

A holistic group treatment program for patients with mild acquired brain injury

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Introduction: Patients with mild acquired brain injury (MABI) often receive the same interventions as patients with moderate and severe brain injury, which might be ineffective for patients with MABI (Comper et al., 2005). Research of the efficacy of occupational interventions for patients with MABI is very limited. In this study a holistic occupational therapy group-treatment program for patients with MABI was developed. The aim of the program was to facilitate performance in daily life. The program included information concerning brain injury, compensatory strategies for daily life and coping discussions.

Objective: To explore and gain understanding about what patients with mild acquired brain injury consider is effective in a holistic occupational therapy group treatment program.

Methods: This was a qualitative study with interviews. Grounded theory was selected as the method as it is suitable for studying human actions and processes. Ten patients (5/5 M/F, 33-59 yrs) were recruited after completing the group treatment program. Data was coded and analyzed simultaneously in a "zigzag process". An emergent design was used to develop hypotheses. Codes were compared repeatedly within and between each other until the basic properties of the categories were defined. Data gathering was stopped when the categories were considered saturated. Theoretical concepts were developed during the analyses. Trustworthiness was ensured by triangulation in researchers.

Results: All patients perceived that the program provided them with awareness of their difficulties in daily life which was a start for being motivated to develop and use compensatory strategies in order to function better in daily life.

Conclusion: The holistic group treatment provided an integration of knowledge, strategies and self-image leading to changes in how to cope with problems in daily life.

Contribution to the practice: A holistic group treatment program is an effective method for patients with MABI to improve awareness in order to more consciously use compensatory strategies in daily life.

Reference:

Comper, P., Bisschop, S.M., Carnide, N., & Tricco, A. (2005) A systematic review of treatments for mild traumatic brain injury. *Brain Injury*, 19, 863-880.