

## Background

- Occupational therapy (OT) is a health profession dedicated to helping people participate in meaningful occupations of daily life by analyzing the interaction between the task, the environment and the person (OTPF, 2020).
- In the field of geriatrics, OT's role includes fall prevention, environmental modifications, training and encouragement in managing alzheimer's and dementia, support for participation in ADLs and meaningful activities, education for healthy aging, and strategies to increase quality of life (AOTA, 2016).

## Practice Dilemma

There are 16 million caregivers of people with dementia in the United States (Alzheimer's Association, 2020). Caregivers are important contributors to the well being and quality of life of people with dementia but often lack formal training to sustain their role and knowledge about the health risks associated with caregiving (Gitlin et al., 2006).

## Occupational Therapy Based Resources

### FAMILIES

- 2 individual + 4 group counseling sessions
- Coping skills, managing difficult behaviors, emotional support, education about dementia and discussion of resources available (Sperling et al., 2019)

### Family Caregiver Training Program

- 2-hour training module focused on ADL's
- 10 in-home sessions, using cognitive behavioral training for the caregiver
- Focus on bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting and transfers (DiZazzo-Miller et al., 2017)

### Adult Day Services (ADS) Plus

- On average 1 hour /month of contact for support
- 4 areas monitored: counseling, referral , education, support
- Identified individualized areas of focus (Gitlin et al., 2019)

## Literature Review

Bennett et al., (2019) found that occupational therapy increased quality of life and reduced caregiver burden when delivered to caregivers in their homes using tailored and individualized. Interventions.

Marim et al., (2013) and Vandepitte et al., (2016) highlight education and support delivered to caregivers leads to reduced caregiver burden and burnout and increased quality of life.

## Conclusions

- Occupational therapy has a unique contribution to the area of caregiver education and support. This includes increasing caregiver knowledge, competencies and confidence related to activities of daily living.
- Occupational therapy may help identify task modification, environmental adaptations, and focus on meaningful activities.

References available by request