THE EFFECT OF A COMPREHENSIVE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY INTERVENTION PROGRAMME ON THE OCCUPATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF PEOPLE WITH RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS, LIVING IN SOWETO.

Carin Dreijer du Plessis

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Occupational Therapy.

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I, Carin Dreijer du Plessis, declare that this thesis is my own work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Occupational Therapy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other University.

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C Dreijer du Plessis
Post-graduate student, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is a chronic disabling joint disease. Empowering RA patients to self manage the disease can lead to changes in behavior, pain or physical health and psychosocial health status. Limited evidence exists for the efficacy of comprehensive OT for patients with RA in improving functional ability. **Objective:** The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the impact of OT intervention on RA patients in producing a/or sustained improvement in patients' functional ability. **Methods:** A prospective randomized control study over 4 months in which patients with moderately disabling RA, following a week of in-patient rehabilitation care, received either home visits and focus group care (group 1) or standard care (group 2). Primary outcome measures included the modified Health Assessment Questionnaire Disability Index (HAQ-DI) and SF-36 scores. **Results:** There were 29 and 22 patients in each group, respectively. The HAQ-DI improved significantly in both groups following the 1week in-patient care (p<0.05) but there was no significant difference between the groups at the 4 months follow-up visit. The SF-36 scores did not change significantly for group 1 while group 2 showed significant improvements in 5 of the 8 domains at four months. However, group 2, had significantly worse SF-36 scores at baseline compared to group 1. During the focus groups, the two main themes of "behavior and self management" and "problems that interfere with occupational performance" emerged. **Conclusion:** While a comprehensive in-patient occupational therapy improved HAQ-DI scores, home-based and focus group intervention does not appear to have significant impact on measures of functional disability in the short-term.
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OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS
Rheumatoid Arthritis
Home based intervention
Occupational Performance
Comprehensive Occupational Therapy intervention

ABBREVIATIONS
RA: Rheumatoid Arthritis
OT: Occupational Therapy / Occupational Therapist
SA: South Africa
ACR: American College of Rheumatology
DMARDs: Disease Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drugs
AIMS: Arthritis Impact Measure Score
WHOQOL: World Health Organisation Quality of Life
HR-QOL: Health Related Quality of Life
HRFS: Health Related Functional Status
OTA: Occupational Therapy Assistant
CHBH: Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital
HAQ: Health Assessment Questionnaire
PI-HAQ: Personal Impact Health Assessment Questionnaire
AHAQ: Alternate Health Assessment Questionnaire
HAQ-DI: Health Assessment Questionnaire Disability Index
SF-36: Short Form 36
PCS: Physical Competent Scale
MCS: Mental Competent Scale
PF: Physical Functioning
RP: Role Physical
RE: Role Emotional
SF: Social Functioning
BP: Bodily pain
VT: Vitality
MH: mental Health
GH: General Health
DAS28: Disease Activity Score using 28 tender and swollen joint count
DAS28-3V: Disease Activity Score using 28 tender and swollen joint count with three variables
OP: Occupational Performance
EC: Energy Conservation
COPM: Canadian Occupational Performance Measures
MACTAR: McMaster-Toronto Arthritis Questionnaire
WOMAC: Western Ontario and McMaster Universities of Osteo-arthritis Index
RADAI: Rheumatoid Arthritis Disease Activity Index
CASI: Chronic Arthritis Systemic Index
ASMP: Arthritis Self-management Programme
TEFR: Therapeutic Education and Functional Re-adaptation
ESR: Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate
CBT: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
NHW: Non-Hispanic Whites
AA: African Americans
SE: Shared Epitope
SES: Socio-ecomomic Status
IAS: Intra-Articular Steroid
RCT: Randomized Control Trial
CCT: Controlled Clinical Trial
OD: Other Design
JP: Joint Protection
AD: Assistive device
ADL: Activities of Daily Living
MDT: Multi Disciplinary Team
DI: Disability Index
EMS: Early Morning Stiffness
AROM: Active Range of Motion
ANCOVA: Analysis of Co-variance
MOHO: Model of Human Occupation