LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Student Perceptions of Psychiatric Disorder

Thanks to Mike Lyons and Robyn Hayes for their timely and insightful paper, “Student Perceptions of Persons With Psychiatric and Other Disorders,” which appeared in the June 1993 AJOT.

I have been practicing in mental health as an occupational therapist for 15 years and have been troubled by the declining numbers of occupational therapists entering this practice area. I commend the authors for their contribution toward understanding an important issue.

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The Spoon Phase is Another Option for Self-Feeding

The article by Hon Keung Yuen in the May 1993 AJOT titled “Self-Feeding System for an Adult With Head Injury and Severe Ataxia,” was of interest to me on two counts. First, as the supervisor of the pediatric occupational therapy staff at Rancho Los Amigos Medical Center, I’ve encountered the difficult challenge posed by patients with brain injuries, such as the one described in Yuen’s article.

Second, earlier in my career, I was involved in developing a self-feeding method to meet a similar situation for a 16-year-old patient with cerebral palsy who had no functional use of her upper extremities. The resulting spoon-plate device was described on pages 333–335 of the May 1982 AJOT. I believe that Mr. Yuen might have been interested in the spoon-plate as a trial with his patient but was apparently unaware of its existence. These devices are rarely called for but continue to be available from our Orthotics Department at Rancho Los Amigos Medical Center, Downey, California. Readers may be interested in knowing about this option for self-feeding.

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Coming in October:

- OT perspective in the treatment of multiple personality disorder
- Efficacy of upper extremity inhibitive casting
- Career self-efficacy in OT practice
- The patient-therapist relationship

Turn to AJOT for the latest information on occupational therapy treatment modalities, aids and equipment, legal and social issues, education, and research.