Measuring Appraisals of Disabilities Following Spinal Cord Injury

Molsen SH[1], Hansen RM[1], Vibjerg J[1], Wojke P[1], Kennedy P[2,3], Hagen EM[1,4,5]

[1]Spinal Cord Injury Centre of Western Denmark, Department of Neurology, Viborg Regional Hospital, Denmark
[2]Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury, UK [3]Department of Clinical Psychology, University of Oxford, UK
[4]Department of Clinical Medicine, University of Bergen, Norway [5]Department of Clinical Medicine, Aarhus University, Denmark

Introduction:

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) leads to serious physical disability which has important consequences for the individual person's social (work, relationships and economy) and psychological life (loss, grief and acceptance of the new circumstances).
The aim of the rehabilitation is to enable persons with SCI to live as independently as possible.
At the Spinal Cord Injury Center of Western Denmark the psychologist is a part of the rehabilitation team. Appraisals are psychosocial variables in the rehabilitation following SCI, which are good predictors of emotional adjustment.

Aims:

The study aims to evaluate each patient's appraisals in order to offer the best treatment strategy by using an appraisal scale ADAPSS (The Appraisals of DisAbility: Primary and Secondary Scale) which is developed and validated for adults with SCI.

Material and Methods:

The questions in ADAPSS explore following items: Fearful Despondency, Overwhelming Disbelief, Negative Perceptions of Disability, Determined Resolve, Growth and Resilience, Personal Agency.
By answering the questions ADAPSS assesses
 - the individual's evaluation of an event or situation.
- the indivuals own coping resources
- the possibility of the resoureces being adequate
- the likelyhood that these resources can be employed effectively.

Patients characteristics:

Data from the study period:

Gender	
Female (N)	9
Male (N)	6
Cause	
Traumatic (N)	23
Non-traumatic (N)	12
Level and completeness	
Tetraplegia complete (N)	2
Tetraplegia incomplete (N)	17
Paraplegia complete (N)	10
Paraplegia incomplete (N)	6
Time since injury	
< 1 year	21
> 1 year	14
Age at time of examination, years (mean ± SD)	55.3 (± 13.3)
Time since injury, days (mean ± SD)	3.4 (± 7.2)

Conclusion:

The ADAPSS are straightforward to use, and covers a range of appraisal themes.
It is useful in the clinical settings to improve understanding of the appraisals significant for adjustments to SCI.

Future perspectives:

The ADAPSS can be used as one of the tools to stratify the patients and promote psychological care according to the individual scoring, i.e. social support, mindfulness course tailored to SCI, or Psychotherapy based on the principle of

email: Sara.Holmelund.Molsen@Viborg.RM.dk

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Spinal Cord Injury Centre
of Western Denmark
Department of Research and Development