




Community for Life | Community of Practice | No one left behind

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Introduction

The ICE-ASI (2018) Education Standards ensure the knowledge and skill development of therapists learning and practising ASI. The Education Team developed a series of innovative solutions delivered to address Covid-19 challenges of face-to-face learning going online. Pilot studies by Smith (2013) to deliver a face-to-face parent education, 'Parenting through the Senses' Smith (2004) online, revealed that classroom-to-virtual learning requires additional opportunities for guided support and interaction, a means to generalise learning beyond the screen. A vision was founded on the principles of a strong foundation for growth and development for all, to bring people together who all share a common interest around Sensory Integration to fulfill a group goal (Wenger- Trayner, E., & Wenger- Trayner, B. 2020).

We created a vision inspired by Hammell's (2014) 'doing, being, becoming and belonging'

- Weekly 'Coffee and Chat' Community of Practice (COP) - an informal peer group meeting online;
- 'WhatsApp and later 'Telegram' Groups - real time virtual peer support;
- Vibrant and active; "COPs and 'spin-out' 4 formalised peer groups
- Compulsory small group tutoring (pre-certificate - Assessment and Intervention Tutor Groups; Case Studies are presented and discussed);
- Mentoring (post-certificate - optional) individual and via small groups

"Belonging (connecting and contributing) is positively correlated with human well-being, is valued by the majority of the world's people, and informs the meanings attributed to and derived from the occupations of culturally diverse people. These are important considerations for both the theory and practice of occupational therapy."

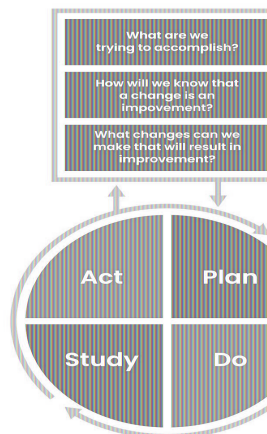
- Hammell, 2014

Methodology

Since 2017, the Community of Practice has grown significantly, accelerated by COVID over a range of online platforms/forums; as well as responding to the needs of its members, increasing the range of specialisms. The CoP has now trebled in size with active membership in excess of 22,000, with 5 communities of life pathways combining families, individuals, health, social and education partners, and therapists. There is a point in each of the pathways to meet what community members (individually, collaboratively and collectively) require. If this is not available and the community asks; the team explores the need and creates the solution. Feedback showcases overwhelming gratitude and success of the CoP. Community for Life - No one Left Behind.

Results

This analysis study explores the quality improvement cycle that was put in place in 2017 at the foundation stage of the student learning journey. Feedback was sought from the community to build on the layers of specialism. This was based on the latest evidence base and drivers from places such as Higher Education England, NHS England, The Royal College of Occupational Therapy, the Chartered Institute of Physiotherapy, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapy, the UK Department for Health and Social Care, UK Department for Education, Ulster University and the ICE-ASI. A Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) model was utilised throughout to gather the qualitative and quantitative data to make small changes based on real-time feedback.



Conclusions

A robust COP has been built that therapists, parents, individuals and wider professionals alike value and contribute to regularly. The richness of data, discussion and support is available for all, regardless of when they join the community. A sense of belonging, inclusivity and encouragement allows people to feel safe to ask questions and seek support and guidance in the knowledge that the community will respond. The community feels safe to respond, knowing that others will value their contribution and that additional layers of knowledge and opportunities for learning will be offered.

It is important to explore and develop a more robust system to bring this richness together, including a secure, easy-to-navigate platform. Wider connection and community are being actively sought through exploring ways of linking in with the overarching ICE-ASI and global community, sharing a common interest around ASI.

To find out more please visit our website:
www.sensoryproject.org/isic2023

References

1. Wenger-Trayner, E., & Wenger-Trayner, B. (2020). Learning to Make a Difference. In Learning to Make a Difference: Value Creation in Social Learning Spaces (pp. 1-11). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Hammell K. R. (2014). Belonging, occupation, and human well-being: an exploration. Canadian journal of occupational therapy, 81(1), 39-50.

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