Perception of Role-Emerging Level II Fieldwork

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**Perception of Role-Emerging Level II Fieldwork**

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**Abstract**

*Background:* Academic fieldwork coordinators (AFWC) in occupational therapy (OT) programs are challenged to find placements. Reasons for this challenge include changes in reimbursement, workload and productivity demands, and restrictions imposed in response to the pandemic. OT programs have pursued settings where OT is not currently provided to meet the growing need for level II placements. Research has investigated the students' perceptions of role-emerging placement (REP) but has not until now investigated the supervision provided by the other professions in addition to the Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) requirement of eight hours of supervision by an occupational therapist. Research has not been conducted into non-occupational therapy (non-OT) supervisors' perception of REP. *Purpose:* This study aimed to investigate the experiences of non-OT supervisors, including perceived opportunities and challenges, and supervisory practices utilized by the non-OT supervisor. *Method:* The researcher used a basic interpretive qualitative approach using individual semi-structured interviews. After Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, criterion sampling was used to identify participants from established REP with D'Youville University. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed thematically. *Results:* Information power was achieved after four participants completed the interview process. Three themes emerged which elucidated the participant's perceptions of REP. The themes were: requirements for student success; benefits; and opportunities for further partnerships. *Discussion:* The significance of this research will be its potential to identify the benefits of role-emerging placements facilitating the profession's ability to respond to an ever-changing healthcare arena.

*Keywords*: role-emerging placement, level II fieldwork

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**Perception of Role-Emerging Level II Fieldwork**

Across the United States, occupational therapy academic fieldwork coordinators (AFWC) are challenged to secure level II fieldwork sites for their students. The level II fieldwork allows students to practice with clients across the lifespan in a supported environment. This experience is vital to the development of entry-level occupational therapists and is supported through curriculum design highlighting the use of meaningful, purposeful occupations and the profession's domain and process (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2012; AOTA, 2020). The typical level II fieldwork occurs over a 12-week period, during which the occupational therapy student learns entry-level skills alongside an occupational therapist fieldwork educator (FWEd). This level II fieldwork occurs after the student completes the didactic portion of the curriculum (Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education [ACOTE], 2021). The AFWCs are challenged most recently by a shortage of fieldwork placements due to the growth of accredited occupational therapy programs, perceived barriers to hosting students, and the recent COVID pandemic, which have limited opportunities in traditional occupational therapy placements (AOTA, n.d.; ACOTE, 2021; Varland et al., 2017). In addition, specific to this study, New York State has the highest number of occupational therapy schools, further adding to the volume of students needing fieldwork placements (ACOTE, n.d.-a).

One potential avenue to identify new settings for fieldwork is via role-emerging placement (REP). The REP occurs in setting(s) where an occupational therapist is not or has never been employed (Linnane & Warren, 2017). Community-based sites that address an individual, group, or population's health and wellness would meet a REP's requirements (AOTA, n.d.). To meet ACOTE accreditation standards, at least two professionals must supervise students

in a REP. The non-occupational therapy (non-OT) supervisor is a professional associated with the site responsible for the student's primary supervision during the fieldwork. The second supervisor is a regulated occupational therapist who is required to directly supervise the student for a minimum of eight hours per week and is available for consultation when the student is with the other supervisor (ACOTE, 2020; AOTA, 2012). The occupational therapist serves as the FWEd in the REP. The FWEd supervising the REP will have at least three years of full-time experience or equivalent experience before acting as the FWEd. This FWEd supervises the student under a contractual agreement with the academic program (ACOTE, 2020). The ACOTE Standards, allowing occupational therapy programs to place students in a REP, results in increased sites where OT programs can develop partnerships to fulfill the level II fieldwork requirement and expand the profession's scope of practice into community-based sites.

Participation in the REP has also been beneficial for the students. Specifically, the REP has been shown to provide students with a variety of learning experiences, has the potential to expand the OT profession, and can address fieldwork placement shortages (Bossers et al., 1997; Cooper & Raine, 2009; Dancza et al., 2013). Studies investigating the student's experience after completing the placement have found growth in areas such as critical thinking, application of OT theory, and ability to collaborate (Clarke et al., 2015b; Dancza et al.,2013; Kaelin & Dancza, 2019; Mattila & Dolhi, 2016; Overton et al., 2009; Syed & Duncan 2019). Gat and Ratzon (2014) conducted a study in Israel and found that role-emerging, community-based fieldwork students scored higher in their perceived personal responsibility, cultural competence, and overall personal skills than their cohort who completed a more traditional placement with an on-site FWEd. Also, students' self-efficacy improved after completing the REP (Gat & Ratzon, 2014), a phenomenon supported by other studies (Golos & Tekuzener, 2019; Mattila, 2019;

Mattila et al., 2018). Although research has been conducted in Australia, Ireland, Britain, Israel, and Canada, limited research has been carried out in the United States concerning the utilization of and experiences with role-emerging occupational therapy fieldwork placements (Lau & Ravenek, 2019; Mattila, 2019; Mattila et al., 2018; Mattila & Dolhi, 2016). Limited comparative studies have been conducted on students' perceptions before and after the REP. Additionally, to this date, the role of the non-OT supervisor has not been investigated. In the seminal work of Bossers et al. (1997), it was recommended to investigate the role and perception of fieldwork educators and non-occupational therapy supervisors. Additional studies have identified the gap in the literature regarding REP fieldwork opportunities and the perceptions of the non-occupational therapy supervisor (Clarke et al., 2014a; Wilburn et al., 2016).

**Problem Statement**

To date, of the studies conducted in the United States, most research investigating role-emerging fieldwork has been conducted after students completed the fieldwork (Lau & Ravenek, 2019). However, no studies have investigated the non-occupational therapy supervisors' perceptions of the role-emerging placement. Investigating these perceptions can further the OT profession, identify the non-OT supervisors' perceived enablers and barriers to successful student supervision in REP fieldwork, identify supervisory strategies currently being utilized, and assist the AFWC in curricular design to further support all involved with the REP. Therefore, to meet the fieldwork needs of occupational therapy students and make supportive changes in the curricula, the AFWC would benefit from understanding the non-OT supervisors' perceptions of the role-emerging placement.

**Purpose Statement**

A basic interpretive study will aim to understand the non-OT supervisor's perceptions of the role-emerging level II fieldwork placement.

## Research Questions

- How do non-OT supervisors perceive the role-emerging level II fieldwork placement?

    o What are the perceived opportunities?

    o What are the perceived challenges?

    o What supervisory practices are utilized by the non-OT supervisor?

## Significance of the Study

The research findings and themes may identify potential new role-emerging placements that further the OT profession, ensuring the profession's evolution as occupational therapy practitioners respond to an ever-changing healthcare arena. Investigating the perceptions of the non-OT supervisor, the AFWC, and the supervising OTR can promote preparation to support the student and the REP. Gaining this knowledge about how the non-OT supervisors approach supervision and understanding their perceived potential opportunities and barriers will assist curricular development for the role-emerging setting.

## Definition of Terms

- Role-emerging practice setting: Role-emerging placements (REP) occur in settings where no occupational therapist is employed (Linnane & Warren, 2017).

- Level II fieldwork: "level II fieldwork provides an in-depth experience in delivering occupational therapy services to clients, focusing on the application of evidence-based purposeful and meaningful occupations, administration, and management of occupational therapy services" (AOTA, 2012, para. 4).

**Literature Review**

Fieldwork placements are vital components of every occupational therapy student's learning experience and are fundamental to curricular program design (AOTA, 2018; Mattila, 2019). Specifically, level II fieldwork allows students to apply the theory and techniques acquired through didactic and level I fieldwork exposure (AOTA, 2018, ACOTE, 2020). Didactic knowledge was described by ACOTE (2020) in section B standards. It included the following content requirements: *foundational content requirements, occupational therapy theoretical perspectives, basic tenets of occupational therapy, referral, screening, evaluation, and intervention plan, context of service delivery, leadership, and management of occupational therapy services, scholarship, and professional ethics, values, and responsibilities* (see Table 1). The level II experience allows the student to carry out professional responsibilities, including evidence-based, purposeful, and meaningful occupations, and conduct administrative and managerial duties under an occupational therapy professional (ACOTE, 2020).

Through experiential learning, the student applies academic knowledge, develops clinical skills, and has the opportunity to determine what area of practice they are going to pursue (Mattila & Dolhi, 2016). Experiential learning allows the students to practice from the profession's framework, specifically the *domain* and *process* of occupational therapy.

According to AOTA (2020), the domain identifies the "profession's purview and the areas in which its members have an established body of knowledge and expertise" (p. 4). The process includes the actions occupational therapy practitioners engage in when providing services that are "client-centered and focused on engagement in occupations" (p. 4). Aspects of the domain include occupations, contexts, performance patterns, performance skills, and client factors (see Table 2). The process further describes how occupational therapy practitioners apply the domain

(e.g., evaluation, intervention, outcomes—see Table 2) to support a client's engagement, participation, and health (AOTA, 2020).

Traditionally, the supervision of the student is provided by a licensed and credentialed occupational therapist with a minimum of one year of practice experience (ACOTE, 2020). Per ACOTE (2020), FWEd is used when the occupational therapist functions as a student supervisor.

**Role-Emerging Placements**

Provisions exist for fieldwork placements where OT services do not exist (ACOTE, 2018). The literature defines these settings as role-emerging placement or nontraditional (Lau & Ravenek, 2019). For this study, REP will be the term used to identify this fieldwork type. Examples of REP areas found in the United States (U.S.) include prisons, primary care in underserved rural areas, at-risk youth shelters, homeless veterans' programs, psychosocial clubhouses, after-school programs, community outreach for individuals with intellectual disabilities, and long-term structured residences (Mattila, 2019; Mattila & Dolhi, 2016; Precin et al., 2018; Provident & Joyce-Gaguzis, 2005). Recently, there has been a shift to providing occupational therapy students with fieldwork opportunities in REPs (Syed & Duncan, 2019). To achieve AOTA's Vision 2025, academic programs must prepare students for emerging practice areas and meet the needs of diverse settings and populations (AOTA, 2019a).

**Justification for Using REP and Requirements to Conduct a REP**

The cause of this shift is multifaceted. In the U.S., there are currently 461 ACOTE-accredited programs, 98 programs in the candidate phase, and 112 programs in the application phase (ACOTE, n.d.-b). Given the potential for a nearly 50% growth rate in occupational therapy programs, there will be a significant need for additional fieldwork placements. According to the

U.S. Department of Labor (2021), the 2019-2029 job outlook for occupational therapy practitioners is anticipated to be 16%, which is much faster growth than in other professions.

A REP is possible when the site does not have an established occupational therapy service. In these situations, the student will be supervised by a site staff member (i.e., the non-OT supervisor) with an offsite FWEd (Fitzgerald et al., 2017). ACOTE (2018) further clarifies that the FWEd must have at least three years of full-time experience in occupational therapy. The offsite FWEd is also known as the long-arm supervisor (Warren et al., 2016).

### Fieldwork Educators' Perspective

From the traditional FWEds' perspective, workload and productivity demands have been identified as reasons they do not host fieldwork students (Evenson et al., 2015; Ozelie et al., 2015). According to Varland et al. (2017), a cross-sectional survey of 500 FWEds found the following to be reasons that negatively affected their ability to host fieldwork students: job responsibilities, size of caseload, productivity standards, not working a full-time schedule, and fear of having to fail a student. Globally, there is also a shortage of placements across nursing and allied health professions (Taylor et al., 2016), and the COVID-19 pandemic has augmented the staffing crisis (Robinson et al., 2021). Given this information, there is a growing demand for placements but a decrease in available traditional opportunities. To address this gap between the need for and availability of placements, REPs are being established by academic programs.

### National Regulatory Changes and the COVID-19 Pandemic

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented economic and medical challenges for the U.S. health care system, mainly affecting the small, independent, and rural systems that usually run on lean budgets (Khullar et al., 2020; Sokol & Pataccini, 2020). The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic may add to the previously mentioned reasons why FWEds

and their employers choose not to host fieldwork students. The pandemic caused many fieldwork settings to cancel placements due to budgetary concerns and personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages, causing an accumulation of students requiring placements to satisfy ACOTE accreditation standards.

The pandemic occurred nearly synchronously with U.S. health care regulatory changes. The changes shifted reimbursement from fee-for-service to value-based (i.e., Patient-Driven Payment Model and Patient-Driven Groupings Model; AOTA, 2019b; Bogenrief, 2020). Instead of being reimbursed based on the amount of therapy service, the new models determine payment based on the patient's characteristics (i.e., primary diagnosis, functional impairment, and the presence of comorbidities) (Bogenrief, 2020). Some providers have attempted to reduce costs by reducing the frequency of OT services. These changes have spurred a shift toward prevention, wellness, and recovery, supporting occupational therapy's move away from the medical model (Metzler, 2019). Given these identified hurdles, role-emerging placements are a way the AFWCs can procure fieldwork placements in areas where the number of students exceeds the number of available and willing FWEds and employers.

**Benefits and Challenges to Students Completing a REP**

Level II fieldwork generally provides experiential learning, enabling students to apply academic knowledge, develop clinical skills, and determine what practice area they will pursue (Mattila & Dolhi, 2016). Studies have elucidated the benefits and challenges students experienced during the REP.

*Benefits for Students*

The REP setting is known to provide students with a varied learning experience, offer the opportunity to expand the OT profession, and address the placement shortage (Bossers et al.,

1997; Cooper & Raine, 2009; Dancza et al., 2013; Overton et al., 2009). Literature examining

the REP is growing, with the primary focus on the student experience upon completion of the

placement. For example, recent studies have demonstrated that students develop the following

skills while on their REP:

- critical thinking (Dancza et al.,2013; Mattila & Dolhi, 2016; Nielsen et al., 2020; Syed & Duncan, 2019)

- application of theory to a unique setting (Dancza et al.,2013; Kaelin & Dancza, 2019; Syed & Duncan, 2019)

- collaboration with those who may not understand their roles (Clarke et al., 2015a; Dancza et al.,2013; Syed & Duncan, 2019)

- advocacy for OT in the non-occupational therapy setting (Clarke et al., 2015b; Dancza et al.,2013; Syed & Duncan, 2019)

- organization and independent practice (Dancza et al.,2013; Syed & Duncan, 2019)

- practice in a more client-centered way (Clarke et al., 2014b; Kaelin & Dancza, 2019; Syed & Duncan, 2019)

Studies conducted before and after the REP identified similar skill development and

noted additional benefits, positive experiences, and perceptions of the placement. For instance,

students' self-efficacy, described as a person's belief in their ability to perform and complete a

task or situation (Bandura, 1977), was reported to improve throughout the REP (Gat & Ratzon,

2014; Golos & Tekuzener, 2019; Mattila et al., 2018; Mattila, 2019). In a study by Kaelin and

Dancza (2019), students identified learning threshold concepts (i.e., client-centeredness,

occupation, and applying OT theory) unique to OT while on their REP.

***Challenges for Students***

Upon completing the REP, it is essential to note that students have also identified challenges, negative experiences, and perceptions. Similar themes of fear and anxiety were reported in several studies. Mattila & Dolhi (2016) noted that participants reported fear and anxiety about the unknown. This fear was noted in themes surrounding the setting and the population (i.e., an at-risk youth shelter) (Mattila & Dolhi, 2016). Students identified uncertainty when applying knowledge because they could not emulate their FWEd (Kaelin & Dancza, 2019). Students noted various emotional extremes, from excitement, satisfaction, fulfillment, and tiredness (Dancza et al., 2013; Clarke et al., 2015a). Finally, students noted a sense of being thrown into the placement (Clarke et al., 2014a; Clarke et al., 2015a).

In response to a limited understanding of the strategies used by students, Clarke et al. (2019) conducted an interpretative phenomenological analysis study of five students upon completion of their REP. They found two themes that described strategies used by the students. The students identified "drawing on inner resources," which included students investing themselves in the placement and use of the reflective practice to "make sense of the experience" (p. 23). The students also identified "being part of the team," which included the students' perceived level of support, the supervisory relationship, frequency of supervision, and learning through engagement with the clients (Clarke et al., 2019, p. 24). Given these findings, it is clear that supervision and support for the student completing the REP are vital. This support is provided through the combination of the individuals on-site at the REP, the FWEd, and the AFWC.

## Perceptions from the FWEd, AFWC, and Community Representatives

A recent study investigating FWEds' experiences acting as long-arm supervisors identified enabling activities such as developing rapport with the site, using a peer or paired

student supervision model, and professional gains from serving as the FWEd (Warren et al., 2016). Also identified in this study were challenges for FWEds, including providing supervision in unfamiliar settings, underestimating the time commitment, and managing the students' ideas and emotions during the placement (Warren et al., 2016). The enabling activities were necessary for the long-arm supervisor to meet the demands of this FWEd role. Wilburn et al. (2016) surveyed 44 AFWCs regarding their experiences in emerging practice areas in a related study. Perceptions shared by the AFWCs were noted that students on fieldwork in emerging practice areas demonstrated improved professional behaviors, gained abilities to collaborate interprofessionally, and attained a more refined ability to define and apply occupational therapy principles (Wilburn et al., 2016). According to van Rensburg et al. (2019), perceptions from community partners when OT students complete service learning noted contributions to occupational justice, occupational enablement, and improved health and well-being for its members. The role of AFWCs and FWEds in developing and sustaining REPs is vital to the future of the occupational therapy profession (Lau & Ravenek, 2019; Wilburn et al., 2016). Recent literature suggests that academic programs must provide learning opportunities to reflect the themes identified by the fieldwork educator and the students (Clarke et al., 2014a; Clarke et al., 2019).

Research examining REPs primarily focuses on student perceptions after completion of the fieldwork and perceptions of the AFWC and long-arm supervisors. However, there is a lack of research into the role of the non-OT supervisor (Clarke et al., 2014a; Wilburn et al., 2016). This study will fill a gap in the literature and support the AFWC and FWEds to develop curricula and support initiatives for all students and non-OT supervisors. It is also important to note that the REP is routinely not the first fieldwork opportunity chosen by the OT students or assigned by

the AFWC, which could be due to the structure of the long-arm supervision. Further developing

REP opportunities will enhance the available pool of fieldwork placements, support the non-OT

supervisors, and reach areas where OT services are necessary but are currently lacking.

## Method

### Study Design

This study utilized a basic interpretive qualitative approach. Merriam (2002) described

the purpose of this approach was to understand how people interpret their experiences and apply

meaning to those experiences. This approach is appropriate as the researcher seeks to investigate

non-OT supervisors' perceptions of a REP and what meaning these supervisors attribute to the

fieldwork. The researcher also examined the supervisors' understanding of the REP, identified

supervisor perception of enablers and barriers to completing the REP, discovered possible

curricular needs, and ascertained supervisors' interest in the REP.

The researcher received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval at D'Youville

University before recruitment and data collection. Also, a reliance agreement was developed

between D'Youville University IRB and the University of Indianapolis IRB.

### Participants

Participants were non-OT supervisors who supervised students during REP level II

fieldwork. Inclusion criteria required participating as a non-OT supervisor in a REP within the

past five years within a two-hour drive from D'Youville University. The researcher is a faculty

member at D'Youville University and recruited non-OT supervisors from previously established

REPs that the university utilizes.

Qualitative researchers seek to understand the meaning associated with the experiences of

people who share a common phenomenon. For this study, the researcher determined the number

of participants through the use of information power (Malterud et al., 2015). These

recommendations work in concert to determine when higher information power is present (i.e., a

smaller *N*) or when a larger sample size is required to answer the research questions. To have

higher information power, it is recommended that the research conducted have a narrow study

aim, the participants are highly specific to the study aim, an applied theory be used, a robust

interview dialogue is captured, and an in-depth analysis of the interview is conducted (Malterud

et al., 2015). Information power "is not intended as a checklist to calculate *N* but is meant as a

recommendation of what to consider systematically about recruitment at different steps of the

research process" (Malterud et al., 2015, p. 4).

**Setting**

The researcher conducted all activities on a small, private urban campus that serves 3,000

students and on-site at the REP. The researcher conducted all interviews on-site at the

community-based REP. All activities were conducted in a private, distraction-free setting.

**Procedures**

*Sampling and Recruitment*

Qualitative research utilizes purposeful sampling to select participants who can best

inform the researcher about the focus of the research question (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Specifically, criterion sampling was used in this study and deemed appropriate as these

supervisors are likely to reveal opportunities for program improvement in curriculum

development and identification of potential REP settings (Patton, 1990). The researcher is a

clinical assistant professor in the occupational therapy department and does not have contact

with non-OT supervisors.

Upon receiving IRB approval, the researcher initiated recruitment by contacting the involved AFWC and requesting contact information, such as email address and work telephone number, for the FWEd assigned to the REP and the non-OT supervisor. The researcher then contacted the FWEd by email (see Appendix A) to introduce the study as a courtesy before the researcher contacted the non-OT supervisors. This step was required as the FWEds have established a relationship with the REP and the non-OT supervisor.

Upon receiving the fieldwork educators' permission to contact the non-OT supervisor, the researcher emailed the non-OT supervisors and included the FWEd in the carbon copy (see Appendix B). Including the FWEd in this initial email will let the non-OT supervisor know that the FWEd was aware of this recruitment request. The FWEd piloted the interview guide (see Appendix C) via practice interviews with two FWEd.

This introductory email to the non-OT supervisors introduced the proposed study, including the purpose, inclusion criteria, potential benefits and risks, confidentiality, and the opportunity to respond with questions and identify their interest in participating. Participants were informed that each would receive a $25 gift card to compensate for their time upon data collection and analysis completion. The researcher allowed the non-OT supervisors to reply with questions for one week from the email. After one week, the researcher reminded those non-OT supervisors who did not respond to the initial email to query their interest in participating in the study (see Appendix D). Upon receiving non-OT supervisors' emails indicating their statement of interest, the researcher contacted them individually by telephone, reviewed the inclusion criteria, and scheduled the interview date, time, and location.

***Informed Consent***

Before completing the semi-structured interviews, each participant was provided a study information sheet (see Appendix E) to read via email and again at the beginning of the interview. This sheet included: the voluntary nature of the study, the ability to withdraw from the study at any point, the purpose of the study, procedures to be used in the collection of data, protection of confidentiality, the risks and benefits associated with participation in the study, and contact information for the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To prevent the collection of identifiable information via a signed form, verbal informed consent was obtained via audio consent at the time of the recorded interview. Before initiating the interview, the participants were offered the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification regarding any study component.

### Data Collection

Data were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews between the researcher and the participant. The interviews were audio recorded via a password-protected Voice Recorder application on an Android phone. The interviews were conducted in an empty classroom on the campus to protect participant privacy or in a private, distraction-free setting of the participants choosing. The researcher utilized a previously established semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix C) throughout the interview and engaged in unique probing and follow-up questions to allow the conversation about the topic to evolve organically. The interview guide was piloted with the REP FWEds before conducting the research interviews. After each interview, the researcher completed field notes to capture what was observed to augment the audio recording. The practice of triangulation with the field notes ensured the confirmability of the researcher and added to the credibility of the data collection process (Henderson & Rheault, 2004). After each interview, the researcher also completed memoing to recognize similar information for thematic development, jumping from raw data to descriptions

of the research question and reflexivity (Birks et al., 2018; Satterlund, n.d.). As previously

mentioned, the researcher utilized information power to determine when data collection would

cease, and the sample size was then known (Malterud et al., 2015). As Malterud et al. (2015)

explain, information power can help shape the size of the sample because "the more information

the sample holds, relevant for the actual study, the lower number of participants is needed" (p.

7).

*Data Management & Analysis*

Data analysis began immediately after the first semi-structured interview, with the

researcher completing field notes and memoing observations for possible interpretation. Field

notes served as observational accounts of the interviews and aided in removing researcher bias

from the study to ensure confirmability (Henderson & Rheault, 2004). As such, the researcher

completed field notes immediately following each interview. Additionally, memoing captured

the researcher's learning through the interview process and identified similar views and themes

(Birks et al., 2018; Satterlund, n.d.). Next, the researcher transcribed interviews through Temi, a

password-protected transcription service. Then the researcher conducted a detailed review of the

transcription against the password-protected Voice Recorder audio recording on an Android

phone. This reviewer then completed this line-by-line to ensure the accuracy of the data.

**Data Storage.** After the researcher completed the detailed review of the transcription

against the audio recording, the audio was saved as a password-protected MP3 stored locally.

The transcriptions and audio files were then stored in Dedoose 9.0 ©, a data management and

analysis application. The audio recording was then removed from Voice Recorder and Temi.

Dedoose files were only accessible by the researcher, an analysis expert acting as a secondary

coder, and the outside reviewer, as requested. The written material generated through field notes

and memoing was housed in a locked storage box accessible only by the researcher. Participants

and related study data (MP3, transcription, field notes, and memoing) were assigned a unique

identification number to ensure confidentiality and de-identification. The next step was inductive

coding of the data.

   **Coding.** The researcher engaged in coding and theme identification via a line-by-line

reviewing process through immersion in the data, reviewing the transcripts over multiple

sessions, and using memoing for interpretation and analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2011;

Stuckey, 2015). During the interviews, the researcher intended to capture the multiple views of

the non-OT supervisors. The researcher utilized information power to determine when the

amount of information gained develops new knowledge and answers the research question

(Malterud et al., 2015).

   The data in the first cycle of the coding process identified single words, short phrases,

and more extensive passages relevant to the research question (Saldaña, 2013). A codebook was

developed and included the organization of this coding process. The codebook contained a list of

codes, code descriptions, and sample data to reference (Saldaña, 2013). This codebook aided the

researcher in maintaining organization throughout the multicycle coding process (Saldaña,

2013). Descriptive codes were used when coding the field notes, and In Vivo coding was used

when coding the transcriptions (Saldaña, 2013). Descriptive codes summarize the main topic

from an excerpt of a field note, and In Vivo codes are taken from the interview transcript and

placed in quotation marks (Saldaña, 2013).

   The multicycle coding process included the analysis expert acting as a secondary coder.

The secondary coder was CITI trained and had expertise in qualitative research methods,

evidenced by experience publishing qualitative studies and data analysis with applications such

as Dedoose 8.1 ©. The secondary coder separately coded all interviews. The researcher and the secondary coder agreed on codes that most accurately capture the data furthering the codebook development. This data triangulation verified the results and ensured the study's credibility (Henderson & Rheault, 2004). The following coding phase involved again reviewing the data, identifying additional codes, and potentially reconfiguring the codes to immerse the researcher further in the data (Saldaña, 2013). With immersion in the data, this potential reconfiguration elucidated additional themes. The coding cycle continued as the researcher identified categories that organized the codes into families of information with similar meanings, and then the categories further developed into broader themes (Saldaña, 2013). The researcher then engaged in member checking to ensure the credibility of the data by providing the resulting themes to each participant, allowing the participant to clarify any item (Lincoln & Guba,1985). This process was completed by sharing the generated themes with each participant through email, with the researcher requesting correspondence to verify the results, including seeking clarification and corrections.

All data, transcripts, and interpretations, generated during the coding process, contributed to an audit trail to demonstrate how coding, categories, and themes were developed (Stuckey, 2015). An external audit was conducted using an outside reviewer who examined the data analysis process and attested to the confirmability and dependability of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The outside reviewer completed an external audit for triangulation which will ensure the confirmability and dependability of the research. This outside reviewer had expertise in qualitative research methods through a history of publishing qualitative studies and data analysis. After the analysis, the researcher created a table comprising the relevant themes identified during the coding process.

**Rigor/Trustworthiness**

Guba's Model of Trustworthiness guided the procedures, emphasizing the data collection

and data analysis processes to ensure a quality study. Trustworthiness was achieved by applying

the following strategies: credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). Credibility and confirmability were achieved during data collection through

reflexivity and member checking (Henderson & Rheault, 2004). The researcher mitigated bias

using memoing (Henderson & Rheault, 2004). During data analysis, member checking was

utilized to ensure a credible study (Henderson & Rheault, 2004). The researcher achieved

dependability by following the detailed step-by-step process in the method section. Triangulation

and an audit trail were implemented to ensure confirmability and dependability. The sample

represents a larger population of non-OT supervisors for transferability. This transferability will

occur through purposeful criterion sampling, data collection using open-ended questions, and

analysis (Henderson & Rheault, 2004). This transferability further occurred through the

researcher providing thick descriptions of the participant's responses and context with

transparency in the methods.

## Results

Information power was achieved after four participants completed the interview process,

becoming evident by both the researcher and the secondary coder as the rich data was analyzed

and answers to the research questions emerged. Specifically, four participants who served as

non-OT supervisors for level II fieldwork students completed the current study, all meeting the

inclusion criteria (see Table 3). The participants were all women: two with clinical bachelor's

degrees, one with a liberal arts bachelor's degree, and one with a dentistry degree. The settings

included an adult day program, a pediatric dentistry clinic, a social club for individuals with

autism, and a social club for individuals with acquired head injuries. Via supervision and

collaboration with occupational therapists who served as the FWEd, the occupational therapy

students (OTS) provided occupational therapy services addressing the profession's domain and

process by targeting the occupational needs of the REP clientele. The delivery of the services

was supervised by the non-OT supervisor, an on-site professional responsible for the day-to-day

duties and obligations.

Data analysis resulted in 33 codes used to categorize the participant interview data. Of

the 33 codes, ten of the codes were parent codes. Five of the ten parent codes were further

delineated into 19 child codes. Finally, three of the child codes were split into four grandchild

codes. One code ($n=1$) was removed during the analysis due to participant-specific application.

Based on the analysis of the hierarchical codes, three themes, and six sub-themes (see

Table 4) emerged and aided in answering the research questions.

**Theme 1: Requirements for Student Success**

The first theme that resulted from the multicycle coding process was the requirements for

student success. Each participant identified requirements for success in their setting, noting

student attributes, including a need for didactic knowledge, the student's own ability to use

therapeutic use of self, and the non-OT supervisor's supervision style.

*Didactic Knowledge*

A sub-theme that emerged related to requirements for student success in a REP was

didactic knowledge. Participant 1 stated, from an adult day program: "When [students] come,

when they first start here, they're a student-like a true student-with a ton of knowledge and

skills." Students need this didactic knowledge to identify a need for and provide occupational

therapy services within the profession's domain and process (see Table 2). Participants

acknowledge that strong didactic knowledge is critical in a setting where an occupational therapy practitioner is not providing service.

This sub-theme includes examples of didactic knowledge, including the ACOTE requirements of foundational content within occupational therapy educational curricula; basic tenets of occupational therapy; referral, screening, evaluation, and intervention plan; and professional, ethics, values, and responsibilities and how this knowledge looks at the REP (see Table 1). Participant 2 stated from a pediatric dental clinic, "[Students] do come with an amazing skill set... strong didactic skills in occupational therapy."

**Foundational Content Requirements.** Specific participant examples include the occupational therapy student's ability to identify performance skills and occupations, as evidenced by participant 2 at a pediatric dental clinic: "Whether it be your textbook or what you've seen or what you've learned, you have a child who is having difficulty with their motor skills [for example] holding a toothbrush." All participants identified specific diagnoses for their REP and how the diagnoses affected the occupational therapy domain and process. Participant 4, at a social club, stated: "TBI or brain injury... You don't think of motor vehicle, MS... or other neurological disorders. [And] just the knowledge of our population is huge." Additionally, all participants emphasized the need to acknowledge variability in diagnoses, presentation, and specific client factors. Participant 1, from an adult day program, stated:

> What's startling to some students is that [some participants] don't have memory loss, but the two [participants] with particular frontotemporal dementia, they have pretty significant aphasia. One is nonverbal now. And he laughs whether he is happy, sad, angry... Understanding the different types of dementia. When I talk about the 'fine dance,' it's because they don't have memory loss when they communicate with you, and

people might assume that they're not understanding, but they truly do understand. They do know who their family [is] and where they used to work... that's another example of the different types of cognitive deficits and what the students need to be prepared for.

Participant 3, from a social club, also noted that OT students need to understand the variability in diagnoses, presentation, and specific client factors: "[Clients] diagnosed with [autism]... [students] need to learn the differences [in autism]." The students at the REP apply this foundational knowledge to the provision of OT services occurring at the REP.

**Basic Tenets of Occupational Therapy.** All participants spoke to the basic tenets of OT, including the ACOTE standard addressing *Safety of Self and Others*. For example, participant 3, from a social club, commented on the opportunity to address the client's performance skills during social interaction, specifically sensory regulation:

Safety. That's a big one, safety. We also make sure that [the students are] aware of when [an] individual leaves an area, [the student should] go make sure you know where [the individual] is. If [the individual] is going in the sensory room, [the student] should hang out in the sensory room with.

Participant 3, from a social club, also shared the student's exposure to client factors, specifically cognition:

If [the individual] is going out to that front door [and says], 'my mom texted she's here' or 'my mom's here now,' [the student should] walk them out there and make sure they are getting in the correct car... I have one girl that's so high functioning [and] she got turned around. She [went] outside to look for her mother. She ended up behind the building.

Another example from a pediatric dental clinic, during the occupational therapy process of completing an evaluation and providing interventions, also addresses the safety of self and others: "To not only perform to the safety of the child, but also to [the dental hygienist's and the OT student's] safety." Finally, participant 1 summarized the need to address the safety of self and others by stating, "understanding what [clients] can't do, I guess, understanding safety enough [that the] students understand where their limits are [for both clients and students].

Study participants discussed the standard, *Effects of Disease Process,* which was noted by participant 1 and included how the client's ability to complete performance skills and occupations was affected by a disease process.

If [the student is] supervising a small group activity, [and a participant] has to get up from the table, most of our participants are not independent ambulators, but there's a few that are, the students need to know that... or I have to approach [the participant] from this side [or] if [the student] sees [a participant] go get up without their device, [the student] would need to provide a reminder.

Lastly, students reportedly need to have a firm understanding of *Activity Analysis,* which was affirmed in a quote by participant 2 at the pediatric dental clinic: "[Student's] ability to see what's happening. I love that when... a child will be coming in, could be upside down in the chair... how are we going to modify the activity that's going on?" And participant 3, from a social club, stated: "in the evaluations... how you handle different situations [with the individual]... planning your group to tailor [to]everyone in that group." These examples demonstrate the student's opportunity to complete activity analysis during the OT process at the REP. Participant 3 further noted that this ensures activities are "...accessible to everyone."

**Referral, Screening, Evaluation, and Intervention Plan.** These quotes are related directly to the OT process and further illustrate the sub-theme, didactic knowledge. For example, participant 4, at a social club, stated, "So I feel like it takes a couple weeks of just straight, straight up, observing skills [and] the groups." From a pediatric dental clinic, participant 2 stated: "You are going to be teaching [during an intervention]... [students] should know medical histories and medical conditions. [And students should know] swallowing skills [the performance skills necessary for the occupation of eating and swallowing]" Participant 3, at a social club, stated: "they're here for weeks, [but on] day one [the students are] cooking [with the individuals]." Participant 1, at a social club, noted interventions that occur at the REP in this statement: "As far as eating and making decisions about how to keep people safe during mealtime... level II students have actually gone and gotten adaptive equipment for us." These quotes emphasize the student's didactic knowledge in screening, evaluation, and intervention planning.

**Professional, Ethics, Values, and Responsibilities.** Another example of didactic knowledge includes the ACOTE standards relating to professional, ethics, values, and responsibilities. Participant 2, at the pediatric dental clinic, noted the student's ability to advocate for social responsibility, equitable services, and sustainability: "buying into the therapies that we [OT] provide and just how important receiving OT is."

*Therapeutic Use of Self* is another ACOTE standard included in the examples of didactic knowledge, specifically in the content requirement, referral, screening, evaluation, and intervention plan, and was heavily discussed by all participants. Thus it was identified as the next sub-theme.

*Therapeutic Use of Self*

Therapeutic use of self requires an occupational therapy practitioner to understand clients as human beings at an interpersonal level and the ability to apply empathy and use of interpersonal knowledge and related skills to "thoughtfully resolve evocative interpersonal events in practice" (Taylor, 2020, p. 2). All participants identified the student's need to utilize therapeutic use of self to be successful at their REP. For example, participant 4, from a social club, stated, "I think, as always, until they build a rapport, you just see a night and day difference with facilitation skills." Participant 4 continued, "just having a strong demeanor... putting yourself out there... the students have to put themselves out there... you gotta be able to ... introduce yourself... make an attempt to get to know the individual." At another social club, participant 3 emphasized this in the following: "[the students] interact, and they [develop] a good peer-to-peer relationship." Participant 3 also stated:

> We have eight autistic individuals here. Each one is different. I want you [OT student] to pick up on the difference qualities and abilities ... and always remember if you worked with one, the next will be different, and how to approach them [use of interpersonal skills].

Additionally, to further illustrate the therapeutic use of self, participant 3 stated, "in your field... any professional who will eventually be working with the developmentally or intellectually disabled... need to learn to interact... they wanna be able to pick up on the cues that that person is giving off."

Participants identified skills required to meet individuals at the interpersonal level, including rapport building, observation, socializing, intervening, communicating, behavior management, listening, objectivity, and confidence in these stated skills. From an adult day program, participant 1 stated:

I never look to the students to understand how to intervene [initially]. I more would need

the students to understand how important it is to not intervene... if they haven't worked

with the participant before... They would need to know whether to back off and observe

or just ask for help or if they should intervene.

These skills were also illustrated in a quote from the pediatric dental clinic interview with

participant 2: "To be able to use their interpersonal skills to read the situation. And to elevate if it

needs to elevate or to calm if it needs to calm." Participant 2 continued: "I mean the skills that

you bring to the table, not just here, but the phone calls to parents and teleconference and with

parents." Participant 4 from a social club stated, "So if you really wanna build rapports, you

gotta make the effort and... be comfortable doing so... That's like the number one in this setting."

Participants emphasized that therapeutic use of self is necessary for a successful REP

student placement. This need was supported during the interview at a social club with participant

3: "to take the education and the background that they have to the benefit of the individual. But

first and foremost, to be a friend." And also, in the quote from participant 1 at an adult day

program: "open and willing to bend and meet [the student's] needs as long as the client's needs

are being met." Developing a therapeutic use of self requires supervision while the OT students

are at the REP.

### Supervisory Style

The participants all noted the need for a supervision plan and process to be successful.

This supervision was provided via a combination of the non-OT supervisor and the FWEd and

can be described as collaborative, supportive, and often available immediately. For example,

participant 1 stated, "We're in this together." Participant 3 provided feedback in a "direct matter

of fact... friendly manner. Not in a supervisory manner, in a friendly manner." Participant 2

described how the supervision is provided collaboratively at the pediatric dental clinic and begins with "meeting the occupational therapy school... the director, the students, [the patient, the dental resident, and hygienist]... So getting to know each other's session before we're even on the floor." Participant 2 illustrated how this occurs, "We move in, we debrief, we listen, we talk, you know, we see another patient." Participant 4 speaks explicitly to this supervisory style provided at the social club in the following quotes:

> And then the open-door communication is something that I have with the students because there isn't somebody [FWEd] directly on site, so if you have a question come right now, we'll formulate an email. If I can't answer it [we'll] call... and we'll get an answer for you.

Participant 4 continued:

> It's great that [FWEd] sits in personally or via Zoom for the assessments. She [FWEd] gives the best and most appropriate feedback...it's great that we both observe, but... it's better she [FWEd] does too. And is there every time at the moment she can say, let's maybe rephrase that to... and that part's great and helps them... feel supported.

The supervisory style can be summarized with the following single-word quotes: "accessible," "direct," "informal," and "supportive."

## Theme 2: Benefits

The second theme that resulted from the multicycle coding process was benefits. Each participant reported benefits from hosting level II students at the REP. The benefits noted were experienced by the student, the site, and the non-OT supervisor and were highlighted as sub-themes.

### *To the Student*

Throughout the interviews, benefits to the student were emphasized by the participants. As anticipated, the benefits included advocacy for OT, applying OT theory in a unique setting, working independently, and program development. Additionally, the participants noted that a REP is supportive and can meet specific student needs. Students have the opportunity to gain continued experience at a REP throughout portions of their required fieldwork placements (i.e., level I, level II, or advanced clinical placement), and the REP allows OTS to pursue other areas of interest. Participant 3 described the benefits experienced at the social club: "I do see advocacy... between your students and where they could go out and... advocate for things." Participant 3 then gave examples of when past OTS advocated for clients to receive OT and related services, which continued post-graduation. Participant 4 provided the following as an example of advocacy for OT at the social club: "students quite literally seeing barriers that they wouldn't otherwise see, like how to access the community, something as simple as going to the grocery store, managing money, different daily living skills in place here." "We have such great opportunities to really let folks know what an occupational therapist does," was witnessed at a pediatric dental clinic by participant 2.

At the REP, students are afforded multiple opportunities to apply OT theory in a unique setting. Participant 4, at a social club, noted: "that a student is having other opportunities that would not necessarily be at a traditional placement." Also, from a social club, participant 3 stated, "building a relationship... we're just different here." Examples of applying OT theory in a unique setting were provided by each of the participants and included from an adult day program, participant 1 noted: "And when you have an OT [student] that comes here and is great with art and can work the somebody with a tremor or with CVA [cerebral vascular accident],

with some vision loss and set them up the way they need to be set up." In the social club setting, participant 4 provided these examples:

> Even the goals are client-oriented. I sit one-on-one with participants when they start after 30 days. And then... two times a year to evaluate those goals. And it's up to them what they wanna work on... I have people that quite literally come here with the only goal of "I wanna come four times a month for [what] interests me. I have people that wanna come strictly for music... or social appropriateness... to talk in a social group setting.
>
> The socialization piece is always gonna be a goal here. Now we have a full-time evening program. Wonderful opportunities for future students... like intake assessments.
> Participation. It's a whole different realm that I don't feel students see all the time. So it's great. In hopes that they buy in... this is a whole new world I wasn't aware of... I feel like we provide a unique takeaway... than another placement.

Examples provided by participant 3 illustrate applying OT is a unique setting: "we do advanced life skills, kitchen lifestyle... so they're learning to prepare simple meals for themselves... So they're a lot more higher functioning, but they do still need assistance. And that's what [the social club and the OTS] bring to a daytime program."

Participant 2 provided the following comments regarding OT in a unique setting:

> The skills that you bring to the table, not just [in the clinic], but the phone calls to parents and the teleconference and... toothbrushing there [at the patient's home] and then recreating it here, the green room created-they created for us [for sensory regulation], the social stories [for behavior management]. It is bountiful, you know, everything that has occurred.

Students were also able to work independently when on their REP. Participant 3 stated at the social club, "[students] jump [in]... it's like, they've always been here. Like they were made for that role. They're very good at what they do. And I think they're going to be very successful, and they're going to be an asset to the community." Participant 3 stated that students "need very little direction." Participant 4 stated, "it's the individual [and] their opportunity to work independently" during the REP at the social club. As summarized, the student's ability to work independently at the adult day program, participant 1 described this benefit with "[Students] own observations and interventions from start to finish not because somebody else said 'we have a problem over here and identify it."

Finally, students benefitted while on the REP from exposure to program development. Participant 1 described program development that students have been involved in:

The printed information we have for staff training for exercise programs has come from level II students who've compiled yoga programs, gardening programs with grading challenges... it's incredible... the encyclopedia we have from two students, they're going to make sure that we have copies of all of that for our second site.

Participant 4 noted the following opportunity for program planning: "[develop] a group where... it's for seven weeks, but then maybe we can run it again two months down the road. We'll run it again, still keeps on paying... moving forward."

There were unanticipated student benefits identified during the multicycle coding process. The interviews identified that the REP is supportive and can meet specific student needs. Participant 1 stated:

We worked that [accommodations for her medical condition] out. We worked out her hours and how she would cue me if she was having a hard time [with her medical

condition]... It's a really supportive environment here, and I think she shined, and I think

it was great to get this under her belt... open and willing to bend and meet the needs as

long as the client's needs are being met.

Participant 4 provided another example of this benefit and stated, "we [FWEd, the non-OT

supervisor, and OTS] do a week-to-week check-in... to sit down and say this is the week we're

running our group. And close the next week. How do we think it went?"

The students also have the opportunity to gain continued experience at a REP throughout

their fieldwork experience, from level I to level II or from level II to an advanced clinical

placement required as part of the community practice course that follows the successful

completion of level II fieldwork. This benefit was illustrated in a quote from the interview with

participant 3, "so that's another opportunity for, for students as well as, and you know, across

just specifically to the level II, which is what this study is focusing on, for from the level I

perspective [and] from the community practice perspective."

Finally, the REP allows OTS to pursue other areas of interest. One example is an OTS

with previous nursing experience who developed a manual on transfer training at the adult day

program. Participant 1 provided the following example:

A student was very outgoing and strong. And so, I set up situations where she would take

the lead. And she, in particular, is one that I'm thinking grew like exponentially while she

was here... if I can identify things with the students, whether it's a skill... we look at that

early on and make sure they're polished.

Participant 1 continued:

Natural abilities in certain areas... I've really been pushing the idea that I want the

students to develop on those areas while they're here... I think they'd get the most out of

this placement if they can dig deeper in areas that they're interested in [or] are very

skilled.

### To the Site

The participants noted multiple instances of benefits to the site and the site's clients,

including program planning, the client's benefit from evidence-based practice, and improved

client quality of life. Participant 4 noted that the students develop programs and run groups that

continue beyond their placement, stating, "[students initiate a] group where it's for seven weeks,

but then maybe we can run it again two months down the road, leave it, leave it for us [to run

after the student completed the REP]." Participant 3 stated, "D'Youville has helped us with the

placement of students [to] advance to where we are today. There are very few programs [for our

individuals]... but there's no social, so we base everything on social, but then we need hands-on."

This "hands-on" refers to the students' use of evidence-based practice.

Participants provided additional examples of evidence-based practice. Participant 2 spoke

about the students creating a sensory regulation room and using social stories: "occupational

therapists can get the evidence-based terminology and theories... we say so that we [pediatric

dental clinic staff] can help." Participant 1 also noted evidence-based practice when working

with home safety evaluations, with techniques to improve self-feeding and fall prevention.

Participant 1 reported improvements in the client's quality of life using compensatory strategies

and recommendations for adaptations, stating, "the biggest role of the students [and the FWEd

was] doing home visits... you need a handle to get into the tub, so that has been improved quality

of life for our participants. I'm so grateful for that." A statement from participant 2 summarized

the benefits to the site as "patient satisfaction and resident and student learning... the flow of the

clinic... Very quickly on we realized it [occupational therapy on site] could be a help."

### *To the Non-OT Supervisor*

Benefits to the non-OT supervisor were also identified. As a result of the interview with participant 1, the non-OT supervisor noted the benefits of program planning for business development and stated, "All of the [programs and support materials] we have from two students, they're going to make sure that we have copies of all of that for our second site." Participant 2 stated, "I think it made it more exciting. We're all about interprofessional collaborating and we understood right away that this [REP] was gonna be groundbreaking or trailblazing." Participant 2 also noted benefits to the non-OT supervisor at the pediatric dental clinic from hosting the REP:

> That's when I get fascinated... when we have our debriefing... but listen to connect how occupational therapy can connect the textbook with what we just saw... and label the behavior and, you know, move on. Maybe now we need sedation. [No,] maybe we need to take a break and have them [dental patient] come back. An occupational therapist can... get evidence-based terminology and theories... Maybe we don't have to go to the operating room. Maybe what we can try is a weighted blanket. Maybe we can try [a] change in the lighting or the atmosphere or massages or the smell... Occupational therapy brings so many more tools into the operatory [location of dental chair]... but it's gonna take some time for everybody to realize that. I get the pleasure of seeing that... and now I have, have to get that out to everybody else.

When queried, no participants noted barriers to hosting the level II students. A quote from Participant 3 illustrated this finding: "quite honestly, I don't see any [barriers]."

**Theme 3: Opportunities for Further Partnerships**

The third theme that resulted from the multicycle coding process was opportunities for further partnerships. Each participant reported opportunities at their REP for continued partnerships with D'Youville. Specifically to the needs of the community, participant 3 from a social club stated:

> We love having the students here. We would love more of them. We would love to run a daytime program with D'Youville.... There's a need right now because the day hab [daytime habilitation programs] and different things are so short-staffed that everyone's losing their services, adult, the adults, the ones that have aged out.

Filling an unmet need in the community was also noted by participant 1, who stated, "opportunities... I'm looking to open up a second site because we have a waiting list all the time." Participant 4 from the social club stated, "We just feel there's such a need for an OT in this setting."

The participants identified a need for additional activities with the university to further these partnerships. Continuation of program planning was noted by participant 4, who stated: "[adding] to previous program planning... not starting from scratch." Participant 3 stated, "we would like to partner on a higher level with D'Youville... we don't have nonprofit experience... but we work hard, and we know what's needed ... we don't have the insight that a university does." Examples included conducting needs assessments, running an organization, and further program development, specifically telehealth, to reach [clients] in their homes.

Participant 4 stated, "I hope somebody comes back in five years because our program has grown so much through D'Youville. I can't wait to see what we're gonna do together... I am so excited."

**Discussion and Conclusion**

"Occupational therapy has an important and expanding role in non-traditional settings and emerging practice areas outside of the healthcare system" (American Occupational Therapy Foundation [AOTF], n.d.). However, limited research has been conducted investigating role-emerging fieldwork, with the majority of research being conducted with students after they completed the fieldwork (Lau & Ravenek, 2019). To date, one study focused on psychosocial settings investigating "non-OT professionals' views regarding the profession of OT and their perceptions of OT" (Fanelli & Nadeau, 2022, p. 112). It is important to emphasize that the study focused on the psychosocial setting where level I and II fieldwork occurred for occupational therapy assistant students and occupational therapy students. It is also important to note that both the Fanelli and Nadeau (2022) study and this current study occurred nearly simultaneously, highlighting the need for research into REP and the non-OT supervisor. Therefore to add to the newly burgeoning area of REP, the purpose of this basic interpretive study was to investigate the non-OT supervisor's perceptions of the role-emerging level II fieldwork specific to the non-OT supervisor's perceived opportunities, perceived challenges, and supervisory practices. The findings of this study will further enhance the study's significance to the occupational therapy profession.

The significance of this study includes the opportunity to identify new REP fieldwork placements which have the potential to further the reach of the occupational therapy profession. This study is also significant as it suggests strategies to enhance student preparation before the REP and ways to promote curricular development at the educational institution. The multicycle coding process revealed the following three themes: requirements for student success, benefits of participating in the REP, and opportunities for further partnerships. Through this discussion, the

themes and related sub-themes will be expanded upon to answer the research questions from the non-OT supervisors' perspective.

**Theme 1: Requirements for Student Success**

Each participant identified that a student must possess strong didactic knowledge to be successful in the REP. For this study, didactic knowledge was defined through the ACOTE content requirements and related standards of foundational content requirements; *basic tenets of occupational therapy; referral, screening, evaluation, and intervention plan; and professional, ethics, values, and responsibilities* (see Table 4). Although this current study investigated the non-OT supervisor's perceptions of the REP, this study's findings were similar to previous studies investigating the students' perceptions of the REP. Several previous studies highlighted the need to practice in a more client-centered way (Clarke et al., 2014b; Fanelli & Nadeau, 2022; Kaelin & Dancza, 2019; Syed & Duncan, 2019).

Practicing in a more client-centered way requires the student to possess a deep understanding of the *foundational content requirements*. The ability to apply this foundational knowledge across the lifespan was identified by Syed and Duncan (2019) through an online survey of 88 occupational therapists who completed a REP fieldwork. The survey identified the following skills directly tied to the ability to apply foundational knowledge: client-centered/therapeutic relationship, knowledge integration, and cultural sensitivity (Syed & Duncan, 2019). This study supports the findings from previous studies that strong didactic knowledge is one key to success in a REP; however, it further refines the broad representation of 'didactic knowledge to include *foundational content requirements* as defined by ACOTE (2020). This study celebrates the input of the non-OT supervisor because these findings, similar to data

from other stakeholders in REP, strengthen the value and need for strong *foundational content requirements* for students to be successful at the REP.

Additional ACOTE (2020) standards referenced by participants include the need for strong didactic knowledge related to the *referral, screening, evaluation, and intervention plan*. The ability to apply theory in a unique setting was identified by Kaelin and Dancza (2019) and is congruent with findings from this study of the non-OT supervisors' perceptions. After completing a school-based REP, 13 students were interviewed via semi-structured focus groups, and the results identified their need to apply OT theory in practice (Kaelin & Dancza, 2019). This identified need for strong didactic knowledge was also found in a study by Clarke et al. (2015b), noting that students leaned on their understanding of familiar models of practice and assessment tools to know how to advocate for the profession.

This ability to advocate for the profession was emphasized in this current study and is consistent with ACOTE (2020) standards related to *professional, ethics, values, and responsibilities*. This finding was also identified in a study conducted by Dancza et al. (2013), which noted that students "appreciate being given the opportunity to use the occupational therapy process to frame their practice, taking time to complete observations and using these to justify their interventions" (p. 432).

A finding unique to this study was regarding the non-OT supervisors' emphasis on the students' strong didactic knowledge regarding the *basic tenets of occupational therapy*. The participants noted the need for students to possess enhanced abilities to practice safely, both for themselves and others, to understand the effects of a disease on occupational performance, and to analyze activities for continued engagement in occupations. A possible reason for this finding is

that this current study captured a day-to-day view of what was required for student success from the non-OT supervisor's perspective.

Enhanced ability for the *therapeutic use of self* was also identified as a requirement for student success at the REP. The participants described it as "rapport building," "facilitation skills," "putting yourself out there," "ability to develop a peer-to-peer relationship," "learning to interact... pick up on cues," and "interpersonal skills." The recent study by Fanelli and Nadeau (2022) noted similar findings from the non-OT professionals who described "specific qualities that they felt were common among OT practitioners" (p. 116). In the previously discussed study of five students who completed a REP, Clark et al. (2019) noted that they identified how they learned through therapeutic interactions with clients.

The participants in this current study also identified the support of both the non-OT supervisor and the FWEd as vital to students' success at a REP. Supervisory styles described by the participants included a collaboration between the non-OT supervisor and the FWEd, and the non-OT supervisor's style was often informal between the non-OT supervisor and the student. This sub-theme has not been identified in the literature due to the limited research into the role of the non-OT supervisor. Thus, this current study emphasizes the value of knowing and preparing the triad of partners (non-OT supervisor, FWEd, and student) in the REP.

This first theme and sub-themes directly related to the purpose statement and research questions. As non-OT supervisors, the participants shared their perceptions on what was required for student success in the REP. These findings present an opportunity to the institution for future curricular development and enhancement of didactic knowledge to support students on the REP. This study's unique findings specific to the *basic tenets of occupational therapy* suggest that students need to possess enhanced skills in activity analysis to be successful at the REP. This

finding includes the ability to identify how occupational performance should be addressed at the REP safely and that students be able to complete activity analysis independently. In addition to activity analysis, *therapeutic use of self* was identified as an explicit sub-theme requirement for student success. Enhancing a student's ability to develop and utilize therapeutic use of self before and while completing fieldwork requirements will ensure the student's success at the REP and solidify the profession's role at the REP. The therapeutic use of self is integral to occupational therapy practice and is used in all client interactions (AOTA, 2020). Identifying the preferred supervisory styles of the non-OT supervisor and that a strong collaboration is required between the non-OT supervisor and the FWEd is also an opportunity for institutional programming to support and nurture the non-OT supervisor during the REP. This support will better ensure future student success at the REP and has the likely potential to realize the benefits of the REP for many stakeholders.

**Theme 2: Benefits**

In the current study, the participants identified the benefits of hosting level II OT students at the REP. These benefits were afforded to the students, the REP site, and the non-OT supervisor. As anticipated, the participants identified benefits to the students in the following areas: advocacy for OT, working independently, applying OT theory in a unique setting, and program development. It is important to note that these benefits were in addition to the benefits of a traditional level II fieldwork placement. As previously discussed, the studies conducted by Clarke et al. (2015b), Dancza et al. (2013), and Syed and Duncan (2019) identified that the REP fieldwork provided students the opportunity to develop advocacy skills and work independently. Similarly, in the Clarke et al. (2015b) study, students noted an increased responsibility to represent the profession as they acted autonomously. The participants in this current study

reported multiple opportunities where the students advocated for the profession and worked independently. Examples include identifying community barriers to participation in instrumental activities of daily living (IADL), advocating for the occupational therapy profession with other healthcare providers, and advocating for continued OT services after completing the REP fieldwork.

Participants in this study also identified that the students benefitted from applying OT theory in a unique setting. The potential reason for this is the nature of the non-traditional REP setting. The represented settings included an adult day program, a pediatric dental clinic, and two social clubs. A study by Dancza et al. (2013) noted that students needed to rely on OT theory and process to justify their interventions. According to Danzca et al. (2013), the students' REP experience was either a school-based setting, a community education organization, or a homeless organization. The benefit of having the opportunity to apply theory to the OT process has been identified in this current study and supports the same findings from other studies, all of which were conducted in a wide variety of settings.

In this current study, the participants noted that the students were also provided the opportunity for program development. This finding echoed the recent study by Fanelli and Nadeau (2022), where non-OT professionals identified that students created programs for their REP. Examples of program development completed by students on their REP level II placement included: the creation of group protocols, the creation of a sensory regulation room, the development of social stories, and enhancing staff training manuals.

This current study identified unique benefits to the student completing the REP. Examples of this noted by the participants included the ability to adjust the REP to meet the specific needs of the students, such as addressing medical concerns, supervision frequency, and

the opportunity to pursue other interests at the REP. Finally, a newly identified benefit of the

REP provides the student the opportunity to follow the REP throughout their fieldwork

experience, from level I to level II or from level II to an advanced clinical placement required as

part of the community practice course that follows the successful completion of level II

fieldwork. This finding also expands on the first theme, which identified the need for strong

didactic knowledge to be successful at the REP.

Participants noted multiple benefits realized by the REP as a result of hosting the level II

students. Examples include the site's clientele benefitting from evidence-based OT practice

improving the client's quality of life, enhanced program planning, improved patient satisfaction,

enhanced workflow, and the opportunity to learn from other disciplines. These findings were

consistent in the literature. A study investigating eight community partners' perceptions of

service learning provided by OT students found that the clientele realized enhanced confidence

and dignity and enhanced occupational participation, which led to an improved quality of life

(van Rensburg et al., 2019). Fanelli and Nadeau (2022) also identified that the site benefits from

hosting the OT students, specifically noting that the "students enhanced their programs,

increased productivity of their staff, complemented other disciplines, and provided them with a

new perspective and a fresh set of eyes" (p. 116). It is also important to know that the pediatric

dental clinic from this current study has since hired an occupational therapist to develop further

the program initiated through the REP fieldwork experience.

Finally, the participants noted the benefits they personally received while acting as the

non-OT supervisor. These benefits included the opportunity for future business development and

to be part of ground-breaking interprofessional delivery of services. These findings echo the

recent findings from the Fanelli and Nadeau (2022) study, which noted that the non-OT

professionals desire further interactions with the OT profession as this partnership enhanced their current programs and professional practice. It is important to note that the participants in the present study did not identify any barriers to hosting level II REP students.

This second theme and sub-themes are related to the purpose statement and research questions. As non-OT supervisors, the participants shared their perceptions of benefits gained by the student, the REP site, and the non-OT supervisor. These findings again speak to the significance of the study identifying opportunities for curricular development for the student and opportunities for business development and interprofessional service delivery for the non-OT supervisor. For the students, the focus should include enhancing didactic knowledge for applying OT theory and advocacy skills, developing strategies for practicing more independently compared to traditional level II fieldwork, and strengthening skills in program planning skills. The findings specific to the non-OT supervisors' perceived benefits and lack of barriers to hosting the level II students present an exciting opportunity to advance the OT profession and to reach, yet to be served, non-traditional settings ensuring the continued provision of occupational therapy. This opportunity will require the development of education by the academic institution for the non-OT supervisor on the OT scope of practice and supervisory styles. It is important to be cognizant that participants' responses in this study were highly favorable and did not identify any challenges to hosting level II students. This finding leads to the final identified theme of opportunities for further partnerships.

**Theme 3: Opportunities for Further Partnerships**

Participants identified multiple opportunities for further partnerships. These opportunities included meeting unmet needs in the community with a forecast for more interprofessional investment in service delivery. Participants also acknowledged the support from the academic

institution for activities such as grant writing and continued program enhancement. The

opportunity for further partnerships was also noted in the Fanelli and Nadeau (2022) study, as the

non-OT professionals wanted to continue the relationship and have OT practitioners at the site.

Three sites included in the Fanelli and Nadeau (2022) study have since hired OT practitioners to

develop OT programs at their REP. One of the current study's settings also shares this finding, as

the site has employed an OT to develop further the program initiated by the level II OT students.

**Limitations**

Investigating potential reasons why the non-OT supervisors did not identify any

perceived challenges leads to identifying limitations in this study. The first limitation of this

study is the potential for coercion. Although the researcher has never been involved with any of

the interviewed non-OT supervisors or their respective REP, she is identified as a representative

of the academic institution. The non-OT supervisors identified the hope for continued

partnerships with the institution, which could affect their willingness to identify challenges to

supervising level II OT students at their REP. Further, to protect the supervisory collaboration

established between the FWEd and the non-OT supervisor, the researcher included the FWEd in

the initial recruitment letter. This professional courtesy inadvertently may have also been

coercive. There is also a potential for researcher bias as the researcher is a passionate

occupational therapist. To counteract the potential researcher bias and coercion, extensive

practices were followed to ensure the study's trustworthiness and rigor. These practices included

field notes and memoing for confirmability and reflexivity (Henderson & Rheault, 2004). A

secondary coder completed independent coding of all interviews, and a codebook was developed.

These activities are an example of data triangulation which also speaks to the study's credibility

(Henderson & Rheault, 2004). Member checking was conducted to further the study's credibility

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985). And finally, the audit trail was reviewed by an outside reviewer who verified that the researcher and the secondary reviewer followed the process described in the methods section.

**Implications for Practice and Future Research**

The findings of this study focus on the perceptions of the non-OT supervisor at the REP and have implications for future occupational therapy fieldwork practices and research into the REP. Despite the stated limitations, this study presents several opportunities for stakeholders involved with the REP. For the AFWC, understanding what is required for student success on the REP will aid in curricular development, and this should include strategies for preparing students of all ability levels for the demands and expectations of fieldwork. The participants identified positive outcomes from hosting the level II students, but the academic institution should be aware of the student's abilities and needs before the assignment and selection of the REP fieldwork. The academic institution has the opportunity to develop community partners for all levels of fieldwork, including the capstone requirement. This opportunity will allow for large-scale projects to be developed and followed through by occupational therapy faculty involved with the fieldwork (i.e., the AFWC and FWEd), encouraging threading the REP throughout the OT curriculum. This opportunity will also ensure that the occupational therapy program and other disciplines at the academic institution can further develop robust fieldwork experiences that benefit all stakeholders, including the community served by the REP.

Developing community partners such as a REP will provide additional data for research at the institution. The first opportunity would be to add to the growing research on REP, including the effectiveness of OT in the REP and how OT addresses occupational performance within community health models (AOTF, n.d.). Additional research is warranted in other areas

related to the REP, including the effectiveness of developed programming focused on student success and the effectiveness of programming focused on the non-OT supervisor's supervisory practices, the long-term effects of hosting OT students on outcomes measured at the REP, and sustainability practices between the institution and the REP. This future research will aid REP development in the United States as the need to develop emerging practice areas to meet the needs of diverse settings and populations were included in AOTA's Vision 2025 (AOTA, 2019a).

**Conclusion**

This study aimed to understand the non-OT supervisor's perceptions of the REP level II OT fieldwork placement. The research questions focused on perceived opportunity, perceived challenges, and supervisory styles. Three themes emerged and spoke to what was required for a student to be successful at the REP, what benefits are afforded to those who participate in the REP (i.e., the student, the site, and the non-OT supervisor), and the potential for continued partnerships. Participant responses were overtly positive, which could have been due to the researcher being identified as a university representative. However, the interviews provided rich, detailed information addressing specific requirements for student success, including strong didactic knowledge, keen use of therapeutic use of self, and the collaborative supervision offered by the FWEd and the non-OT supervisor. It is important to note that rigor and trustworthiness were maintained through several evidence-based processes. This current study adds to the seminal research conducted by Fanelli and Nadeau (2022) on the REP focusing on non-OT professionals and other studies on the REP. Additional research is necessary into using the REP as the occupational therapy profession adapts to the ever-changing healthcare arena (AOTF, n.d.).

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**Table 1**

*Content Requirements and Standards of Didactic Knowledge*

| Component | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| Foundational Content Requirements | "Program content must be based on a broad foundation in the liberal arts and sciences. A strong foundation in the biological, physical, social, and behavioral sciences supports an understanding of occupation across the lifespan" (ACOTE, 2020, pp. 24-25). |
| Occupational Therapy Theoretical Perspectives | "Current and relevant interprofessional perspectives including rehabilitation, disability, and developmental as well as person/population-environment-occupation models, theories and frameworks of practice" (ACOTE, 2020, p.26). |
| Basic Tenets of Occupational Therapy | "Coursework must facilitate development of the performance criteria listed and include: OT History, Philosophical Base, Theory, and Sociopolitical Climate; Interaction of Occupation and Activity; Distinct Nature of Occupation; Balancing Areas of Occupation, Role in Promotion of Health, and Prevention; Effects of Disease Processes; Activity Analysis; and Safety of Self and Others" (ACOTE, 2020, pp. 26-27). |
| Referral, Screening, Evaluation, and Intervention Plan | "The process of referral, screening, evaluation, and diagnosis as related to occupational performance and participation must be client-centered; culturally relevant; and based on theoretical perspectives, models of practice, frames of reference, and available evidence. The process of formulation and implementation of the therapeutic intervention plan to facilitate occupational performance and participation must be client-centered and culturally relevant; reflective of current and emerging occupational therapy practice; based on available evidence; and based on theoretical perspectives, models of practice, and frames of reference. These processes must consider the needs of persons, groups, and populations" (ACOTE, 2020, p. 28). |
| Context of Service Delivery, Leadership, and Management of Occupational Therapy Services | "Context of service delivery includes knowledge and understanding of the various contexts, such as professional, social, cultural, political, economic, and ecological, in which occupational therapy services are provided. Management and leadership skills of occupational therapy services include the application of principles of management and systems in the provision of occupational therapy services to persons, groups, populations, and organizations" (ACOTE, 2020, p. 34). |

| | |
|---|---|
| Scholarship | "Promotion of science and scholarly endeavors will serve to describe and interpret the scope of the profession, build research capacity, establish new knowledge, and interpret and apply this knowledge to practice" (ACOTE, 2020, p.36). |
| Professional, Ethics, Values, and Responsibilities | "Professional ethics, values, and responsibilities include an understanding and appreciation of ethics and values of the profession of occupational therapy. Professional behaviors include the ability to advocate for social responsibility and equitable services to support health equity and address social determinants of health; commit to engaging in lifelong learning; and evaluate the outcome of services, which include client engagement, judicious health care utilization, and population health" (ACOTE, 2020, p. 38). |

**Table 2**

*Domain and Process*

| Domain | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| Occupation | "Everyday personalized activities that people do as individuals, in families, and with communities to occupy time and bring meaning and purpose to life. Occupations can involve the execution of multiple activities for completion and can result in various outcomes. The broad range of occupations is categorized as activities of daily living, instrumental activities of daily living, health management, rest and sleep, education, work, play, leisure, and social participation" (AOTA, 2020, p. 79). |
| Context | "Construct that constitutes the complete makeup of a person's life as well as the common and divergent factors that characterize groups and populations. Context includes environmental factors and personal factors" (AOTA, 2020, p. 76). |
| Performance Patterns | "Habits, routines, roles, and rituals that may be associated with different lifestyles and used in the process of engaging in occupations or activities. These patterns are influenced by context and time and can support or hinder occupational performance" (AOTA, 2020, p. 80). |
| Performance Skills | "Observable, goal-directed actions that result in a client's quality of performing desired occupations. Skills are supported by the context in which the performance occurred and by underlying client factors" (Fisher & Marterella, 2019, as cited in AOTA, 2018, p. 80). |
| Client Factors | "Specific capacities, characteristics, or beliefs that reside within the person and that influence performance in occupations. Client factors include values, beliefs, and spirituality; body functions; and body structures" (AOTA, 2020, p.75). |
| **Process** | |
| Evaluation | "The comprehensive process of obtaining and interpreting the data necessary to understand the person, system, or situation. . . Evaluation requires synthesis of all data obtained, analytic interpretation of that data, reflective clinical reasoning, and consideration of occupational performance and contextual factors" (Hinojosa et al., 2014, p. 3, as cited in AOTA, 2020, p.76). |

| | |
|---|---|
| Intervention | "Process and skilled actions taken by occupational therapy practitioners in collaboration with the client to facilitate engagement in occupation related to health and participation. The intervention process includes the plan, implementation, and review" (AOTA, 2015c. p. 2, as cited in AOTA, 2020, p.78). |
| Outcome | "Result clients can achieve through the occupational therapy process" (AOTA, 2020, p.80). |

**Table 3**

*Participant and Site Characteristics*

| Identification Code | Profession | Highest Degree Earned | Gender | Setting | Contract Established for REP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Social Worker | Bachelor's | Woman | Adult Day Program | 2020 |
| 2 | Dentist | Doctorate | Woman | Pediatric Dental Clinic | 2020 |
| 3 | Retired | Bachelor's | Woman | Social Club | 2020 |
| 4 | Recreational Therapist | Bachelor's | Woman | Social Club | 2020 |

**Table 4**

*Interview Themes, Definitions, and Sub-Themes*

| Theme | Definition | Sub-Theme |
|---|---|---|
| Requirements for Student Success | Non-OT supervisors identified skills and knowledge that students should possess to be successful at their REP. | Didactic Knowledge<br>Therapeutic Use of Self<br>Supervisory Style |
| Benefits | Non-OT supervisors reported benefits from hosting level II students at the REP. | To the Student<br>To the Site<br>To the Non-OT Supervisor |
| Opportunities for further partnerships | Non-OT supervisors reported opportunities at their REP for continued partnerships with D'Youville. | |

**Appendix A**

**Email to FWEd Prior to Contacting Non-OT Supervisor**

SUBJECT: Request to contact the non-OT supervisor at _____ (name of facility)

Message:

Dear Dr. _____,

      As you may know, my doctoral research focuses on investigating the perceptions of the role-emerging practice (REP) non-OT supervisor. I am contacting you at this time out of courtesy as you have established a working relationship with _____ (name of the non-OT supervisor). You will be included in the carbon copy of the recruitment email. Your cooperation and support of my research will benefit the D'Youville students, you as the FWEd, the REP, and our profession. Would you please let me know if you have any questions or concerns?

Regards,

Tracy Bentley-Root, MS, OTR/L

**Appendix B**

**Recruitment Email to the Non-OT Supervisor**

SUBJECT: Request to interview for doctoral research

Cc: Dr. _____ (FWEd assigned to the REP)

Message:


Dear _____,


      This email intends to seek your cooperation and recruit you to participate in my doctoral research investigating the perceptions of role emerging practice (REP) non-occupational therapy (non-OT) supervisors. As a faculty member at D'Youville, gaining knowledge into your perceptions of this role will be invaluable to you, as the non-OT supervisor, to the students, to the college, to the fieldwork educator (Dr. _____), and the occupational therapy profession as practitioners respond to an ever-changing healthcare arena.

      A basic interpretive study will aim to understand the non-OT supervisor's perceptions of the role-emerging level II fieldwork placement. Your participation is being sought as you meet the inclusion criteria of supervising a D'Youville level II student within the past five years and are located within a two-hour drive from the campus. There are no known risks associated with this study. The audio-recorded interview should take approximately 45 minutes, and all information discussed in the interview will remain confidential, meaning your name will not be associated with the research findings. All data collected will be de-identified and secured, with access only provided to the researchers.

If you wish to participate and complete the interview, you will be offered a $25 gift card. I am happy to discuss your potential participation further and answer any questions. Feel free to email me. If I do not receive an email, a follow-up email will be sent in one week.

Sincerely,

Tracy Bentley-Root, MS, OTR/L

**Appendix C**

**Interview Guide**

**Introductory Paragraph**

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for this study. Completing the study is necessary to fulfill the DHSc dissertation requirement from the University of Indianapolis. The resulting research findings will be disseminated, at a minimum, via DHSc Doctoral Defense Days.

The purpose of the study is to understand the non-occupational therapy (OT) supervisors' perceptions of a role-emerging Level II fieldwork. The questions that you will be asked today will focus on your perceptions of the role-emerging placement (REP), including the opportunities and challenges of the REP and the supervisory practices utilized during this fieldwork.

Participation in this study does not carry any known risks. The anticipated expected benefits from participation in the study are for current and future students who choose a REP by identifying new fieldwork opportunities and furthering the occupational therapy profession in response to the ever-changing healthcare arena. Additionally, the research findings and identified themes will aid the academic fieldwork coordinator (AFWC) in guiding curricular development for the students, fieldwork educators, and non-OT supervisors during the REP fieldwork.

The interview should take approximately 45 minutes, and all information shared during the interview will remain confidential. Your name will not be associated with the research findings. You can stop the interview at any time to clarify or ask a question. Please know that you can also skip any question that you are not comfortable answering and that you may withdraw from this study without affecting your relationship with the occupational therapy

department, the researcher, or the academic institution. Do you have any questions before we

begin this interview? If this is acceptable, this interview will be recorded. This recording will

capture everything that is said and allow for review. Do I have your permission to start the

recording?

**Interview Questions and Prompts**

*General Prompts*

- Tell me more …

- How did that affect you…?

- What are some examples of …

- How did … make you feel about it?

- What did you think about…?

*Interview Questions*

1. What comes to mind when you think of a REP?

2. When presented with the option of supervising a REP, what were your first thoughts?

   a. That is interesting. Would you please tell me more about this first impression?

   b. How did the first impression affect your decision to supervise a student for a REP?

3. Tell me more about your take on the purpose of a REP fieldwork site.

   a. What opportunities do you believe are present in the REP that may not be found during a

      traditional fieldwork placement where occupational therapy services are already offered?

      i. Specific prompts for this question—probe for information on critical thinking, theory

         application in a unique setting, collaborate with other professions, OT advocacy,

         work independently, practice in a more client-centered way, etc.

    b. What barriers do you believe are present in the REP that may not be found during a traditional fieldwork placement?

        i. Specific prompts for this question—probe for information on fear and anxiety, the uncertainty of their knowledge, handling the unexpected emotions, being in a setting without OT, etc.

4. What skills do you think are needed in the REP?

    a. Why do you think _____ (skill) will be necessary?

5. What special knowledge do you believe is/will be necessary for this REP?

    a. Why do you believe this knowledge is/will be necessary?

6. Can you describe what a successful placement looks like to you?

    a. How do you plan to prepare for a successful outcome?

7. Can you describe your supervisory style?

    a. How do you plan to provide feedback to the student?

        i. Specific prompts for this question—probe for information on their understanding of feedback (i.e., immediate, etc.), their plan if the student does not modify their behavior, etc.

***Background Demographics***

1. What is your profession?

2. What is your highest degree earned?

3. In terms of gender, how do you identify?

***Wrap-Up***

Would you like to share anything else regarding the REP or your participation in this interview?

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us via email.

I appreciate your cooperation.

Thank you!

Tracy Bentley-Root bentleyroott@uindy.edu

**Appendix D**

**Follow-up to Recruitment Email**

SUBJECT: Request to interview for doctoral research

Cc: Dr. _____ (FWEd assigned to the REP)

Message:


Dear _____,

      This follow-up email intends to seek your participation with my doctoral research investigating the perceptions of the role emerging practice (REP) non-OT supervisor. The interview should take approximately 45 minutes and can be completed at your location or on the D'Youville campus. The benefits of this research are tremendous and can further the REP by providing curricular support to you as the non-OT supervisor. If you have additional questions or concerns, please email or contact me via my cell at (716) 868-9927. If you agree to participate in this study, I will contact you via email to set a date and time within the next two weeks.


Thank you for your time,


Tracy Bentley-Root, MS, OTR/L

**Appendix E**

**STUDY INFORMATION SHEET**

The purpose of this form is to assure you are given enough information to make an informed decision as to whether you will agree to be a subject in research

**Study Title:** Perception of Role-Emerging Level II Fieldwork

**Length of participation:** 45 minutes

**Name and credentials of Study Investigator:** Tracy Bentley-Root, MS, OTR/L
**Address of Study Investigator:** D'Youville, 320 Porter Avenue**,** Buffalo, NY 14201
**Phone number of Study Investigator:** 716 828 8134

The purpose of the study is to understand the non-occupational therapy (OT) supervisors' perceptions of a role-emerging Level II fieldwork. The questions that you will be asked will focus on your perceptions of the role-emerging placement (REP), including opportunities and challenges of the REP and the supervisory practices utilized during this fieldwork.

Participation in this study does not carry any known risks. The anticipated expected benefits from participation in the study are for current and future students who choose a REP by identifying new fieldwork opportunities and furthering the occupational therapy profession in response to the ever-changing healthcare arena. Additionally, the research findings and identified themes will aid the academic fieldwork coordinator (AFWC) in guiding curricular development for the students, fieldwork educators, and non-OT supervisors during the REP fieldwork.

The interview should take approximately 45 minutes, and all information shared during the interview will remain confidential via password protection software and locked storage box. Your name will not be associated with the research findings. You can stop the interview at any time to clarify or ask a question. Please know that you can also skip any question that you are not comfortable answering and that you may withdraw from this study without affecting your

relationship with the occupational therapy department, the researcher, or the academic

institution. Upon completion of the data collection and analysis, you will receive a $25 gift card

to compensate you for your time.

If you choose to participate in this research, please reply to this email. Upon receiving

non-OT supervisors' emails indicating their statement of interest, the researcher will contact you

individually by telephone, review the inclusion criteria, and schedule the interview date, time,

and location.