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Functional Cognitive Activities for Adults with Traumatic Brain Injury: Pilot Case Studies

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**PARTICIPANT 1**

**Age:** 61 | **Gender:** F | **Education Level:** Associate Degree | **Years Post-TBI:** 5

**Beginning FCA Level**
- Level 5 FCA Focus: "Navigating Beyond the Room"
  - Navigating to various locations on multiple floors of the building
  - Complete tasks during scavenger hunt to utilize divided attention
  - Problem solving to complete schedule on time

**Ending FCA Level**
- Level 7 FCA Focus: "Out the Door"
  - Revise self-made schedule and estimate travel time
  - Determine an efficient route to an unfamiliar destination
  - Anticipate consequences of decisions

**Level 5 FCA Participant Strategies:**
- Use a map to navigate
- Take notes on verbal instructions
- Ask clarifying questions

**Level 7 FCA Participant Strategies:**
- Use positive self talk as encouragement

**PARTICIPANT 2**

**Age:** 77 | **Gender:** M | **Education Level:** Graduate Degree | **Years Post-TBI:** 3

**Beginning FCA Level**
- Level 4 FCA Focus: "Following a Time Schedule"
  - Previous task materials need to be removed to show that a change in activity has occurred
  - Adhere to specific time schedule
  - Complete multiple steps and in varying length of time for each activity

**Ending FCA Level**
- Level 3 FCA Focus: "Looking Around the Room"
  - Navigate safely and efficiently in immediate environment
  - Demonstrate safety awareness
  - Visually scan environment for task materials

**Level 4 FCA Participant Strategies:**
- Taking notes when given verbal/written instructions
- Keep schedule on hand at all times

**Level 3 FCA Participant Strategies:**
- Scan the environment and pace self during ambulation
- Utilize watch and alarm

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**FUNCTIONAL COGNITIVE ACTIVITIES APPROACH**

The Functional Cognitive Activities (FCA) approach was developed to improve everyday occupational performance in adults with TBI through the utilization of a task-centered approach involving the three global elements. The FCA approach is designed to generalize learned skills in a therapy setting in order to engage in meaningful occupations across a variety of context. The purpose of these pilot case studies is to provide preliminary evidence to determine the effectiveness of the FCA approach for improving generalizability in adults with TBI.

**3 Global Elements**

- **Interpersonal Relationships**
  - The ability to initiate communication with others, utilize appropriate behavior in a group, understand and read verbal and nonverbal cuing, give and receive feedback as needed.

- **Environmental**
  - The ability to visually scan, orient self to place, arrange workspaces appropriately in order to complete the task, acknowledge safety hazards, safely navigate, and use a map and/or compensatory devices.

- **Time Parameters**
  - The ability to initiate tasks and estimate the time needed to complete them, follow schedules, orient to the time of day, and manage multiple tasks at once.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Conclusion**
- The FCA approach can be an effective method for facilitating the generalization of functional cognition skills in daily occupations across contexts and environments for adults with TBI.
- The FCA approach can guide therapists to evaluate an individual's cognitive performance level and provide the proper amount of support needed in order to be able to adhere to a time schedule.

**Recommendations**
- Formal training of the implementation of the approach prior to beginning treatment sessions with participants.
- More thorough selection process including an interview with the potential participants regarding their acceptance of their condition.
- Involving caregivers in intervention goals and implementation to avoid caregiver barriers.

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**REFERENCES**