



**It starts with a cue:**  
Implementing the use of effective cueing  
strategies to optimize client outcomes

**19<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF  
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS**



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# Imagine this...



# Background



- Cognition
  - “The mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses.”
- Cognitive dysfunction
  - “Cognitive functioning that is below expected normative levels”
  - Can slow or limit rehab outcomes, lead to longer hospitalizations and long-term disability
- Evidence-based cueing strategies/supports can optimize recovery of clients with cognitive dysfunction



# Cueing Strategies + Supports



## Direct Cues or Instructions

Use direct instructions or commands

Goal = complete task via errorless learning



## Environmental + Task Modification

Modify environment or task

Goal = reduce cognitive demand during a task



## Guided Discovery

Use graded hierarchy of questions + prompts

Goal = support problem solving + self-evaluation



# Problem Identification



## *Current challenge*

- Inconsistent use of effective cueing strategies in clinical practice

## *Barriers to consistent use*

- Cueing strategies are embedded within complex interventions
- Difficult to match intervention with client's presentation
- Limited confidence to use cueing strategies

# Project Details



## *Proposed solution*

- Design training program about the cueing strategies and train occupational therapists

## *Aim 1*

- Improve champion knowledge about selected evidence-based cueing strategies

## *Aim 2*

- Improve OT's confidence in using and mentoring others in the evidence-based cueing strategies

# Training Program



## Cueing Framework

- Identify evidence-based cueing strategies
- Develop simple, user-friendly framework

## Types of Cues + Supports



### Guided Discovery

Hierarchy of questions & prompts that encourage problem solving & self-reflection before, during & after an activity to optimize learning

*Ex: Standing from wheelchair*  
*Is everything setup like you want?*  
*How did that go for you?*  
*I noticed your wheelchair is moving...*



### Direct Cues + Instruction

Multi-modal cues & instructions provided throughout an activity that prevent or avoid errors

*Ex: Standing from wheelchair*  
*Lock the brakes before you stand.*  
*Put your left hand here, then.*  
*\*Provide hand over hand assist\**



### Environmental + Task Modifications

Adjusting the task setup & environment OR reducing the complexity of a task to reduce the overall cognitive demands

*Ex: Standing from wheelchair*  
*\*Move wheelchair close to the bed & apply the brakes for patient\**  
*\*Reduce # of steps patient does\**

# Training Program



## Cueing Framework

- Identify evidence-based cueing strategies
- Develop simple, user-friendly framework



## “Cueing Profiles”

- Describe common *client profiles* of cognitive dysfunction
- Cluster cueing strategies to match profiles

# Cueing Profiles + Intervention

■ Guided Discovery

■ Direct Cues + Instructions

■ Environmental + Task Modifications

## Prioritize Guided Discovery



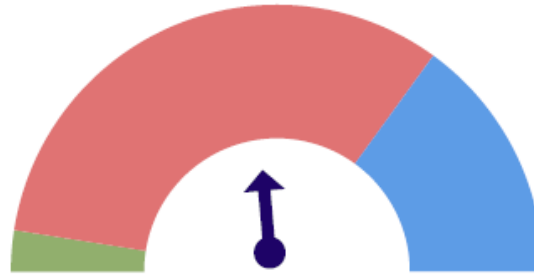
### Profile #1

*Patient with mild to mod impairments*

Focus of intervention:  
Use cues & questions that encourage **problem solving** & self-reflection ("errorful" approach)

Expected outcomes:  
Improve self-monitoring & problem solving

## Prioritize Direct Cues + Instructions



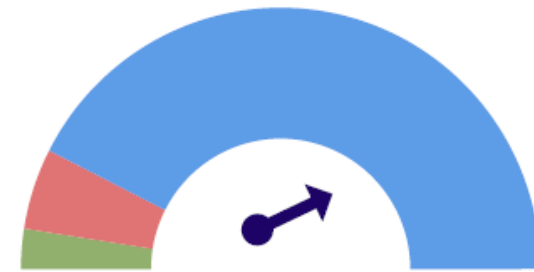
### Profile #2

*Patient with mod to severe impairments*

Focus of intervention:  
Give specific instructions & cues that **direct** each step & **avoid errors** ("errorless" approach)

Expected outcomes:  
Successfully perform a specific, learned task

## Prioritize Environmental + Task Modifications



### Profile #3

*Patient with severe impairments*

Focus of intervention:  
Change the environmental stimuli or steps of a task to **decrease the cognitive demand** on the patient

Expected outcomes:  
Actively participate in a familiar task

# Training Program



## Cueing Framework

- Identify evidence-based cueing strategies
- Develop simple, user-friendly framework



## “Cueing Profiles”

- Describe common *client profiles* of cognitive dysfunction
- Cluster cueing strategies to match profiles



## Training Series

- Training program to
1. Increase *knowledge*
  2. Increase *confidence* with cueing strategies
  3. Establish role “cue champion”

# Training Series

## Implementation Strategies



Small group discussions



Allotted mentoring time



Share successes + challenges



Individualized feedback



# Assessing Change



Importance of  
using cues in  
practice

Perceived ease  
of delivering  
cues

Confidence  
with selecting  
& using cues

Knowledge of  
different cue  
types

Confidence  
describing cues  
to a peer

Confidence  
mentoring a  
peer about cues

# Key Take-aways



- Cueing strategies can improve performance of clients with cognitive dysfunction
- Training program using implementation strategies can improve knowledge and confidence of trainees
- Future initiatives should integrate a similar approach to knowledge translation to promote adoption of best practices

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