HOW OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND THE FIRE SERVICE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO PREVENT FIRE RELATED INJURY AND DEATH: CREATING A HALF-DAY TRAINING MODULE FOR 4TH YEAR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS.

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Introduction

- I am Lynsey Robertson-Flannigan from Queen Margaret University (QMU) in Edinburgh, Scotland

- Small university on outskirts of Edinburgh

- President of occupational therapy society, which was set up for students at QMU in 2014

- My presentation today will discuss a training session for final year occupational therapy students in collaboration with Scottish Fire and Rescue

Idea Conception

- Undergraduate occupational therapy students at Queen Margaret University undertake one 6 – 8 week practice placement each year

- My third placement was 'role emerging', with a housing association

- I worked with Jim Laing from Scottish Fire and Rescue to arrange home fire safety checks

(Fire Scotland 2015)

Idea Conception

- Reflection on our opportunity as occupational therapy professionals to work alongside the fire service to reduce the risk of fire death and injury of the clients we work with
- Literature search completed to establish current work in this area

Literature Search Findings

- NHS Tayside and Scottish Fire and Rescue identified the need for allied health professionals (AHPs) and the fire service to work in partnership

- Collaboration resulted in positive figures:

- Cases classed as 'high-risk' for fire fell from 46 pre-intervention to 25 post intervention, 'medium risk' cases fell from 44 to 7 and the number of 'low-risk' cases rose from 22 pre-intervention to 77 post-intervention.

NHS
Tayside

Literature Search Findings

- Older people have a higher risk of death or serious injury by fire, with older adults suffering twice as many fire-related fatalities than the younger population (Andrews et al 2013)

- Fires in the home are, "one of the greatest risks to the safety and independence of older people" (Doughty and Orton 2014, p. 43).

- Other at-risk groups include smokers and people living with mental health illnesses (Doughty and Orton 2014).

Literature Search Findings

- The Scottish Community Safety Network (SCS) (2011) identified that there is a particularly high rate of fire-related death and injury in Scotland

- Four of the main contributory factors included: "health issues (such as alcohol consumption, smoking prevalence and mental health, high levels of [social] deprivation, rising numbers of people living alone (and) the projected increase in the number of older people" (SCS 2011, p.3).

- Health professionals can aid with improving fire safety in the homes of at-risk people by receiving appropriate training enabling them to gain an understanding of what constitutes a potential fire risk and how the risk can be minimized

Relevance to OT

- Practice placement with students from Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Scotland

- the students were equipped with a better understanding of the role of the fire service (Allan and McIntyre 2014)

- Enabled client-centred practice

- Assessing the environment and effect it has on occupational performance (Kielhofner 2008)

- Need for Allied Health Professionals to work collaboratively with fire service

Project Development

- Fed literature search findings back to Sarah Kantartzis, Level 4 Coordinator at Queen Margaret University, and Steven Scott, Manager at Scottish Fire and Rescue in Liberton, Edinburgh

- Discussed with QMU OT Society, agreed that this would be a priority for the year

- Granted funding from Carnegie Trust to develop project over the summer break

Aims and Objectives

- **Aim:**

- To develop a half-day training programme which will educate level 4 OT students on the importance of fire safety within at-risk clients' homes, as well as how to prevent fire related injury and death.

- **Objectives:**

  - Work alongside Steven Scott (Scottish Fire and Rescue) on key elements to be included in the training programme.

  - Create and support a link between Scottish Fire and Rescue and OT students at Queen Margaret University.

  - Establish the main risk factors that OTs should be looking for when working with clients and how we can refer people to the fire service, as well as what services Scottish Fire and Rescue can offer.

Project Development

- Worked alongside Steven Scott to develop half-day training programme
- Presentation will be delivered by a member of staff from Scottish Fire and Rescue to final year undergraduate OT students at QMU in November 2015
- Access to fire safety checklist

Going Forward

- Students will be asked to complete evaluation following the training
- Future partnership between occupational therapy department at QMU and Scottish Fire and Rescue
- Well-informed future occupational therapy professionals
- Volunteering opportunities
- I will take learning into my future practice

Queen Margaret University

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SCOTTISH

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

Thank you for listening.

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