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Perspectives of Special Educators and Paraprofessionals on Person-centered Planning Tools for People who use AAC

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Background

- Person-centered planning (PCP) is an intervention approach for people experiencing disability[1]
- Some people with disabilities communicate using augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)
- PCP's efficacy for people with disabilities in general shows moderate to high benefit for the participants[2, 3]
- Existing PCP tools include FACT Oregon Person-Centered Profile and Oregon Individualized Service Plan One Page Profile
- No person-centered planning tools yet exist specifically designed for PWUAAC
- Super PACT is a novel PCP tool designed for PWUAAC currently in development

Purpose

To explore the perspectives of Oregon special educators and paraprofessionals on the usefulness of PCP tools for PWUAAC

Methods

- Inclusion criteria:
  - Employed as a special educator or paraprofessional in the state of Oregon in early childhood through high school settings
  - Worked with at least one PWUAAC in the preceding three years
- A survey via Qualtrics was completed:
  - Participants reviewed completed examples of Super PACT, FACT Oregon Person-Centered Profile, and Oregon ISP One Page Profile in a counterbalanced order
  - Reading levels of the tools were balanced at 6th-7th grade levels
  - 23 questions including 11 demographic, 3 Likert scale regarding usefulness of each tool, and 9 open-ended responses
- A thematic analysis was used to identify themes of what information was learned and missing
- Two investigators reviewed and coded the data independently using Braun and Clarke's (2013) Stages of Coding and Analysis for Experiential Thematic Analysis

Results (cont.)

Key concepts elicited through the coding process included the following themes:

FACT Oregon Person-Centered Profile (*n*=16)	Oregon ISP One Page Profile (*n*=10)	Super PACT (*n*=14)

Theme	Subthemes	Responses: What was learned	Responses: What was missing
Student Information	Social, physical, academic, behavioral, motivators, home and family	P8: "I learned skills that the student has and topics he is interested in." P7: "She likes to read to others, Harry Potter is a favorite." P5: "... interests, home information."	P6: "support he needs when using his AAC, current level of involvement with peers." P1: "What kind of music and what kind of books does she like?" P8: "Any behavior issues related to device use? Misuse?" P11: "...I would have liked to seen more info about student's goals"
Teaching Approaches	Prompting, environment, inclusion	P6: "Asking one question at a time, not overwhelming him, let him drive his interactions do not push, must have access to communication." P6: "I learned that she needs processing time to answer but will answer. She needs support in positioning and if she isn't answering it could be an access issue."	P8: "I would definitely include the processing time (10-20-30 seconds)." P5: "...cues that may help student access aac"
AAC Use	Troubleshooting, positioning, operation, language use	P3: "I love the troubleshooting piece that tells what to do if something goes wrong." P10: "Keeping things mid-line. This would bring about being more comfortable and better responsiveness." P5: "What sides her buttons go on..."	P7: "How does Addie indicate that they are not being heard, do not have their communication system, or other problems? Physical and academic abilities would also be useful." P5: "what device is used, photo of device, how to use device, device set up."
Communication Use	Non-spoken communication, communication preferences	P4: "The table of what the child does, what it means, and what to model is amazing." P6: "The description of her signs and communication partners expectations is very helpful."	P1: "Do we want him to communicate via voice or talker more?" P7: "What is the mode she uses for self-advocacy? Verbal, physical?"

Results

Descriptive statistics of Likert scale data of perceived usefulness of each tool (scale 1-5, 1=not at all useful, 5=extremely useful)

Tool	Average Score (Standard Deviation), *n*=9
FACT Oregon Person Centered Profile	3.55 (± 1.24)
Oregon ISP One Page Profile	3.78 (± 0.97)
Super PACT	4.56 (± 1.01)

PCP Tool Examples

Discussion

- When supporting PWUAAC, teachers value detailed information regarding:
  - operational skills and troubleshooting
  - teaching approaches
  - student preferences, abilities, and interests
  - communication signals
- Based on descriptive statistics, we suspect teachers preferred Super PACT over other PCP tools because it contained more detailed information as described above
  - Number of words in Super PACT was higher; this may have resulted in inflated ratings
- Information from qualitative analysis will be used in conjunction with future stakeholder surveys to inform the design of Super PACT
- Future studies will evaluate the effect of Super PACT on preparedness for working with PWUAAC

References

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