

Challenges in the process of cross border repatriation between South Africa and Malawi: a case study of two clients with spinal cord injury post rehabilitation at Western Cape Rehabilitation Centre.

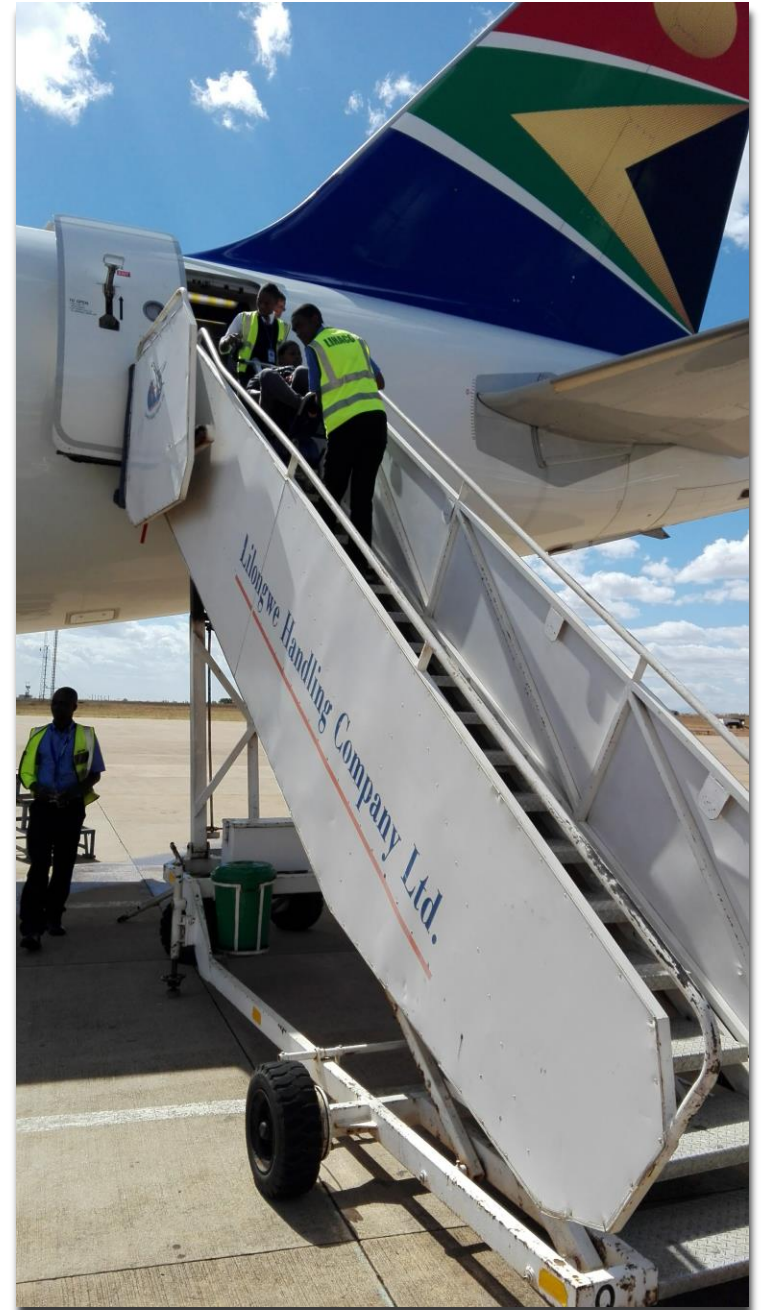


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Outline

- Background
- Repatriation Process
- Challenges Experienced
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements



Background

- **Complexity of long-term care for person with Spinal Cord Injury (SCI).**
- **Difficulty finding suitable discharge environments.**
- **No family support in South Africa = long-term placement problems.**
- **2 cases at WCRC – clients repatriated back to home country, Malawi.**



Repatriation Process

- **Ground work (documentation/family contact) - Social Workers at WCRC.**
- **International Organisation for Migration - paperwork, financial support.**
- **OT and Doctor escorted clients from Cape Town to Blantyre, Malawi.**
- **Clients transported to Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital for family training.**
- **Networking with other health care professionals.**
- **Transport of clients to their homes.**



Challenges Experienced ¹

- **Change from from high to low resource setting.**

Cape Town, WCRC



Blantyre, Malawi



Challenges Experienced ²

- **Change from high to low resource setting.**
- **Language barrier – English to Chichewa.**
- **↓ General awareness and education on Spinal Cord Injury.**
- **Cultural and religious beliefs of family members.**
- **Lack of time to process and accept.**
- **Lack of facilities for family members during family training.**
- **Limited Occupational Therapists.**



Discussion



- **The importance of education – for client and family.**
- **Communication in a language the client and family understand.**
- **Time for processing the condition – further support needed in community.**
- **Weekend leave is invaluable in preparing for re-integration.**

Conclusion

- **Complexity of long-term care for person with SCI.**
- **Multiple challenges associated with repatriation.**
- **Important themes which should inform OT practice:**
 - **The importance of education – for client and family.**
 - **Communication in a language the client and family understand.**
 - **Time for processing the condition.**
 - **Weekend leave is invaluable.**

Acknowledgements

- **Western Cape Rehabilitation Centre – Management, Social Workers, Therapists.**
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