BACKGROUND AND AIMS

Physical (PT), occupational (OT), and speech (ST) therapy service decisions for children with cerebral palsy (CP) are important from many perspectives (i.e., efficacy, time management, cost of services, etc.), 1,2 Our aims were, as children aged:

1. To compare changes in parents’ report of amount and focus of PT, OT and ST, rating of the extent to which services met their children’s needs, and the frequency of children’s participation in family, community, recreation and leisure activity.

2. To examine correlations of service amount, focus and meeting needs to children’s participation in family, community, recreation and leisure activity.

METHODS

• SAMPLE
  • 77 children with CP: 41 male, 36 female
  • 61 white; 14 non-white; 2 not reported
  • GMFCS level I = 20; II = 23; III = 7; IV = 10; V = 17
  • Reside in USA = 40; reside in Canada = 37
  • Families’ income (USA dollars): up to $74,999 = 33.8%; >$75,000 = 55.9%; missing = 10.4%

• INSTRUMENTATION
  • Services Questionnaire1
  • # of PT, OT, ST intervention hours in past 12 months
  • 6 items on the focus of therapy: - primary impairments - secondary impairments - activity - environment modifications - self-care - play
  • 3 items on the extent services met child’s needs in: - Motor abilities - Self-care - Participation in play, leisure, recreation
  • Rating scale (focus, needs met): - 1: Not at all - 2: To a small extent - 3: To a moderate extent - 4: To a great extent - 5: To a very great extent
  • Child Engagement in Daily Life2
  • 6 activities on family and community life participation
  • 5 items on leisure & recreation participation
  • Rating how often children participate in activity as: - 1: Never - 2: Almost never - 3: Once in a while - 4: Often - 5: Very often

• PROCEDURES
  • When children were 1.5-4.6 years old, their families participated in the Move & PLAY study (2006-2009) and when children were 6.3-11.1 years old, their families participated in the On Track study (2012-2017).
  • Mean younger age: 2.9 yrs (SD=.9); older age: 8.7 yrs. (SD=1.1); Mean difference = 5.8 years (SD=0.6)
  • Parents completed the Services Questionnaire and the Child Engagement in Daily Life measure in each study.

• ANALYSIS
  • Parent estimated hours/year of services of PT, OT, and ST from each time period were compared using Wilcoxon signed rank tests due to skewed data.
  • Parent average ratings for each therapy focus item and average rating for extent to which parents perceived that services met their children’s needs for each time period were compared using paired t-tests.
  • Correlations between parents’ average ratings of participation frequency to service amount, focus, and extent that children’s needs were met were calculated.