

Introduction

Transition planning encompasses services that support children and families during significant changes in the therapy journey. In an outpatient pediatric clinic, this often includes navigating the shift from outpatient services to school-based therapy, community programs, and adult services. For many families, transition planning can feel complex and overwhelming as they manage multiple systems simultaneously (e.g., healthcare, school, and community). Research shows that parents frequently experience barriers and uncertainty during these transitions, emphasizing the need for clear guidance and supportive resources (Hoffman & Kirby, 2022). A needs assessment conducted at Orange County Speech Services revealed variability in clinician knowledge and access to transition related resources, limiting both families and clinicians in their engagement with effective transition planning services.

Project Description

The project involved developing a family-friendly transition planning resource system and educating clinicians on how to use and share these materials effectively.

This project aligns with Hawai'i Pacific University OTD program core values with demonstration of leadership (**Aloha**), responsibility to the occupational therapy profession and enhancing practice (**Kuleana**), supporting families and children served by Orange County Speech Services (**Kokua**), and through interprofessional collaboration (**Laulima**).

Purpose/Aims

To increase clinician knowledge and confidence in navigating transition services by developing accessible multimedia transition planning resources for children.

References and Digital Resource System



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Methods

Systematic process which included:

- Needs assessment (site observations, stakeholder interviews, and surveys to identify gaps).
- Review of scholarly literature and community resources related to transition planning and family education.
- Participation in local resource informational meetings
- Curation of existing resources including Spanish and Vietnamese translations to enhance accessibility for non-English speaking families
- Organization of resources for easier access and navigation
- In-service training for clinicians to introduce the resource system, demonstrate navigation, and discuss dissemination strategies for family use

Evaluation Methods: Collection of pre- and post-training survey to explore clinicians' confidence in educating and supporting families about transitions, including familiarity with funding sources and resources for families.

Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics, frequency of survey responses, and thematic analysis of open-ended survey questions

Results

Participants: N=21 clinicians (6 occupational therapists, 4 applied behavior analysts, 10 speech-language pathologists, 1 physical therapist)

- After the training sessions, clinicians reported increased confidence in sharing transition resources with families through clinician training on the resource system, and dissemination strategies for family use (**Figures 1, 2, & 3**).

Fig. 1 How confident are you educating families with transitioning from outpatient therapy to adulthood or community programs?

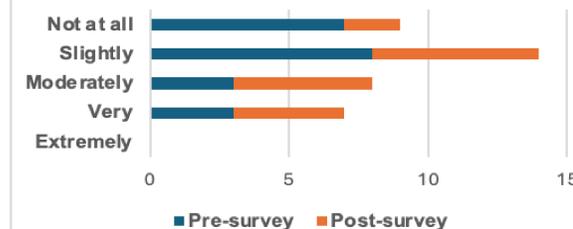


Fig. 2 How confident are you educating families about transitions from early intervention to school-based services?

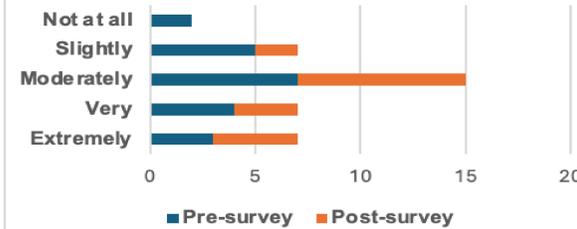
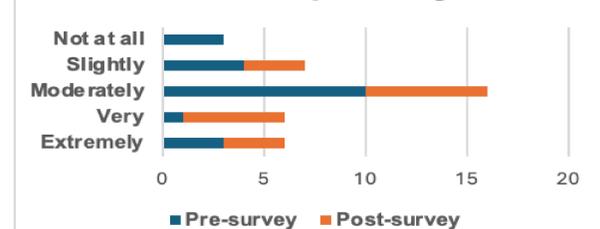


Fig. 3 How confident are you in providing families with resources to support transition planning?



Qualitative Analysis

Emerging Themes from Interviews and Open-Ended Survey Questions:

- Parents reported overwhelm with neither knowing where to get transition resources nor the next steps after outpatient services
- Parents recommended beginning services as soon as possible and being open to receiving services from various therapists
- Staff indicated that they would feel more confident educating families on transition planning with online materials (i.e. websites), digital and printed resources, and additional training.

Outcomes

The comprehensive transition planning resource system for families served by Orange County Speech Services includes:

- Digital repository containing categorized and editable transition resources
- Physical binder with printed resources for in-clinic access
- Materials available in Spanish and Vietnamese to increase access to non-English speaking families

Discussion

It is important to start transition planning services earlier for children with disabilities and their caregivers to improve preparedness and promote a smoother transition process (Hoffman & Kirby, 2022). Engagement of clinicians to educate caregivers about transition timelines and use of the digital repository of resources promotes sustainability of this project. The outcomes of this capstone could be replicated in other outpatient and school-based settings to strengthen clinician-family engagement in transition planning.