

**From patient to worker or student: Factors facilitating the change.**

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To have the knowledge and be able to explain what enables disabled workers to return to work, is essential to service providers and Health and Social authorities for focused and effective work rehabilitation. Many studies have been carried out on the outcome of work rehabilitation and factors influencing return to work but few studies and none of them Icelandic have focused on what facilitates return to work from the service users' point of view. The Model of Human Occupation explains participation and how changes occur, but has never been applied in the context of research in work rehabilitation in Iceland to explain the process of change in returning to work.

The purpose of this study was to explore participation in work rehabilitation and how and what changed the situation of workers who were away from work because of injury or illness and helped them return to work or education. The aim was also to find out if the changes were compatible with the explanation of the Model of Human Occupation.

Interviews were conducted with 21 individual who had been in work rehabilitation in four different community-based rehabilitation institutions in Iceland. All of the participants had returned to work or study and had been working or studying for at least three months at the time of the interview. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed applying hermeneutics and template analysis.

The findings indicate that the help that facilitated the participants' belief in his or her capacity and self respect was the most effective one. The help was in the form of education, cooperation/bonding, security, and support, many constructs comparable with those of MOHO.

This study illuminates factors in Work rehabilitation that facilitates changes within their clients, workers who were not active in the worker role because of illness or injury but changed through rehabilitation or education. These changes were in general comparable with MOHO's explanations of participation and change. These results add to evidence based practice explaining what occurs in successful Work rehabilitation and an almost fit to a model used worldwide within occupational therapy.