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Theme 14. Evidence based practice
Theme 3: WHO 2020 health promotion and disease prevention

A Critical Review of the Evidence Base for Occupational Therapy Mental Health Practice for Children and Adolescents

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Background: Mental disorders have been identified as the greatest social and economic burden to society; however, resourcing for service provision and research is disproportionately low in Europe (ROAMER, 2015). The World Federation of Occupational Therapists' Master Plan for Mental Health aims to establish and maintain a significant position for occupational therapy in mental health services. This requires accessible, critical summaries of the evidence base underpinning practice.

Aim: Conduct a critical review of evidence (published within last 5 years) to explore the role and effectiveness of occupational therapy mental health practice with children and adolescents. This is a 3rd year "Students as Co-Researchers" project. This age group is highlighted as a priority for research because early experience and wider social influences affect health across life (ROAMER, 2015).

Method: A systemised search and critical appraisal methodology is applied to evaluate literature published in the last five years that relates to occupational therapy and mental health of children and young people.

Results: A critical and thematic analysis related to the effectiveness of interventions and role of occupational therapists will be presented.

Conclusion: The quality of the evidence base will be considered and any evidence gaps identified.

Application to Practice: The findings will contribute to the evidence base underpinning occupation-focused interventions for health promotion and prevention of mental illness with children and adolescents.

References:

ROAMER (2015) A roadmap for mental health research: Final Roadmap 2015. Final report of European Commission's Seventh Framework Program FP7/2007-2013/no 282586 Available at: <http://www.roamer-mh.org/files/MaqRoamer-Roadmap2015F%20FINALISSIMA%20030315.pdf>. (accessed 20 October 2015).