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Addressing the goal of driving while clients are in a rehabilitation facility

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Introduction

The most common goal set by clients in a rehabilitation facility is return to driving. Fear of losing this valued occupation is often present early in the rehabilitation process. In addressing driving at this early phase, the question of what to assess and how to progress clients towards achieving this goal proposes a challenge.

Objectives

This presentation will enable the participant to describe the process, assessments and interventions that are used with patients in a rehabilitation facility.

Description

The best practice group for driving at Toronto Rehabilitation Inst., utilizing best evidence data, developed a process for working with clients wishing to return to driving. As part of this process, a consent form, driving history tool, visual/perceptual/cognitive screen, simulator screen and intervention guides were developed over the past 7 years. As well, a brochure addressing what to expect and how to navigate the system with respect to return to driving was developed.

Discussion

As a result of the development of practice tools and processes, clients feel that their driving goal is being addressed in a safe environment. As well, intervention is more closely linked to findings. The process to return to driving within the Ontario context is complex for both health care practitioner and client to understand. The work to date of this group has simplified the decision making process tremendously. It has also highlighted areas for development and research regarding return to driving.

Conclusion

Driving can be addressed from a rehabilitation facility perspective. Helping clients to understand their path to return to driving is instrumental to wlaying fears about loss of this occupation. Providing clear feedback through evaluation and interventions which address driving and driving related skills gives the client a sense of their own ability to return to driving. Premature and costly efforts are avoided.

Contribution to the practice

This paper will demonstrate how current driving research has been able to inform practice in a rehabilitation facility. Developed resources will be shared.