

Idaho Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference 2009  
Physical Dys Track featuring OT for Older Populations

Title: Occupational Therapy for Older Adults: Occupation, Collaboration and Evidence as Foundations for Meaningful Practice

Best practice in occupational therapy for older adults is often described as occupation-centered, client-centered and evidence based. Yet, understanding and enacting these principles seems daunting at times. Many practitioners are not confident that they understand what it means to apply knowledge from occupational science to practice. Constraints imposed by institutional policy and reimbursement guidelines pose challenges to client-centered and family-centered collaboration. Evidence-based practice, similarly, can be viewed as a threat, rather than an opportunity for more meaningful outcomes for our clients. In this workshop we will explore how best practice in gerontology can occur in the context of the aging process and the life worlds of older adults. In this process we will identify powerful and satisfying roles that occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants can play in consultation, advocacy and direct services that improve the well-being of older adults and their families.

Topics to be addressed:

- Defining best practice for older adults
  - Client-centered practice
  - Occupation-centered practice
  - Evidence based practice
  - Ethical reasoning
  - Development from novice to expert practice
- Evaluation and Intervention
  - Interpreting the meaning and potential of occupations of older adults
  - Person-Environment transactions as a framework for thinking about participation in occupation
  - Analyzing occupational performance in context
  - Understanding the process of change on an individual and system level
- Defining our roles in advocacy, consultation and direct service
- Directions for future practice

Presented by:

Sue Coppola, MS, OTR/L, BCG, FAOTA is Associate Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the Division of Occupational Science. She is a graduate of Syracuse University with a BS in Education in 1979 and received an MS in Occupational Therapy from the UNC-Chapel Hill in 1985. She practiced OT at Duke Medical Center from 1985-1996, and served as Director of OT from 1990-1996. At UNC-Chapel Hill since 1996, she coordinates fieldwork experiences, teaches in geriatrics, and serves on committees to promote interdisciplinary education in gerontology. With the UNC Center for Aging and Health she precepts interdisciplinary student teams in the Hubbard Grant program of home visits for older adults. She is co-investigator of a current study of OT Preventive Home Visits for Older Adults funded by the National Institute on Aging. Sue served as Chair of the Board Certification in Gerontology Panel for the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) from 2004-2007, and is co-editor for AOTA's text "Strategies to Advance Gerontology Excellence" published 2008. She is a member of the Board of Directors of Carolina Meadows Retirement Community since 2001.