

The Fatigue Management Program for people with multiple sclerosis - A feasibility study among Swedish occupational therapists

Eva Månsson Lexell^{1,2}, Tanya Packer³, Lena Haglund⁴

¹Lund University, Lund, Sweden, ²Skåne University Hospital, Lund-Malmö, Sweden,

³Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada, ⁴Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden

Introduction: Around 80% of all people with multiple sclerosis (MS) experience MS-fatigue, significantly impacting everyday occupational performance. The Fatigue Management course (FMC) is an evidence-based occupational therapy intervention that provides people with tools to manage and overcome fatigue. Based on self-management science, participants take an active role in setting goals and learning problem-solving techniques that can be generalized to other occupations. The recently released MS guidelines in Sweden, cite this as best practice, even though no Swedish translation exists. Thus, the ecological validity of the course in a Swedish context is unclear.

Objectives: To translate the FMC manual into Swedish, and to investigate its feasibility for people with MS in Sweden.

Method: We used a mixed-methods design. Eight occupational therapists tested the FMC and then completed a questionnaire and participated in focus group interviews.

Results: Each therapists conducted one course with 5-9 MS-participants (total=48 MS-participants). Overall, therapists were satisfied with the content in the manual, and only minor improvements of the layout were needed. Discussions revealed how therapists who thoroughly read the manual in advance, experienced less implementation problems. Difficulties implementing self-management strategies rather than the traditional role of an expert were discussed.

Conclusions: The FMC course is feasible in a Swedish context. Future studies should focus on larger intervention studies that evaluate course effects on fatigue, occupational performance and engagement in occupations.