Enhancing Student Readiness for Telehealth Through a Structured Google Classroom Onboarding Program

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Mobility Matters foundation

Introduction

Many individuals living in rural and underserved communities experience limited access to occupational therapy (OT) due to provider shortages, long travel distances, transportation barriers, and a lack of nearby rehabilitation clinics (Bolin et al., 2015; Coombs et al., 2022). During the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth emerged as a vital tool for maintaining continuity of care, reducing gaps in service access, and supporting clients who are not attend in-person visits (Bolin et al., 2015). The expansion of telehealth during this period highlighted its potential to bridge access disparities for populations who historically struggled to receive consistent OT services. Telehealth is not a permanently protected component of OT practice, and ongoing advocacy at the state and federal levels is required to ensure continued reimbursement and equitable access.

Project Description

The **Mobility Matters Foundation** delivers OT services through telehealth. They identified a gap in consistent student onboarding, resulting in varied student readiness and increased supervisory demands. This capstone project focused on developing a structured and accessible Google Classroom onboarding system for student practitioners working with the Mobility Matters Foundation in an OT telehealth setting. Prior to this project, the organization lacked a standardized method for preparing students for telehealth-based service delivery, resulting in inconsistent training, increased supervisor burden, and variability in client care quality.

This project aligns with Hawai'i Pacific University's OTD program core values with demonstration of leadership (**Aloha**), responsibility to the OT profession and enhancing practice (**Kuleana**), promoting equitable and ethical practice (**Pono**), supporting individuals in underserved communities (**Kokua**), and through interprofessional collaboration (**Laulima**).

Purpose/Aims

The capstone project involved the development of a standardized, accessible onboarding system for the Mobility Matters Foundation to improve student preparedness, reduce supervisor burden, and promote consistent, high-quality patient care.

Aims:
- Create a structured Google Classroom onboarding course that organizes essential training materials, guidelines, and expectations.
- Improve student preparedness prior to direct patient interactions by providing modules on safety, documentation, equipment knowledge, and communication.
- Reduce the training burden on supervisors and preceptors by minimizing repeated instruction and streamlining orientation processes.
- Increase consistency in clinical documentation and Medicare justification writing through templates, examples, and guided practice.
- Promote safe and competent patient care by teaching proper evaluation techniques, professional behavior, and ethical standards.
- Enhance efficiency within the student learning experience by providing a centralized, easy to navigate digital platform.
- Support organizational sustainability by creating a reusable onboarding system for future cohorts of students.

References

Methods

- A literature review identified evidence on effective onboarding practices, digital learning tools, and competency-based training in OT and health professions education. Findings guided the development and refinement of the Google Classroom onboarding materials.
- Guided by a needs assessment, student feedback, and existing literature, enhancements were made to the digital onboarding system, including the integration of OT-focused training videos, step-by-step clinical resources, and evidence-based materials on mobility evaluations, documentation, and patient-centered service delivery. Course content aligned with ACOTE standards.
- This project underwent regular review by the Mobility Matters Foundation co-founders and board of directors to ensure accuracy, relevance, and alignment with organizational needs. Feedback was incorporated throughout key stages, including proposal development, needs assessment, Google Classroom design, and evaluation planning. Ongoing staff oversight ensured the project met OT program expectations, followed best practices in education, and supported the organization's mission of providing high-quality, community-based mobility services.
- Experiential knowledge from a prior fieldwork rotation at Mobility Matters Foundation's sister company, Limbtech, informed the development of the onboarding materials. This firsthand understanding of mobility equipment provision, clinical processes, and documentation standards contributed to the accuracy, relevance, and practicality of the Google Classroom curriculum.

Results/Outcomes

The comprehensive Google Classroom onboarding system included:

- **A Structured Onboarding Course**: Added 12 Modules with 65 sub-sections which include OT-focused videos, step-by-step clinical resources, and documentation templates were created and organized for student use.
- **Improved Student Preparedness**: The system used videos and step-by-step clinical resources to increase confidence in mobility evaluations, documentation, and readiness for patient care during fieldwork and capstone experiences.
- **Reduced Supervisor Burden**: Standardized resources, such as the Mobility Matters Foundation student handbook minimized repetitive instruction and allow supervisors to focus more on client-centered activities.
- **Consistency in Documentation and Clinical Practices**: Templates and guided exercises promote uniform documentation quality and adherence to best practices.
- **Enhanced Safety and Competence in Patient Care**: Added 13 training modules to emphasize safety protocol and patient-centered strategies to support high-quality clinical interactions.
- **Sustainability and Integration**: The Google Classroom was developed for asynchronous use, ensuring ongoing access for future student cohorts and scalability of the onboarding process.

Figure 1. Children and Families Who Have Benefitted from the Mobility Matters Foundation's Vision & Mission

Discussion

The development of the Google Classroom onboarding program using a structured, centralized, and accessible training platform could effectively address gaps in student preparedness, streamline orientation, and promote consistency in clinical practices at the Mobility Matters Foundation

This project contributes to both OT education and community-based mobility services by providing a replicable model for onboarding students for the Mobility Matters Foundation, which serves clients in rural or underserved healthcare settings. By standardizing training, the project supports efficient supervision, reduces redundancy, and prepares students to provide high-quality, client-centered care. The platform also reinforces the Mobility Matters Foundation's mission to ensure equitable access to mobility interventions and promotes sustainable, evidence-informed training practices.

Opportunities for the next phases of the project include: integrating interactive assessments, adding case-based scenarios, expanding modules on complex mobility equipment, and incorporating ongoing evaluation metrics to iteratively refine the onboarding experience. Future iterations may also explore telementoring or virtual collaboration features to enhance learning in remote or rural settings.