

Tuning Into Creativity: An Individualised Approach to High-Dependency Rehabilitation

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Abstract

This clinical project was conducted on a high dependency locked rehabilitation ward, where individuals may experience significant occupational deprivation. The occupational therapy team began working with a service user who has a long-standing interest in building computers and digital gadgets, and provided specialised 1:1 sessions to support him in successfully and safely creating a digital calculator and radio.

The work conducted with this service user exemplified creativity and complexity in the way of balancing relational security and least restrictive practice, with the aim of providing the service user with an opportunity to engage in an activity that is linked to his historical vocational and educational interests. Taking into account the service user's unique perspective and occupational identity, this project will detail the impact of providing meaningful, individualised opportunities to promote engagement in bespoke interventions that support transitions across the care pathway. For example, this service user could take his skill sets forward as part of his community reintegration. This project could also provide further insight for occupational therapy staff, providing evidence for creative interventions that can engage service users.

The 1:1 Sessions

What did the sessions look like?

- Referral to occupational therapy team.
- Weekly 60-minute sessions.
- Off-ward therapy room.
- Equipment included a soldering kit and electronic DIY materials.
- Sequenced, goal-orientated sessions led by the service user.
- Safe set-up and pack-away.

Clinical Reasoning and Risk Assessment

The occupational therapy team utilised the rehabilitative nature of the 1:1 sessions as application of patient-centred care, in line with the recommendations from the wider MDT. It was agreed that these opportunities supported education, learning and creative thinking, all important skills for community re-integration. Due to the service user's long-standing interest, combined with his low-risk presentation, it was felt he would gain significant therapeutic benefit from engaging in these sessions. A comprehensive risk assessment was completed, as this was a new activity within the locked rehabilitation ward setting, which ensured safe and appropriate engagement for the service user.

Our Service User's Voice:

"I learnt about temperature sensing components and soldering techniques, and orientation of various components and circuit boards. It's creative, like putting pen to paper, which is rare in technology. Building the calculator helped me to determine what the colours mean on different components, so the process of making one thing will help with another. I could fix other things in the future, which is a useful skill. I enjoy soldering and find it creative, although I can sometimes struggle with motivation. I find the activity meaningful; it has shown me I can learn to do things with my special interests that is more productive than sitting in my room. Everything I have made so far has worked to my surprise. I would like to build a robot."

The Digital Radio and Calculator



Key Findings, Impact, and Application

- The service user enjoyed the sessions, successfully building a functional digital calculator and radio.
- With support to work at his own pace, he demonstrated excellent problem-solving skills, activity tolerance, and profound topic knowledge.
- Taking a dynamic approach to risk assessment allows for service users to explore more complex creative projects, when done safely and with mutual agreement between the service user and staff members in their care.
- Locked rehabilitation wards have potential to broaden their horizons with supporting service users to access and develop new skills, which could help to serve successful community reintegration. This could relate to finding employment, learning a new skill, or re-visiting an educational hobby that brings new meaning to daily or weekly routines.

Linking To MOHO

Kielhofner's (2002) Model of Human Occupation provides evidence that occupational therapists can address barriers to volition, habituation, performance capacity through enabling opportunities for service users' to access activities that motivate and provide routine. This helps to tackle occupational injustice, and can re-introduce or maintain a sense of meaningful wellbeing for service users that require support with overcoming barriers.

References

Kielhofner, G. (2002). *A Model of Human Occupation: Theory and Application*. Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.

Integrity

Trust

Empower

Respect

Care