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Aspects of OT Management Capacity: NSW OT Managers' Perceptions

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Background:

Clinical managers play a critical role in the improvement of clinical practice, due to their input into clinical decision-making, day-to-day care processes and service delivery. They play a crucial role in translating organizational vision and policy into meaningful application in services they manage (Balding, 2004). A qualitative study identified that occupational therapy managers in NSW engaged in the range of typical management roles and responsibilities consistent with Australian clinician managers (Braithwaite, 2004; Gamble, Lincoln & Adamson, 2009.)

Aim:

This study explored the roles, responsibilities and work satisfaction of occupational therapy managers in NSW. A subset of results will be presented, specifically addressing: What is the self-perceived adequacy of occupational therapists' abilities to address the work of managers?

Method:

Ninety members of OTAustralia(NSW) managers completed an on-line survey. Information was collected about participants, work settings, aspects of management work, dual responsibilities of management and service provision, and promotion expectations.

Results & Discussion:

The results which will be discussed include: aspects of management in which managers are involved, aspects of management perceived as being most important, those which consumed most time, and aspects of management in which managers feel least prepared. Respondents felt least prepared for: financial management, data management, managing change and external relations. These findings have implications for the promotion of occupational therapy services within the organization and to external stakeholders; and the core work of managing budgets and data.

Conclusion:

Findings indicate areas of management-related training needed by OT managers. Additionally, provision of adequate administrative support will assist managers to remain involved in service-provision, supporting management functions in which they feel least prepared.