

THE LINKS BETWEEN SOCIAL SUPPORT AND WELL-BEING IN PEOPLE WITH TRAUMATIC SPINAL CORD INJURY

Andres Kukk^{1,2}, Priit Eelmäe^{2,3}, Ingrid Hiis¹, Rein Murakas¹

¹University of Tartu, ²Haapsalu Neurological Rehabilitation Centre, ³Centre of Excellence in Health Promotion and Rehabilitation

INTRODUCTION

The main subject of the study is the links between social support and well-being for people with traumatic spinal cord injury (TSCI). The purpose of the study is to find important factors in social network, which have effect on a person's well-being. The expected result of the work is to give input for betterment of the TSCI rehabilitation process through informed involvement of the patient support network.

METHODS

The study involved 25 persons with TSCI during their stay in Haapsalu Neurological Rehabilitation Centre. It focused on three main subjects: well-being, social support and functional independence. For evaluating the functional independence, the FIM® functional independence measure (Rehab measures: FIM instrument, 2016) is used. For studying well-being, the social and personal well-being questionnaire from European Social Survey round 6 is used (European Social Survey, 2013). For examining social support, Social Support Network Questionnaire (SSNQ) from Gee and Rhodes (2008) is used. During the study, all patients used the orthotics with their usual footwear. Motion in sagittal plane was analysed and compared with barefoot trials.



Photo 1. Inter-disciplinary team meeting during SCI rehabilitation in Haapsalu Neurological Rehabilitation Centre. Photo credit: Silver Raidla

Table 1. Correlations between dimensions of well-being and support-network characteristics.

Satisfaction with the support of the network in a positive way and the social pressure of the network in a negative way are connected with the well-being of people with TSCI. Therefore, the social network is an important aspect of improving TSCI rehabilitation.

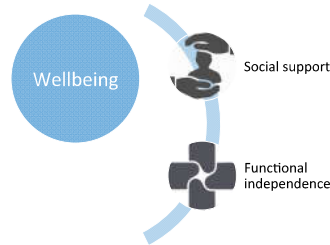


Figure 1. Conceptual schema diagram

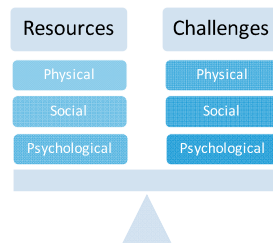


Figure 2. Wellbeing – balance between resources and challenges. Insufficient resources combined with high challenges has a negative impact to well-being likewise high resources with low or no challenges brings about stagnation and low well-being. (Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J. & Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), 222-235)

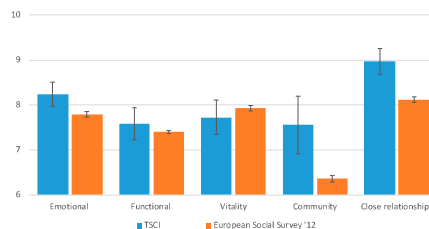


Figure 3. Wellbeing in different dimensions in comparison between TSCI and ESS'12 weighted data. TSCI persons have relatively high rating on dimensions of wellbeing connected with social and communal relations. This result points out that TSCI persons might maintain their high level of wellbeing using support from others.

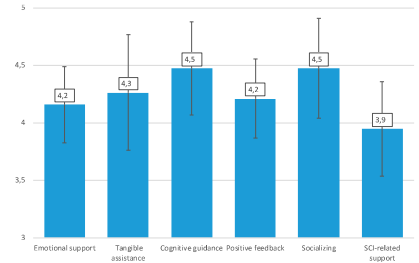


Figure 4. Satisfaction with support on different every-day aspects

RESULTS

Social characteristics of social support, such as satisfaction with the support of the network in a positive way and the social pressure of the network in a negative way are connected with the well-being of people with TSCI. Therefore, it can be said that the social network is an important aspect of improving TSCI rehabilitation.

CONCLUSIONS

The author would emphasize the importance of perceiving and acknowledging the constraints of the resources of the network and the potential problems, which may rise from its expiration. To ensure the effectiveness of rehabilitation and social services, elaborate and optimal usage of the network is crucial.

Correspondance

Andres Kukk

e-mail: andres.kukk@hnrk.ee

tel: +372 5134481

address: Sadama 16 Haapsalu 90502 ESTONIA

www.hnrk.ee

Dimensions of well-being			Satisfaction with support	Size of the social network	Social strain
		Pearson's r			
Emotional			0.104	-0.017	-0.087
Functional			0.358	0.030	-0.088
Vitality			0.449*	-0.233	0.667**
Community			0.512**	-0.023	-0.445*
Close relationships			0.014	0.283	-0.070

*Correlation is significant at the 0.02 level (2-tailed)

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)