LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

LIVING WITH DISABILITY RESEARCH CENTRE

Purpose and Development of the Observing Practice Quality (OPQ) Tool

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Introducing the Observing Practice Quality tool

Outline

- Purpose and development of the tool (Chris)

- Walk through use of the APP and training site (Lincoln)

Observing Practice Quality tool

- The Observing Practice Quality tool is used to assess the quality of support provided to a person with an intellectual disability.

- It can be used as a guide for observing staff practice, evaluating the quality of support, and providing feedback to staff to develop their practice.

- It was designed for Frontline Practice Leaders, internal or external auditors and quality managers

- Users require some familiarisation – there is an APP and a training website

- An organisation can register, you can register as an individual associated with an organisation or you can register as an individual – You can download your observations and if you are associated with an organisation it will be be able to download all observations.

- Data is held on a secure University server – fully deidentified will be available for research purposes

- The OPQ was developed from the Active Support Measure

Background and rationale

- Staff use of Active Support is an evidence-based process indicator of the quality of services

  - If staff use Active Support the people they support will be more engaged in meaningful activities and social interactions.

- Many organisations have adopted Active Support but the quality of staff practice is variable

- There is a growing emphasis on the quality and safety of services and finding ways to measure this

- A primarily mode has been audits which rely on interviews and paperwork

    - interviews exclude many people who have difficulty communicating and those with the most severe intellectual disabilities

    - paperwork is not a good indicator what actually happens nor based on evidence about relationship between processes and outcomes.

- Observation is the most effective way of measuring/judging staff use of Active Support and the quality of practice

- The Active Support Measure is the most common observational tool used by researchers to measure quality of support - but it is complex and require much training

- Aim was to develop a tool for non researchers, based on the Active Support Measure

Active Support Measure

- Most common observational measure (Mansell, Elliott, & Beadle-Brown, 2005).
- **Focus on person and quality support received**
- Combined with EMAC R – 15 of 20 in studies of Active Support
- 15 items completed after 2-hour observation
- Capture opportunities for involvement, skills with which staff interact, provide and support those opportunities (Mansell et al., 2013)
- Extent and consistency of Active Support
- Each item scored 0 to 3
- Tallied and converted to percentage

ASM

- Age-appropriateness of activities and materials
- "Real" rather than pretend or very simple activities
- Choice of activities
- Demands presented carefully
- Tasks appropriately analysed to facilitate service user involvement
- Sufficient staff contact for service users
- Graded assistance to ensure service user success
- Speech matches developmental level of service user
- Interpersonal warmth
- Differential reinforcement of maladaptive behaviour
- Staff notice and respond to service user communication
- Staff manage serious challenging behaviour well
- Staff work as a coordinated team to support service users
- Teaching is embedded in everyday activities
- Written plans in routine use

Stages of development

Stage 1.
- Understand more about concepts that make up the Active Support Measure
- Exploratory factor analysis of data set from longitudinal study (Humphreys et al., 2024)
- Two domains - Providing support – Interacting with the person

Stage 2.
- Generate items to tap dimensions of Active Support
- Knowledge of research team – analysis of qualitative data from longitudinal study

Stage 3 (March 2021)
- Expert review of draft tool – for content validity - scoring 10 min clip – reflections on each item and instructions
- 7 experts experienced in Active Support practice and observations from UK and Australia
- Generally positive – scoring well aligned
- Highlighted range of issues re clarity wording and instructions, avoiding subjectivity, capturing subtleties of practice

Stage 4
- Refinements based on feedback and internal testing

Stage 5
- Building and testing the APP with La Trobe Centre for Data Analytic and Cognition
- Field testing for content face validity – 4 experienced practice leaders – cognitive interview
- More refinements
- Design of training web site
- Graphic design
- Field testing 9 practice leaders mixed experience

Stage 6
- Testing for concurrent validity with the Active Support Measure

ASM
- Age-appropriateness of activities and materials
- " Real " rather than pretend or very simple activities

1. Offering real activities

This item is about the extent that staff offer meaningful activities that have a real purpose to the person to engage in (e.g., leisure, recreation, social, household or work activities).

3	Most or all of the activities staff offered to the person were real and had a purpose
2	Some of the activities staff offered to the person were real and had a purpose
1	None of the activities staff offered to the person were real or had a purpose

1. Offering activities to take part in

Good support means the worker offers and supports the person to participate in multi-step activities.

What type of activities did the worker offer the person?

3	The worker offered multi-step activities
2	The worker offered single step activities
1	The worker did not offer activities

Reduced words – made them clearer and simpler – worker instead of staff.
Statement in training what good looks like.
Item 1 - most difficult to remove subjectivity
- what is real or has purpose – knitting that is unravelled
- in whose eyes is something meaningful
Hoovering may be real but not meaningful
Multi step to differentiate between simple and complex tasks

2. Offering choice of activities

This item is about the extent that staff give the person a choice of activities, how to do them, and whether the person's choice about participating (or not), when and for how long is respected by staff (i.e., the person is offered choice about what to do, how to do it, when and for how long).

3	Staff provided many opportunities for the person to choose which activity, how to do it, when and how much of it to do
2	Staff provided some opportunities for the person to choose which activity, how to do it, when and how much of it to do
1	Staff did not provide any opportunities for the person to choose which activity, how to do it, when and how much of it to do

2 . Offering choice

Good support means the worker provides the person with choice

How much choice did the worker provide the person?

3	The worker provided opportunities to make choices in most or all instances
2	The worker provided some opportunities to make choices, but there could have been more
1	The worker did not provide opportunities to make choices

Many layered concept
- moment in time or part of a chain
- difficulty of knowing if the person understands what's on offer picked up later in communication
- extends choice beyond activities

- Demands presented carefully
- Tasks appropriately analysed to facilitate service user involvement

3. Creating opportunities to engage the person

Staff who are skilled in active support can break complex activities into simpler parts in order to create opportunities for the person to be engaged. This item is about the extent that staff create opportunities for the person to be engaged in all or parts of activities.

3	Staff were proactive and created many opportunities to involve the person in the activities or parts of them
2	Staff created some opportunities to involve the person in the activities or parts of them, but some opportunities were missed
1	Staff did not create any opportunities to involve the person in the activities or parts of them

3. Providing opportunities to be engaged

Good support means the worker breaks activities into simpler parts to create opportunities for the person to be engaged.

How much opportunity for engagement did the worker provide?

3	The worker provided many opportunities to be involved in activities or parts of them
2	The worker provided some opportunities to be involved in activities or parts of them, but there could have been more
1	The worker did not provide opportunities to be involved in activities or parts of them

Is there a need to match opportunities to the person's interested or skills ?
What about missed opportunities

- Sufficient staff contact for service users
- Graded assistance to ensure service user success

4. Providing the right type and amount of assistance

This item is about the extent that staff provide the right type and amount of assistance for the person to engage in activities. It is about providing not too much or too little assistance.

3	In most or all instances, staff provided the right type and amount of assistance for the person to engage in the activities
2	Staff sometimes provided and sometimes did not provide the right type or amount of assistance for the person to engage in the activities
1	Staff did not provide the right type or amount of assistance for the person to engage in the activities

4. Providing the right type and amount of assistance

Good support means a worker provides the right type and amount of assistance to enable a person to participate in an activity or social interaction. Not too much and not too little.

How often did the worker provide the right type and amount of support?

3	The worker provided the right type and amount of assistance in most or all instances
2	The worker sometimes provided the right type and amount of assistance, but it could have been better
1	The worker did not provide the right type and amount of assistance

- Speech matches developmental level of service user

5. Ensuring the message is clear about what is being offered

This item is about the extent that staff clearly communicate (verbally and non-verbally) to the person what is being offered to them or what they are being asked to do.

3	Most of the time staff communicated what was being offered or expected in ways that were tailored to the person
2	Staff sometimes did and sometimes did not communicate what was being offered or expected in ways that were tailored to the person
1	Staff did not communicate what was being offered or expected in ways that were tailored to the person

5. Communicating clearly

Good support means the worker tailors their communication to the person so they understand the information being conveyed.

How clear was the worker's communication?

3	The worker communicated in ways that were tailored to the person in most or all instances
2	The worker sometimes communicated in ways that were tailored to the person, but it could have been better
1	The worker did not communicate in ways that were tailored to the person

Wording for 2 - Did not overly negative

- Staff notice and respond to service user communication

6. Noticing and responding to the person's communication

This item is about the extent that staff notice and respond to the person's communication (verbally and non-verbally).

3	Staff noticed and responded to all/most attempts made by the person to communicate
2	Staff responded to some attempts made by the person to communicate but missed/ignored others
1	Staff did not notice and respond to all/most attempts made by the person to communicate

6. Noticing and responding to the person's communication

Good support means the worker notices and responds to the person's communication.

How often did the worker notice and respond to the person's communication?

3	The worker noticed and responded to all attempts made by the person to communicate
2	The worker responded to some attempts made by the person to communicate, but also missed/ignored some attempts
1	The worker did not notice and respond to most attempts made by the person to communicate

- Interpersonal warmth

7. Respecting the person in all interactions

This item is about the quality of rapport and interactions staff have with the person, and the extent that staff show respect to the person and acknowledge their personhood.

3	Staff were attentive most of the time and showed interest in the person
2	Staff were sometimes attentive and showed interest in the person, but sometimes were not
1	Staff were not attentive and did not show any interest in the person or their feelings

7. Respecting the person in all interactions

Good support means that all of a worker's interactions with the person are respectful.

How attentive and courteous was the worker to the person?

3	The worker was attentive and courteous in all interactions
2	The worker was attentive and courteous in some interactions, but there could have been more of this
1	The worker was not attentive and courteous

Simplified –removed rapport - more common terms respectful, courteous and attentive

8. Creating opportunities for friendly interactions

This item is about the extent that staff create a friendly atmosphere and take opportunities to include the person in social interactions. This may include sharing a moment of fun with the person, smiling with the person, bringing the person into a conversation with others, making positive and relaxed comments about what the person is doing or experiencing, sharing humour through verbal or nonverbal means, or being encouraging through conversation or gestures.

3	Staff created many opportunities for a friendly social atmosphere to include the person
2	Staff created some opportunities for a friendly atmosphere to include the person
1	Staff did not create opportunities for a friendly atmosphere to include the person

8. Having friendly interactions

Good support means the worker is not only task focused.

How friendly were the worker's interactions with the person?

3	The worker's interactions created a friendly atmosphere
2	The worker's interactions sometimes created a friendly atmosphere, but there could have been more of this
1	The worker's interactions did not create a friendly atmosphere

- Teaching is embedded in everyday activities

A1. Teaching something new

When providing support or interacting with a person, there are sometimes opportunities to teach the person something new. This item is about the extent that staff use opportunities to teach the person something new.

3	Staff used or took most of the available opportunities to teach the person something new
2	Staff used or took some of the available opportunities to teach the person something new
1	Staff did not use or take the available opportunities to teach the person something new

A 1. Teaching something new

Good support means taking opportunities to teach the person something new

How many opportunities did the worker use to teach the person something new?

3	The worker used all of the available opportunities to teach the person something new
2	The worker used some of the available opportunities to teach the person something new, but there could have been more of this
1	The worker did not use any of the available opportunities to teach the person something new

Optional –or should it happen all the time?

- Staff manage serious challenging behaviour well

A2. Responding well to challenging behaviour

This item is about the extent that staff are confident (i.e., staff know what they are doing) when they respond to a situation where a person is exhibiting challenging behaviour (i.e., staff respond to the person's emotions and ensure the person and any other people present are safe). Examples of challenging behaviour include aggression, self-injurious behaviour, and damage to property.

Did you see any challenging behaviour? If yes,

3	Staff responded confidently to the person's emotions (feelings), behaviour and the situation
2	Staff sometimes did and sometimes did not respond confidently to the person's emotions (feelings), behaviour and the situation
1	Staff did not respond confidently to the person's emotions (feelings), behaviour and the situation

A2. Responding well to behaviour that is a danger to self or others

Good support means responding well to the person's behaviour when it is a danger to themselves or others.

Did you see any behaviour that was a danger to self or others?

If Yes, how well did the worker respond to the person and the situation?

3	The worker responded confidently to the person's behaviour, emotions (feelings) and the situation
2	The worker was uncertain or hesitant before responding to the person's behaviour, emotions (feelings) and the situation
1	The worker did not respond confidently to the person's behaviour, emotions (feelings) and the situation

Simplifying

New Item

9. How much of the time was the person supported engaged?

How much of the observation time was the person engaged in purposeful activities?

3	Most of the time
2	Some of the time
1	Very little

Not counted in the score but useful indicator of quality of life but not necessarily of support for people with lower support needs

Items from ASM omitted
- Differential reinforcement of maladaptive behaviour - rarely observed
- Staff work as a coordinated team to support service users – hard to observe and not relevant individualised services
- Written plans in routine use – hard to observe

Next steps

- Ethical issues
  - Non-participant observations
  - assent/consent
  - data security
- Stage 6 – parallel observations using ASM and OPQ to test concurrent validity
- Refine based on feedback

- https://www.observingstaffsupport.com.au/