

Purpose

Describe the delivery of interventions to support job retention in patients with MS and provide a case study with clinical outcomes to demonstrate how these interventions can be integrated into an OT plan of care.

Background

- In the United States,
 - 66% of individuals with MS are working at the time of their diagnosis.
 - Only about 20% of individuals are employed 10 years after their diagnosis.
 - Approximately 75% of individuals with MS voluntarily leave work before symptoms make them incapable of work².
- Individuals with MS who are unemployed experience higher levels of perceived stress than their employed counterparts¹.
- There is inconclusive evidence to support vocational rehabilitation (VR) for individuals with MS, highlighting gaps in traditional VR services⁵.
- Multidisciplinary care can help keep this population in the workforce^{2,3,4}.
- Occupational therapy practitioners (OTPs) can support individuals with MS in navigating the common barriers to maintaining employment.

Methods

Job retention interventions were integrated into the 7-session OT plan of care

The Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) was administered at pre and post-intervention to capture perceived performance and satisfaction in areas of occupational performance deficit. Higher scores indicate higher perceived performance and satisfaction. A change in score of 2 points demonstrates clinically significant change.

Job Retention Interventions

Workplace protections under the ADA

Education regarding job protections

Exploration of and collaboration for reasonable work accommodations

Acquisition of reasonable work accommodations

Symptom management in the workplace

Self-advocacy training

Socioemotional concerns

Fatigue management

Body mechanics, ergonomics

Compensatory strategies

Cognition

Discussion

- Clinically significant improvements occurred in 5 of 5 occupational performance areas, including work
- Work-specific occupational performance scores increased by 3.0 for performance and 5.0 for satisfaction
- COPM aggregate performance score showed a 3.2-point increase and aggregate satisfaction score showed 4.4-point increase
- Case study subject improved the ability to manage MS-related symptoms, including fatigue and cognitive fog, and anxiety which increased efficiency and quality of work-related productivity

Conclusions

- This case study highlights interventions OT practitioners can utilize to address the occupational domain of work
- This case study contributes to the literature supporting multidisciplinary care for workforce retention for individuals living with MS

References

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Case Study Description

Pre-Intervention	Intervention	Post-Intervention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working 100% remotely Fatigue and cognitive sx's disrupt work Anxiety, heat, and overexertion exacerbate MS sx's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work accommodations Self-advocacy training Education re: ADA and work protections Self-regulation training Fatigue mgmt. and cognitive mgmt. training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working 80% remotely Increased work efficiency and quality Reduced frequency of work-related overexertion episodes Improved anxiety mgmt.

Case Study Results

COPM Occupational Performance Area	Performance Pre	Performance Post	Satisfaction Pre	Satisfaction Post
Sleep	3	6	1	6
Work	6	9	3	8
Fatigue mgmt.	3	7	1	6
Cognitive sx mgmt.	3	6	2	6
Anxiety mgmt.	3	6	2	5
Average Score	3.6	6.8	1.8	6.2