Occupation-focused and occupation-based interventions for community-dwelling older people

Intervention effects in relation to facets of occupational engagement and cost effectiveness

Magnus Zingmark
Abstract

Background: Occupation-focused and occupation-based interventions can potentially promote occupational engagement among community-dwelling older people but there is limited evidence to identify the most effective and cost-effective interventions.

Aim: To evaluate the effects and cost effectiveness of occupation-focused and occupation-based interventions for two groups of community-dwelling older people, independent-living community-dwelling older people and older people with bathing disabilities.

Methods: Studies I and II were based on an exploratory randomized controlled trial. One hundred and seventy seven persons were randomized to a no-intervention control group or one of three occupational therapy interventions. In study I, effect sizes for leisure engagement and ADL ability were estimated for each intervention in relation to the control at 3 and 12 months after baseline. In study II, the effects on quality adjusted life years (QALYs) and the total costs for the intervention, municipality social services and health care were used to evaluate cost-effectiveness. Study III was a quasi-experimental trial and included 95 persons who had applied for home help with bathing. Participants in the intervention group received occupational therapy intervention. Participants in the control group received no intervention, but were allocated home help services based on an assessment by a municipality care manager. Evaluations of ADL ability, self-rated health, and allocated home help were implemented at baseline and after 15 weeks. Study IV was based on a five state Markov model that was used to evaluate cost effectiveness over 8 years for no intervention compared to an occupation-focused and occupation-based intervention implemented to reduce bathing disabilities.

Results: Study I: Each intervention had small positive effects on minimizing a decline in leisure engagement and/or ADL. Study II: Interventions delivered in a group format positively affected self-rated health. A one-session discussion group was the most cost-effective intervention. Study III: The intervention had no effect on ADL ability or self-rated health, but there was a large difference in the allocation of home help at follow up. Study IV: Compared to no intervention, the intervention had a positive impact on the long term accumulation of QALYs and reduced societal cost and was cost effective.

Conclusion: This thesis provided evidence to support that occupation-focused and occupation-based interventions implemented for community-dwelling older people had potentially positive effects on occupational engagement and were cost-effective.

Keywords
Activities of daily living, Bathing disabilities, Cost effectiveness, Effect size, Health promotion, Occupational therapy, Leisure engagement, Reablement, Self-rated health, Successful aging, QALY