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Clinical Practice Skills and the Development of a Visual Perception Screening Tool for Inpatient Settings

Annie Mehl, OTD-S

Pauline Nichol, OTR/L- Indian Rocks Rehabilitation Largo Medical Center



Introduction

- Visual perception deficits frequently occur secondary to nervous system injuries, impacting individuals' ability to engage in their chosen occupations, and effectively decreasing their independence, safety, and overall quality of life.
- Due to the complex medical needs of the patients treated in the inpatient setting, occupational therapy evaluations must explore a wide array of physical and cognitive functions in order to comprehensively examine all needs of each patient in a client-centered manner.
- The implementation of a visual perception screening tool in inpatient occupational therapy evaluations could significantly increase the likelihood that patients requiring neuro-rehabilitation could receive an accurate appraisal of their capabilities, allowing therapists to create effective and customized plans of care.

Site Description

Indian Rocks Rehabilitation- Largo West Medical Center

- 30-bed Inpatient Rehabilitation Hospital in Largo, FL
- 7 different OT/PT teams with 4 speech therapists
- Target population includes ages 18+ with majority of patients falling within 50-90 year range
- Intensive care provided from OT and PT for 90 minutes per day, 5-6 days per week, for 1-3 weeks
- Variety of diagnoses, most frequently requiring neuro-rehabilitation

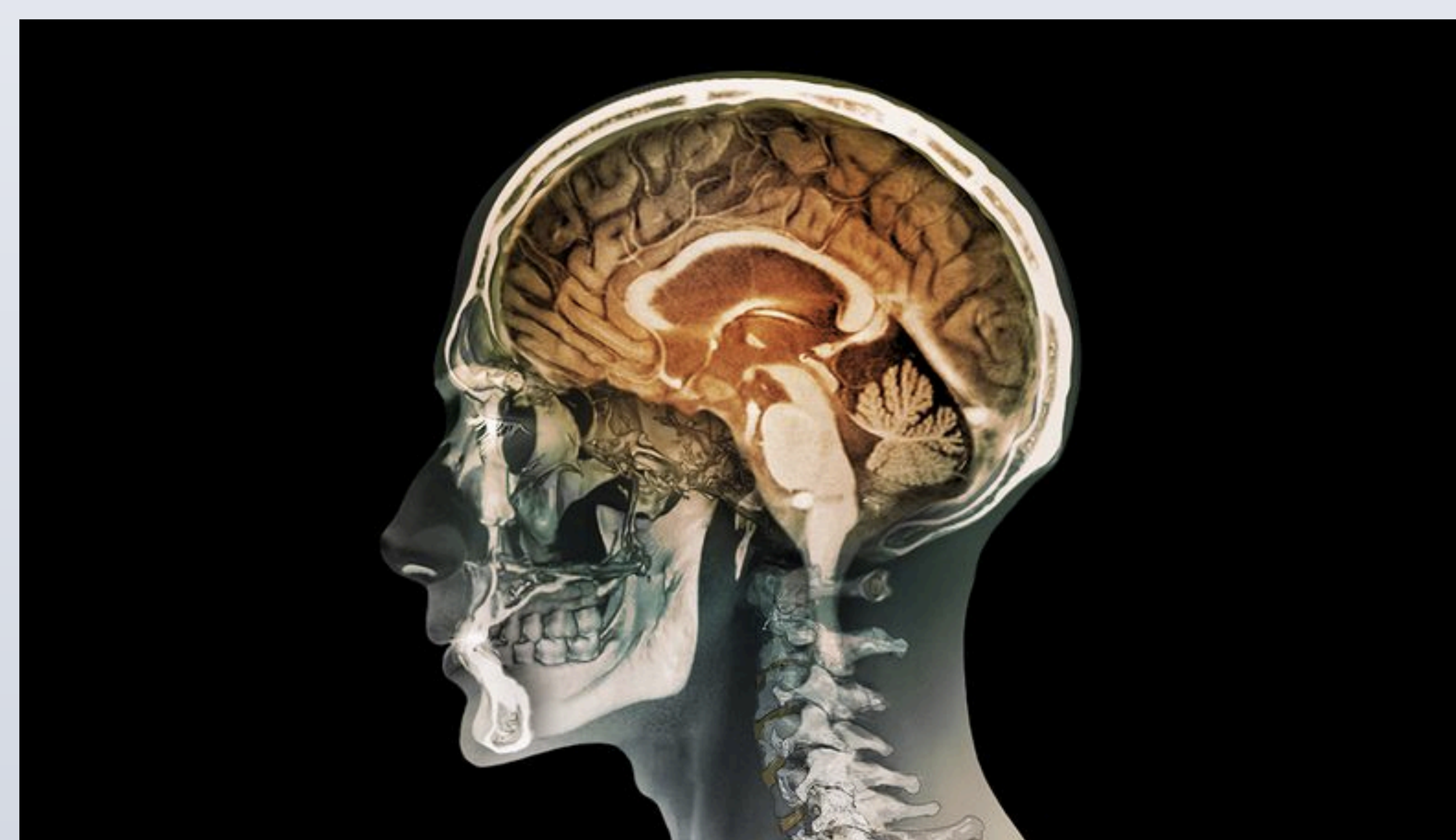
Summary of Needs Assessment

Identified site needs:

- No consistency between therapists while assessing visual perception during occupational therapy evaluations
- Need for a visual perception screening tool to use during evaluations to identify areas in need of further assessment
- Need for interventions addressing different aspects of visual perception
- Need for music-based interventions following the loss of the facility's music therapist

Literature Review Summary

- There is an evident gap in recent literature pertaining to visual perception in adults in the areas of association with occupational therapy (specifically in the inpatient setting), prevalence, impact on everyday occupations, assessments, and interventions.
- Visual perception is the brain's ability to process, interpret and integrate visual information received from the eyes. It is a crucial aspect of cognitive development and cognitive functioning. The seven skills that comprise visual perception include: visual discrimination, visual memory, special relationships, form constancy, sequential memory, figure ground, and visual closure (Diciscia et a., 2021).
- Occupational therapists can have a significant role in visual perception rehabilitation. As noted in the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process Fourth Edition (OTPF-4), visual functions fall under occupational therapy's scope of practice (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2020).



Capstone Project Description

- The main objective of this capstone experience was to gain specialized clinical experience in an inpatient setting in order to develop my clinical skills beyond that of an entry-level occupational therapist.
- I aspired to strengthen and enhance the area of visual perception assessment and treatment in an inpatient rehabilitation setting, specifically in patients with nervous system injuries.
- Lastly, I was able to fill a gap in treatment created by the loss of the facility's only music therapist.
- To obtain these goals, I worked a standard 40-hour work week at an inpatient facility with a full caseload for 16 weeks under the supervision of my mentor. During this time, I developed a visual perception screening tool and administered it to each patient during occupational therapy evaluations.
- I was also able to intermittently lead music-based group therapy sessions by singing and playing a ukulele while patients played instruments that were appropriate for their therapeutic needs. Each patient's participation in the music group was facilitated by their respective occupational or physical therapist. These sessions were one hour long and patients with a variety of diagnoses participated.

HCA Florida Healthcare

Patient name: _____
Date: _____

Visual Perception Screening Tool
Indian Rocks Inpatient Rehabilitation

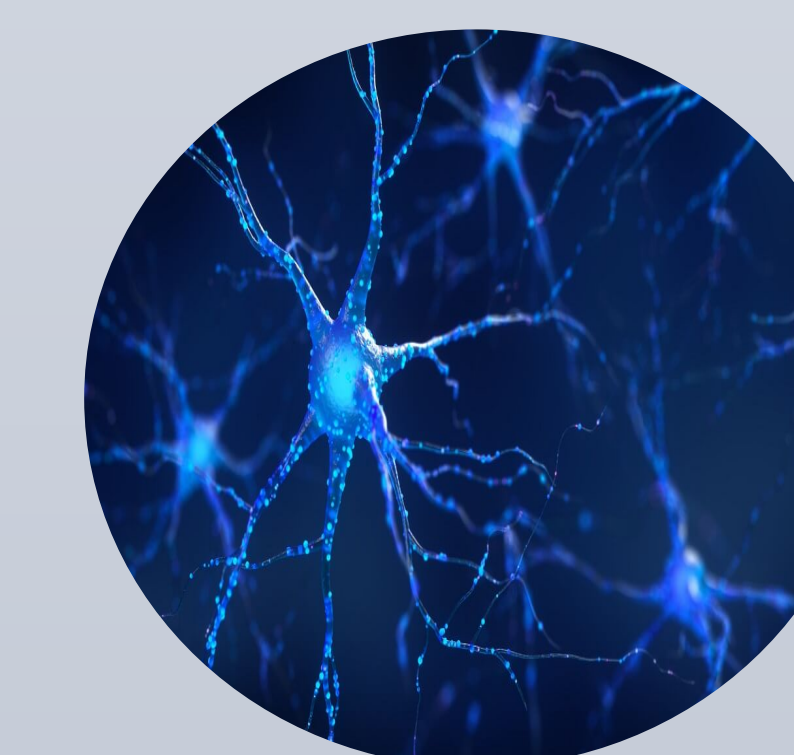
Visual Perception subcategory	Test	Results/Observations
1. Form Constancy	See attached sheet (Appendix A)	
2. Visual Closure	See attached sheet (Appendix B)	
3. Spatial Relations	Clock drawing	
4. Visual Discrimination	Lego color sort	
5. Visual Memory	Memorize container items	
6. Figure Ground	Find fork in container of items	
7. Sequential Memory	Copy container item pattern	

Learning Objectives Achieved

- Developed a visual perception screening tool to be utilized in occupational therapy evaluations
- Organized a binder of various intervention ideas for each subskill of visual perception
- Effectively administered visual perception screening tool to identify areas in need of further assessment
- Presented visual perception screening tool to therapy team and provided education on administration
- Collaborated with occupational therapists and physical therapists to enhance specialized clinical skills relevant to an inpatient rehabilitation setting while taking on a full caseload
- Conducted music-based intervention groups customized to each patients' individual therapeutic needs

Implications for OT Practice

- As an area of function addressed within the scope of occupational therapy in the OTPF-4, visual perception is a topic that all occupational therapists should be well-versed in.
- This visual perception screening tool could potentially be utilized at other HCA locations and within a variety of occupational therapy settings.
- The use of visual perception screening tools could create more comprehensive, client-centered evaluations in this inpatient setting and others.



REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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References Available Upon Request