INTRODUCTION

Background
- Mental health diagnoses are a prevalent issue in the U.S., impacting one in five adults.1
- 50 million individuals receive varying levels of inpatient and outpatient mental health services to improve their ability to perform daily activities.

Significance
- UPMC’s Western Psychiatric Hospital (WPH) Outpatient Psychiatric Rehabilitation (Psych Rehab) serves community-dwelling adults with a range of mental health diagnoses by offering individualized counseling services and group-based therapies.2
- During a needs assessment, staff reported group therapy has not been updated in many years.
- Strong evidence indicates that occupation- and activity-based programming can improve social participation and occupational engagement for individuals with serious mental illnesses.2
- 100% of the staff indicated an interest in education and activity-based therapies.

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop educational materials for staff to increase knowledge and confidence for the implementation of activity-based programming during group therapy.
2. By collaborating with staff, develop and implement a resource binder of holistic and evidence-based activities and materials to enhance group therapy programming.

METHODS

7 staff members (Behavioral Health Counselors and Peer Specialists) responsible for running groups at Psych Rehab were the target of our education.

OUTCOME MEASURES: INITIAL SURVEY

- Likert Scales:
  - Confidence in knowledge (group dynamics, facilitating discussion, activities to include)
  - Confidence in implementation (group dynamics, facilitating discussion, implementing activities)
  - Personal satisfaction

OUTCOME MEASURES: FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

- Likert Scale:
  - Confidence (group dynamics, facilitating discussion, implementing activities)
  - Knowledge Check: 5 questions directly from in-service handout
  - Staff-identified interests of activity to include in resource binder
  - Projected utilization of resource binder
  - Satisfaction with educational programming

RESULTS

7 staff members participated in our Initial Surveys:

- Average score on Knowledge Check (see graph to the right for individual staff scores)
- 100% Staff’s Satisfaction with education
- 100% Projected Utilization of the resource binder

6 staff members participated in our Follow-Up Surveys:

EXEMPLARY OF UTILIZATION

- Exemplar from our resource binder, which consists of: group outlines, example group activities, and handouts for group members organized by topic.
- All resources were supported by research to increase staff’s use of evidence-based practice.

DISCUSSION

- By implementing activity-based group therapy at Psych Rehab, staff are better equipped to serve the needs of their clients to build hands-on skills and allow clients to apply these skills to life outside of groups.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Given the satisfaction of staff members and occupational therapy’s emphasis on using activity to promote wellness, this program depicts the benefits of providing staff education on the use of activity-based programming in outpatient mental health settings.
- Further studies should evaluate the effectiveness of individualized interventions provided by occupational therapy practitioners as well as long-term outcomes of staff education and sustainability of educational programming.

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REFERENCES