

The Vona du Toit Model of Creative Ability

Occupational Therapy Support Group

St Andrews Healthcare

St Andrew's Healthcare is a charity providing specialist mental healthcare for people with complex and challenging mental health needs throughout the UK.

There is growing interest in the VdTMoCA throughout mental health services in the UK and this interest is replicated within the Charity.

The VdTMoCA Support Group was initially developed within the Men's Mental health pathway, however, colleagues from the Women's pathway and Neuropsychiatry services have now joined.

The group is aimed at Occupational Therapy staff who have an interest in the model or who are implementing the model into clinical practise.

The group is open to both qualified and unqualified staff and is held once a month for one hour.

Aims

- To support staff in implementing the model within clinical practise
- To identify and deliver learning and development needs
- To present case studies to the group for peer review
- To generate ideas for activities and consider grading
- To encourage publication and presentation at conferences

Content

The content of each session is guided by the group and their specific development needs. Sometimes it is beneficial to use the time to discuss challenging patients, to present assessment findings and identify treatment priorities. Some sessions have been very practical in trying new activities and considering grading for different levels of creative ability. Whilst other sessions have consisted of more formal teaching, however, very interactive, and practical. Topics have included; task concept, concept formation, task assessment and information on the phases within levels.

There is also time given for any challenges, successes, and questions at the beginning of the session.

Evaluation

The support group now produces an annual evaluation outlining achievements and identified needs for the coming year.

Feedback from attendees

‘The Support Group has assisted in my understanding of the model in practical terms. Its altered the way I plan out sessions, understand why I do certain sessions and the outlook I have in my own head when I go into them; all in all, not bad for one hour a month.’

(Technical Instructor)

‘The Support Group is a dedicated time with other OT staff that are interested in or are using the VdT MoCA. I look forward to these support meetings as there is always something new to learn and sharing information provides new insights that can be taken to my own area of practice. It is great to hear others’ stories and the meeting is often full of laughter, relaxed and welcoming.’ (Occupational Therapist)

‘I have confidence to begin to use a new model and somewhere that I can access support to ensure that I am using it correctly and have colleagues be able to share their knowledge and ideas with me. If I did not have this group, I know I would not have the confidence to start using the model, or the grading of interventions at levels, even after the training, as this is on-going practical support.’ (Occupational Therapist)

Summary

The Support Group has maintained its momentum and increased in attendance. Occupational Therapy staff who have received the formal training on the VdT MoCA have reported that this support is essential in ensuring continued development and maintaining motivation to continue the implementation in to clinical practise.