

Challenges of chronic pain disability: occupational therapy experience in discharge program in public service in São Paulo Brazil

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Introduction: Increasing sick leave statistics and too many difficulties of returning-to-work impaired labors are Brazilian occupational therapists challenges. Among causes that lead removals from work are musculoskeletal and mental health impairments that have been demanding the development of new approaches from occupational therapists practitioners. **Objective:** To verify facilitators and restrictive factors influencing on return-to work capacity (employment capacity) of chronic pain impaired population assisted in a public service - Workers Reference Center in São Paulo **Method:** A group of 10 patients, both sex, age varying between 37 and 55 years old, absent from workforce to up eighteen months period, work related musculoskeletal disorders diagnoses were admitted to attend an orientation discharge group. Individual medical forms review was performed lately. All subjects included on the study had also been discharged from the Public Social Security Assistance. Subjects attended to a 12 sessions' meetings focused on functioning potentialities for a new job employment - labor capacities restrictions; experienced difficulties in the past attempted to return to work; satisfaction of previous medical assistance and treatments. **Results:** All subjects referred have had unsatisfactory medical care and still experienced a feeling of unfinished/incomplete treatment for their conditions due lack of a proper access to public health system (slowness of the system; lack of material and human resources); see themselves as a low rates of expertise (scholarship); discontinuing and/or interruption during attempt to access health care services were the most frequent complain) so they felt they were sick yet and not able to work. **Conclusion:** Environmental factors (public services system) are main reason to creation of disability that hinder return-to-the work process creating a low self concept of labor capacity for employment generating high psychosocial risk factors of social exclusion. Occupational therapist's involved on return-to-return process might consider during treatment and rehabilitation practices beyond overcome physical and psychic impairments but also detect politics and legal matters leading to work disability in a more global and effective actions. **Contributions to occupational therapy field:** Urges articulates different health care levels (prevention, treatment, rehabilitation) to effectively develop approaches to avoid social exclusion.