

The Development of a Group Program for Integrating Novice Occupational Therapists Working in the Field of Physical Medicine and Geriatrics

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Background - The transition from student to therapist is challenging. Occupational therapists who received supervision reported a sense of comfort in their workplace and with their patients. Supervision helped them develop both confidence and a professional identity. The occupational therapy department in Reuth Medical Center provides physical and geriatric rehabilitation services and receives new occupational therapists every year. Experienced and new therapists reported dissatisfaction with the training and requested supervision in a group format. **Project goal** - Development of a professional integration training group program. **Method** - Occupational therapy service managers at Reuth and other rehabilitation centers and the deputy-manager of occupational therapy in the Ministry of Health were interviewed to determine the nature and characteristics of the program. In addition, new occupational therapists and their supervisors were interviewed in order to assess their experiences. **Results** - This process led to the development of a handbook for supervisors. The handbook describes a program of 12 group sessions that aim to develop a professional identity through three key aspects: knowledge and skills, emotional aspects and professional-reasoning. **Clinical implications** - The program will bridge the gap between the current situation at the Reuth Medical Center and the needs of the instructors and supervisors. The program is currently being run at the Reuth Medical Center. The

participants report satisfaction with the meetings and an increase in their sense of professional competence. Additional data will be collected and reported at the end of the training sessions.