

Innovation in Practice

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Objectives

To overview the application and practice of Sensory Integration (SI) across adult learning disabilities (LD) and/or mental health (MH) clinical settings in the South West of England and it's wider application.



The adaptive response

Passive Observing ↔ Active Participating Continuum

Introduction

SI trained therapists are recognising the untreated expressions of sensory integrative dysfunction in adults with LD and MH and are utilising their SI frame of reference to assess and treat adults. Sackett et al (2000) reformulated their description of evidence-based practice to include integration of clinical expertise, evidence from systematic research alongside patient choice and patient goals.

For therapists practicing Sensory Integration with Adults, this means using knowledge gained during post-graduate training in sensory integration and clinical experience alongside evidence from emerging scientific study. This should include studies from within the field of sensory integration but also related fields including neuro-science, medicine and psychology.

Body of work

To support the delivery of adult appropriate SI therapy, the following have been developed:

Supporting Clinical Practice:

- Care Pathways:
- Adult Practice Development Strategies:
- Local peer support groups and regional networks:

Resources:

- Orientation tools:
 - Psycho - education programmes e.g. Be Smart Programme, Sensory Ladder

Literature and resources for service users, carers and professionals e.g. What SI is?

Assessment tools:

- Checklists e.g. Sensory Choices Checklist
- Assessment strategies e.g. Sensory Chain Analysis, Sensory Spider and Sensory Flowers

Intervention tools:

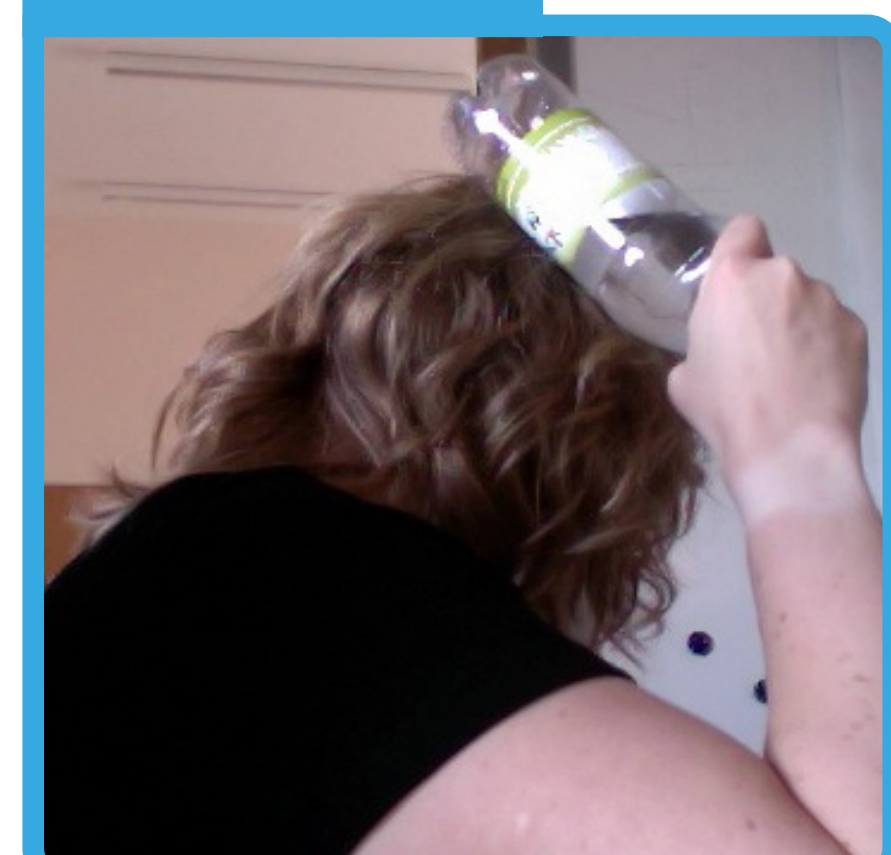
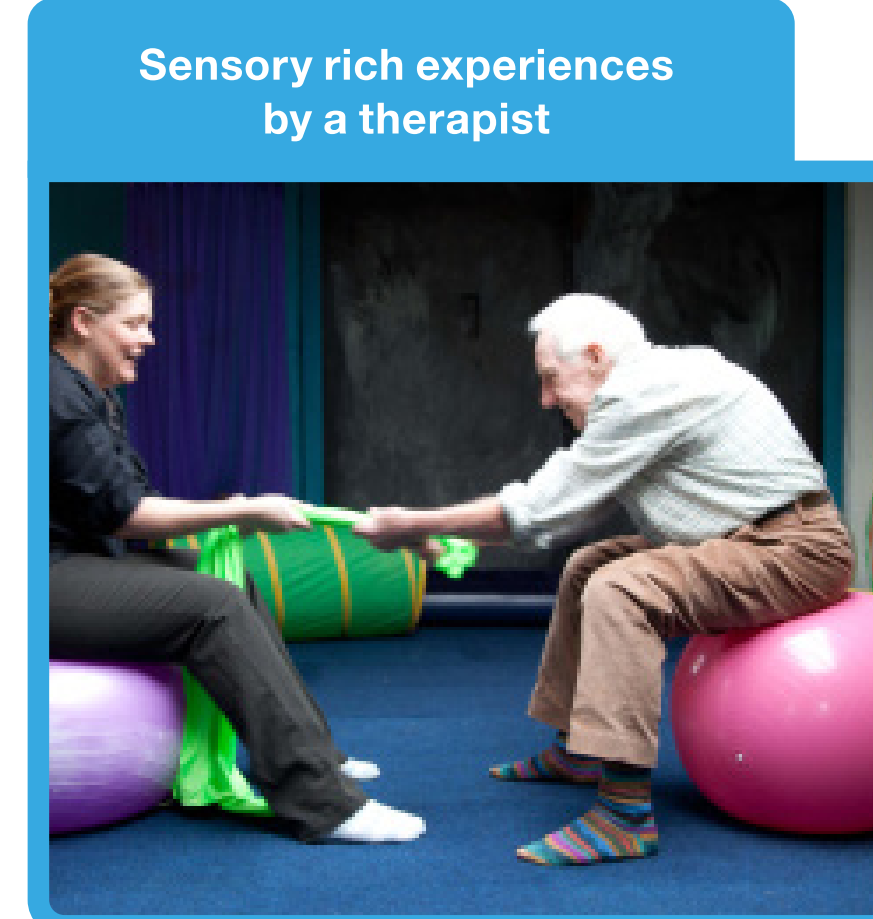
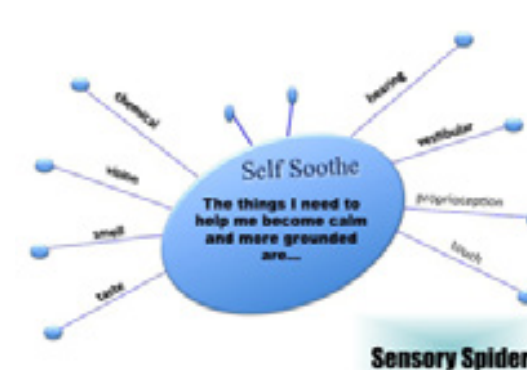
- Accessible leaflets e.g. Easy Read Materials for Self Regulation, Sensory Diet, Arousal Diary, Self Soothe Handouts, Personal Arousal Level Charts

Self regulation resources e.g. Calm and Alerting Kits

Adult accessible and appropriate environments/equipment

Risk management strategies

Outcome tools



Education

- Service User, Carer and Care Team workshops e.g. Parenting thro the Senses
- Contributing to the establishment, development and delivery of the courses for therapists working with Adults in LD and MH settings including the SI Network's master's accredited modules.

Evidence Base

- Literature Summary: Adults and SI: <http://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk/presentations>
- Supporting clinical reviews, audit and research into adult practice (including Urwin and Ballinger, 2005 and Brown et al, 2009).

Discussion

Sensory integration trained (post graduate) occupational therapists, together with SI trained physiotherapists and speech & language therapist colleagues (therapists) in the South West of England, have worked collaboratively in the assessment and development of appropriate SI interventions with adult clients with learning disabilities and/or mental health problems. Positive outcomes are reported that have impacted on clients' ability to engage in functional tasks and everyday living.

Therapists are innovating resources and creating ways to assess and deliver sensory integration interventions to adult clients. This Sensory Integration practice is personalised, with therapist/client collaboration at all stages, including choice, therapeutic alliance and shared goals.

The proposed Dept of Health (2010) policy for the future of national health service delivery (The White Paper, 'Equity and excellence: Liberating the NHS') sets out a long-term vision for the future of the NHS puts patients 'at the heart of everything the NHS does' with a 'focus on continuously improving those things that really matter to patients - the outcome of their healthcare; while empowering and liberating clinicians to innovate, with the freedom to focus on improving healthcare services'.

Conclusions

Increasingly positive clinical outcomes, service user involvement in practice development and research studies should be encouraged. In order to further the evidence base practice of SI with adults, investment into robust research projects (in partnership with local and national universities), education opportunities and resource innovation should be supported. To work in partnership with therapists and promote collaboration with other representative organisations to do this.

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