guide is housed in a virtual platform that is easily accessed by assigned New Start staff to make responsive changes as needed.



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Appendix A



New Start Scope of Services and Service Delivery Guide

Author/Co-Authors:

Sheena K. Miller, OTDS

Janet Jedlicka, OTR/L, PhD, FAOTA

James E. Graham, PhD, DC, FACRM & Devin Barth, MOTS, OTR/L



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New Start Service-Delivery Guide

Purpose

Serves as a guide that outlines the sequencing and scope of services offered through New Start programming to support staff and interns through the decision-making process and appropriate service delivery. It allows for sustainability and quality of programming, appropriate facilitation of services, community connections, and assurance that all needs of participants are being met, and the best outcomes are achieved.

The “Why?”

The need for a service-delivery guide is to target the sustainability and effectiveness of programming that will promote effective outcomes. It is designed to increase the confidence of practitioners/supported education specialists working in New Start by guiding them through the processes and decision-making for improved efficacy of services. The guide can be utilized during quality improvement efforts to ensure New Start’s scope is well-defined and is continuously providing services that target the needs of participants’ and foster community connections that support participants’ overall well-being.

Development Through an Occupational Therapy Lens:

The New Start Service-Delivery Guide was developed from the perspective of the Occupational Therapy (OT) profession. OT values the therapeutic use of occupations to enhance one’s participation and well-being (AOTA, 2020). Occupations are the everyday activities one needs, wants, or is expected to do on a daily basis that holds value to an individual (AOTA, 2020). The profession’s lens looks at the relationship between these valued occupations, the unique characteristics of an individual or population, and the context to provide habilitative and rehabilitative services that promote overall health and well-being (AOTA, 2020). The development of the guide took a holistic view of service provision and utilized components of the OT process for sequencing of services. This unique perspective and knowledge base allows for practitioners/supported education specialists to utilize effective sequencing of services and the ability to make each session individualized without losing the efficacy of services.



Goal: The New Start Service-Delivery Guide will improve effective service delivery and outcomes within New Start Programming by increasing the confidence and competence of practitioners/supported education specialists in the clinical reasoning and program processes.

Objectives

1. Practitioners and Supported Education Specialists will feel confident and competent in the scope and sequencing of New Start services.
2. The Center for Community Partnerships will utilize the service-delivery guide and outcome measure feedback from practitioners/supported education specialists as part of annual program evaluations to effectively implement continuous quality improvement efforts for New Start programming

Brief Overview and How to Use

The guide is divided into six categories. Most of the categories are supported through evidence in the Occupational Therapy Process Framework (AOTA, 2020). Further categories were formulated in collaboration, based on the structural needs of New Start.

The categories are as follows:

1. *Flowchart Overview*

- a. This page gives a broad overview of each stage and the sequence of services, from Intake to Outcomes.
- b. It outlines the Mission, Goal, and Objectives of New Start programming to give context to the rest of the Decision-Making Guide.
- c. Intended use is to give a ‘big picture’ of New Start structure, highlighting the main points of each stage in services.

2. *Intake Roadmap*

- a. This page describes the two primary referral paths and outlines the steps for both. It also lists common question to guide clinical judgment related to the appropriateness for receiving services.
- b. This is intended to be used prior to the first in-person session.

3. *Evaluation Roadmap*

- a. Outlines the Evaluation process and appropriate documents to utilize during the first and potentially, second session depending on the participant.
- b. Describes the importance and processes for goal-setting and action-step planning.



- c. The intended use is to ensure all appropriate documents are filled out, goals/action steps are set in collaboration with the participant, and determining priority needs for intervention planning.

4. *Intervention Roadmap*

- a. Outlines priority areas within New Start Programming and an example of what each may entail. Provides the same clinical judgment questions as on the Intake Roadmap for continuous reference.
- b. Provides resource suggestions for planning sessions and reminders of things to complete during intervention to ensure quality programming.
- c. The intended use is to serve as a guide and reference during the duration of intervention sessions for planning and facilitation to best support the individualized needs of participants.

5. *Outcomes Roadmap*

- a. Outlines outcome measures used for all participants vs. individualized outcome measures that are selected by the practitioner/supported education specialist.
- b. Describes steps to take when outcomes are met/not met. Provides further information on the importance of action steps and how they relate to outcome progression.
- c. Intended use is to ensure effective services based upon continuous measuring of outcomes and evaluation/obtainment of goals/action steps.

6. *Referring Out Roadmap*

- a. Outlines community-specific resources and guidance that are categorized by the “Priority Intervention Area”. These resources are to ensure all needs outside of New Start Programming, are met.
- b. Encourages warm handoffs to other services to increase the performance of participants.
- c. The intended use is to identify appropriate resources that better meet the needs of the participant.

Sustainability and Quality Improvement

The sustainability of New Start programming will be achieved by utilizing the decision-making guide and feedback questionnaire during annual program review processes. Collaboration amongst team members on the results from feedback will support quality improvement adjustments made to the decision-making guide. This is to ensure that the service-delivery guide continuously meets the needs of the population.



Disclaimer on Intended Use

This Service-Delivery Guide is intended to be a guide to support practitioners and supported education specialists through the sequencing and best clinical judgment processes for New Start programming. Staff are encouraged to make suggestions if the guide doesn't support specific situations during service delivery, with various participants or when there are changes made to these processes or the processes highlight the need for quality improvement to meet the needs of the participants. Note: The Capstone Student a part of the creation of the guide, Sheena Miller, is not responsible for edits and/or additions made to the content following initial creation.

References

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain and process (4th ed.). American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 74(Suppl. 2), 7412410010. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001>



New Start Scope of Services & Service-Delivery Guide

Mission:

Recognizing the unique and often invisible needs of Student Service Members and Veterans (SSM/V), New Start exists to motivate and equip individuals to pursue meaningful personal, academic, and career goals.

Goal:

New Start's supported education specialists use individualized assessment and intervention with a focus on positive future orientation and self-determination to foster adjustment to civilian life, promote well-being, and support academic performance throughout education at Colorado State University and during the transition into post-graduation life and career.

Program Objectives

Objectives are focused on the areas of Well-being/Life Adjustment, Skill Building/Academics, Community Access/Connection, and Goal Setting/Achievement.

- 1. New Start will promote participation in identified meaningful activities by the SSM/V to increase their well-being and adjustment to civilian life throughout their time as a Colorado State University Student, developing habits that will extend beyond graduation.
- 2. New Start will integrate effective skill-building techniques to improve the academic performance of student veterans during their pursuit and completion of higher education.
- 3. New Start will foster the utilization of community resources by student veterans to increase positive community connection, decrease experiences of isolation, and improve self-determination.
- 4. New Start will implement individualized goal-setting and attainment measures to foster positive academic and life outcomes.

Program Objective Measures

- Veteran Adjustment to College Scale
- Work & Social Adjustment Scale
- Community Integration Measure
- Satisfaction with Life Scale

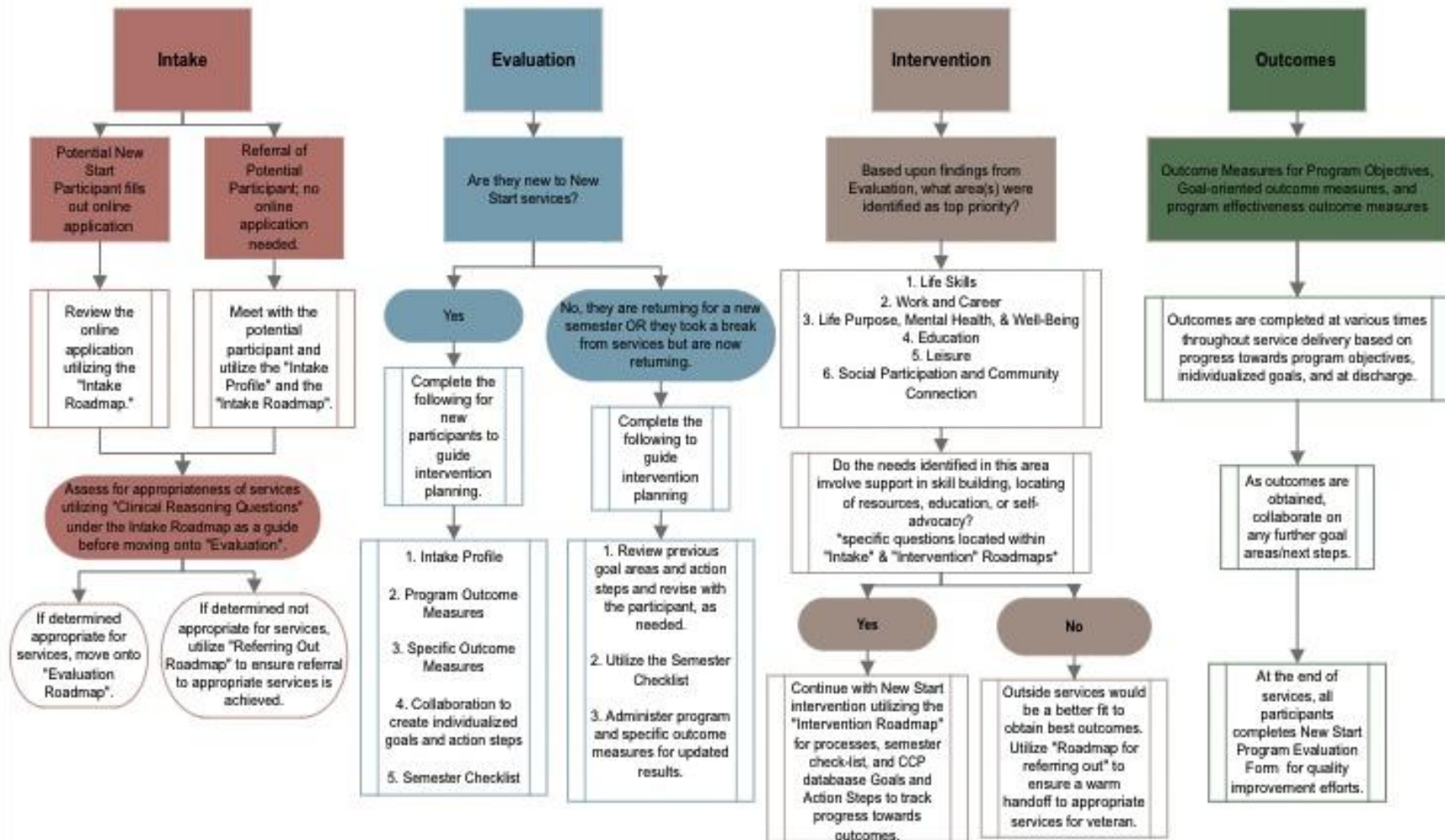
Decision-Making Guide Purpose:

Serves as a guide for practitioners that outlines the sequencing and scope of services for New Start programming and when to appropriately facilitate connections to community services to ensure the needs of student veterans are being met and best outcomes are achieved. Additionally, the guide will support program evaluation and quality improvement efforts.



A Snapshot of New Start Services

The flowchart below is a visual guide of the overall sequencing of New Start Services and highlights key points. Each stage in the process has a correlating page to follow, for more in-depth details to support the practitioner/supported education specialist in the decision-making process.



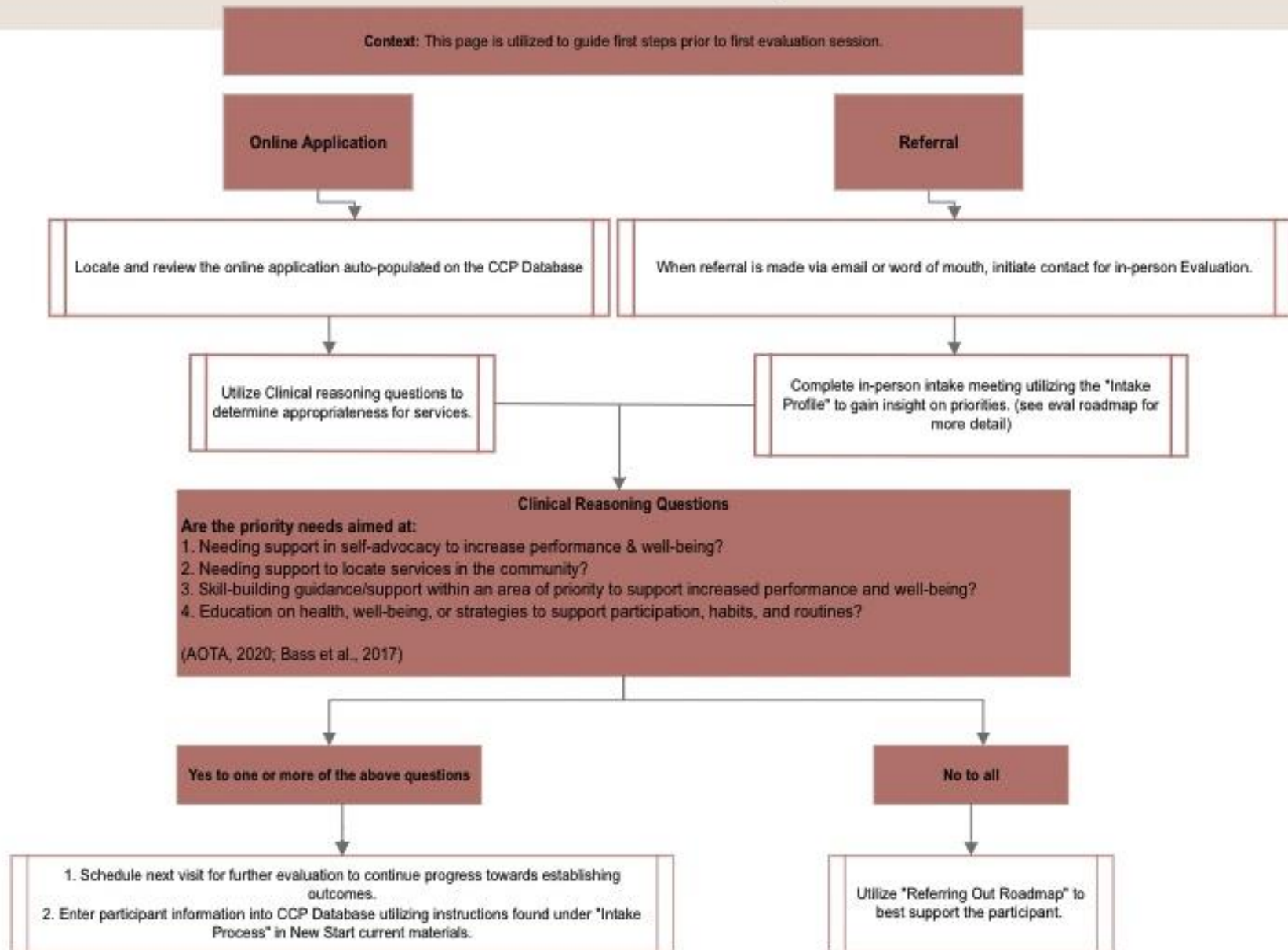
Referring Out

Utilize this document to support facilitation to outside services that would either be a better fit for the participant or would supplement New Start services to support achieving best outcomes. Categories are split up by areas of priority. Specific contact details can be located in the corresponding Teams folder.

Concepts/Processes from The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework & Person-Environment-Occupation Performance Model were utilized (AOTA, 2020; Bass et al., 2017).



Intake Roadmap



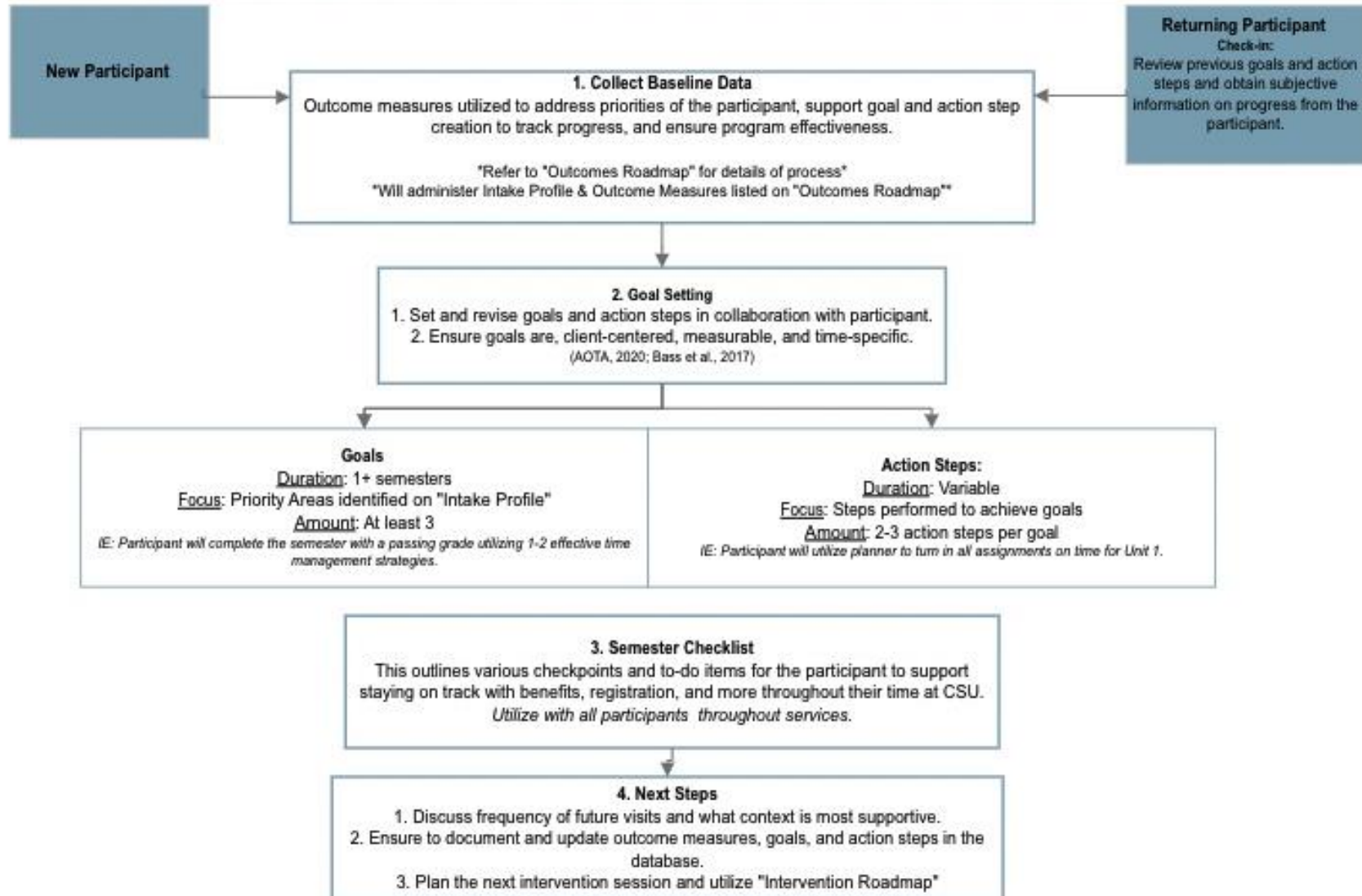
Concepts/Processes from The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework & Person-Environment-Occupation Performance Model were utilized (AOTA, 2020; Bass et al., 2017).



Evaluation Roadmap

Context: You will meet with the potential participant and utilize the following steps as a guide through appropriate processes.

Structure: The process may take 1-2 sessions, depending on the individual and their needs. Make sure to complete authorization forms as needed at the start of the session.

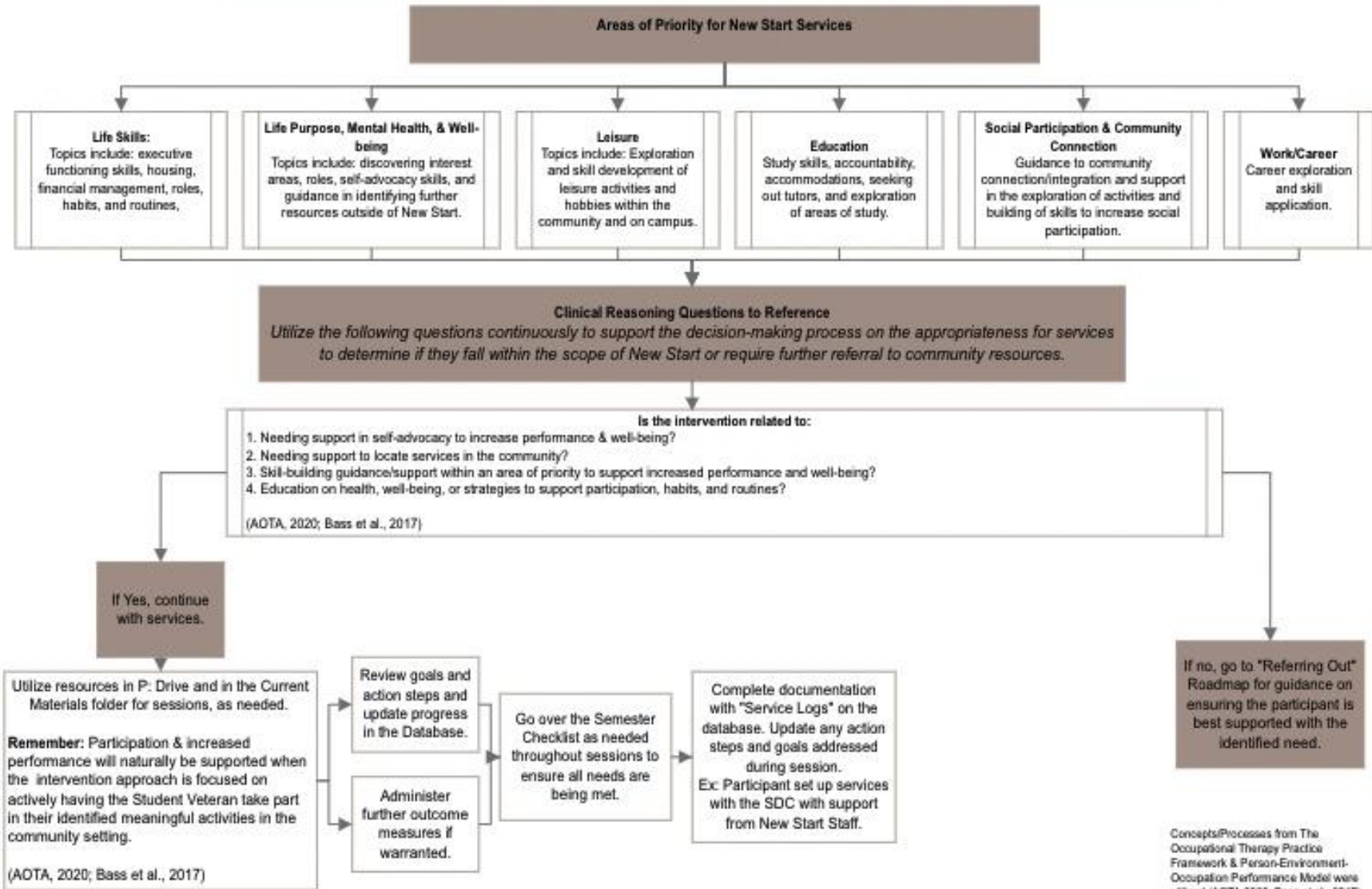


Concepts/Processes from The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework & Person-Environment-Occupation Performance Model were utilized (AOTA,2020; Bass et al., 2017).

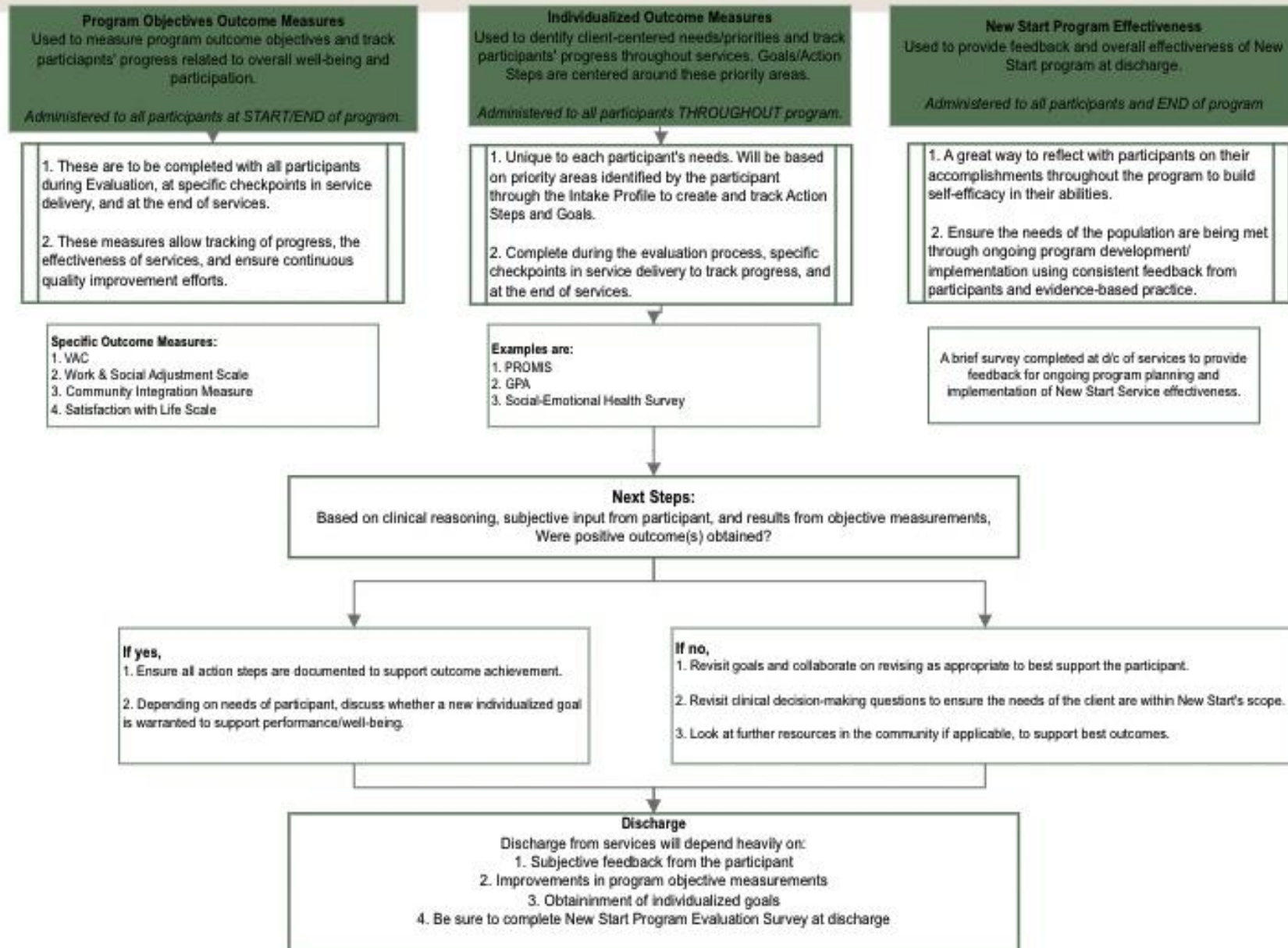


Intervention Roadmap

Overview: The following are broad areas within the scope of New Start services for targeted intervention. A brief description of each area is listed below. Clinical Reasoning questions in the next column should be utilized to conclude if the need of the participant is within the scope of New Start.



Outcomes Roadmap

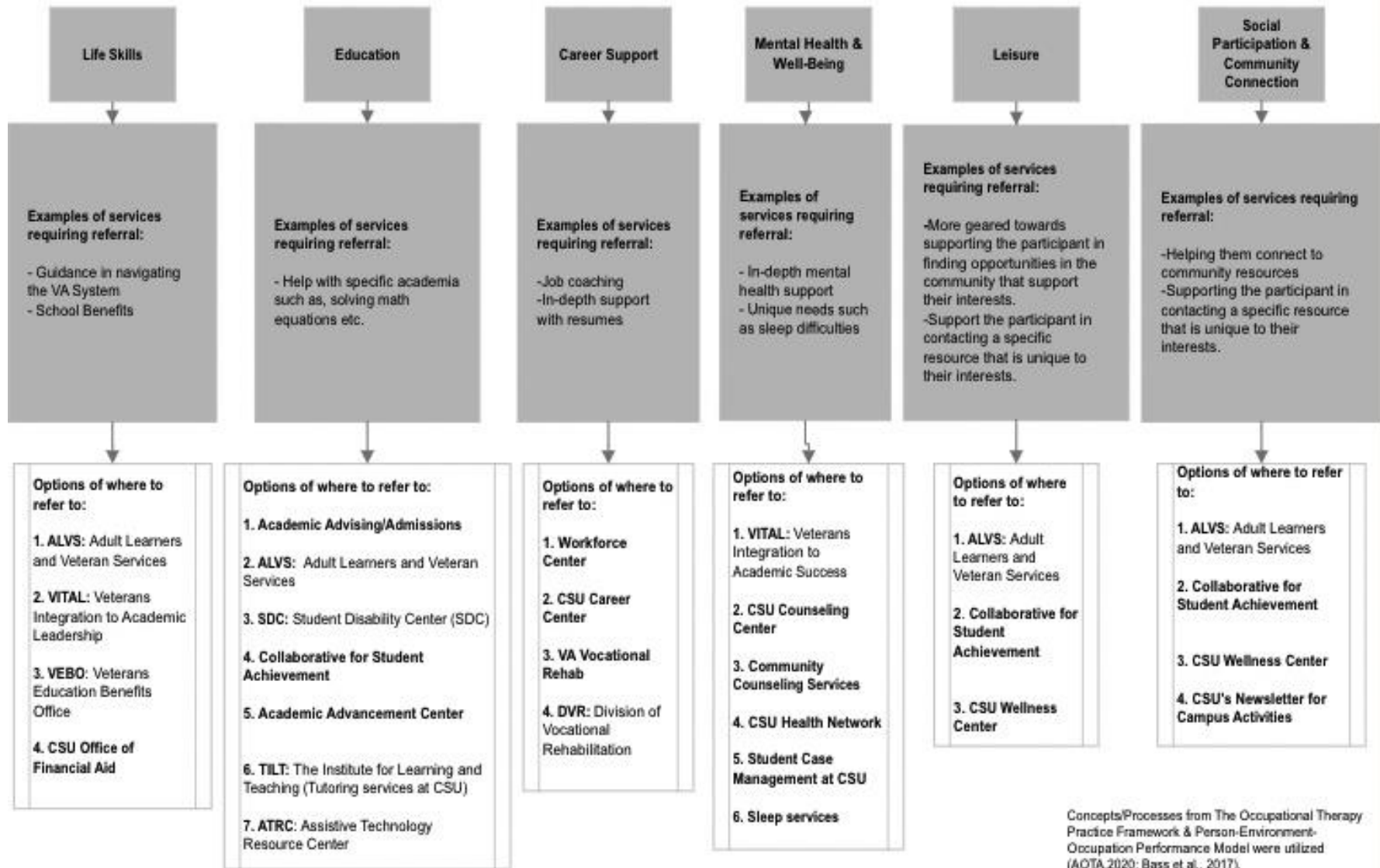


Concepts/Processes from The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework & Person-Environment-Occupation Performance Model were utilized (AOTA, 2020; Bass et al., 2017).



Referring Out Roadmap

Utilize this guide when the priorities/needs of the participant are outside New Starts' scope. This is determined through professional reasoning supported by the utilization of "Clinical Reasoning" questions. These are suggestions to facilitate the best outcomes for participants to ensure increased participation and well-being. Below is not an exhaustive list of all resources. Provide support in locating needed resources to ensure a warm hand-off. Contact details are in the "New Start Current Material" Teams notebook.



Concepts/Processes from The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework & Person-Environment-Occupation Performance Model were utilized (AOTA, 2020; Bass et al., 2017).



References

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain and process (4th ed.). *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 74(Suppl. 2), 7412410010. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001>

Bass, J., Baum, C., & Christiansen, C. (2017). Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance Model. In J. Hinojosa, P. Kramer, & C. B. Royeen (Eds.), *Perspectives on Human Occupation: Theories Underlying Practice* (2nd ed., pp. 207-235). F.A. Davis.



Outcome Measure for Effectiveness of New Start Service-Delivery Guide

Below is a series of questions that provides information on the effectiveness of the guide and its intended purpose. These results will be used to support Quality Improvement efforts.

1. The service-delivery guide for New Start has increased your understanding of appropriate service delivery and the scope of New Start services?

Not at all helpful

Somewhat helpful

Very Helpful

1

2

3

4

5

Comments:

2. The service-delivery guide is easy to use when following provided instructions.

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Comments:

3. How often have you utilized the service-delivery guide over the course of providing New Start services?

- a. Never
- b. A couple of times but didn't provide the information I needed
- c. A couple of times for reference until I got the hang of things
- d. Majority of the time: It provides good reminders on service provision/sequencing
- e. Always



- 4. What features or aspects of the guide have been most useful in service delivery?**

- 5. What features or aspects of the guide do you feel could be clearer/modified in order to increase usability or improve service delivery?**

- 6. Additional comments:**



