

Occupational Therapy and Health Economics

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH
ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC EVIDENCE
FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY IN THE
FIELD OF MENTAL HEALTH DURING
WORKING LIFE AND HEALTH
OF OLDER PEOPLE.

- A summary -



Occupational Therapy and Health Economics



A SUMMARY

For every society it is important to know if the health care interventions provided are effective and efficient. Resources are limited, and in order to maintain high standards, the resources available need to be allocated to the interventions that give the best results. Thus, the need for health economic data that underpins decision-making processes will increase and become more important for policy makers in different parts of our welfare systems.

In general, the effects of occupational therapy interventions are well-known, but knowledge about economical utility of interventions is generally lacking. Even though some research is available it can be difficult to relate the results to national circumstances and interpret them in organisational contexts.

The aim of this report is to promote awareness and basic understanding of Health Economics and increase knowledge about economical utility in occupational therapy interventions.

We hope that the report will provide inspiration and contribute to discussions, not least among occupational therapists, on the economical utility of occupational therapy in practice as well as for research.

THE CONTENT

Chapter 1

Economic evaluation and when to use it

This chapter is a short introduction to the main aspects of economic evaluations i.e. to identify, measure, evaluate and compare the costs and effects of the interventions in focus. The two main types of economic evaluations; trial-based and model-based are explained and exemplified. The main part of the chapter focuses on trial-based economic evaluations since effectiveness trials are often used as a vehicle for economic evaluations.

Chapter 2

Return to work

The chapter is a systematic review aiming at examining scientific evi-

dence for cost-effectiveness of return to work (RTW) interventions that occupational therapists may use, targeting people with mental health disorders. The results show that evidence-based SE IPS intervention is cost-effective in several welfare systems, among them the Nordic countries. A study where work-focused OT intervention was added to standard treatment (as usual), showed the intervention to be more cost-effective than the comparator, but was considered to have low methodological quality.

Chapter 3

Older people, and health

This chapter is a scoping review of health economic perspectives in occupational therapy interventions for older people. The result showed that occupational therapy interventions have potential to positively affect health outcomes such as performance of daily activities, involvement in valued life situations and supporting older people to remain independent. Given the broad spread of interventions, the actual content of interventions varied substantially from a one-session intervention to those including a large number of sessions over a period of up to nine months. While each intervention can be discussed separately in relation to content and outcome, an overall question is how extensive an intervention needs to be in order to give sufficient effects.

IN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this report showed that occupational therapy interventions do have economic implications since, disability, dependency, and work absence impact societal costs. It is, therefore, important that the profession continues to engage in economic evaluations and use results thereof. For future economic evaluation in occupational therapy, researchers need to pay considerable attention to: study design, collecting all relevant data on both costs and effects, following costs and effects over a sufficient period of time and ensuring that studies are statistically powered to detect differences in both costs and effects.

This report, Occupational Therapy and Health Economics, is a result of a project on health economics involving occupational therapy organisations in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. The project group consisted of researchers from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

Interested in reading the full report?

It is available at:

www.arbetsterapeuterna.se

www.ergoterapeutene.org

www.etf.dk

www.ii.is

www.toimintaterapeuttiliitto.fi



SVERIGES
ARBETSTERAPEUTER

