USING THE EFA AND FIM® PROVIDES A MORE COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF PATIENTS WITH ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY

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INTRODUCTION

- The Early functional abilities scale (EFA) characterizes patients with severe neurological deficits following acquired brain injury (ABI) (1).
- It is used in German speaking countries, Denmark and Norway but infrequently used in English speaking countries (2).
- The FIM is a commonly used tool to assess the ability of patients to perform activities of daily living.
- The FIM is unable to assess patients with very little/no functional ability and score the lowest FIM score of 18.

AIM

- To examine the concurrent use of the EFA and FIM scales for assessing patients of all functional abilities in inpatient rehabilitation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

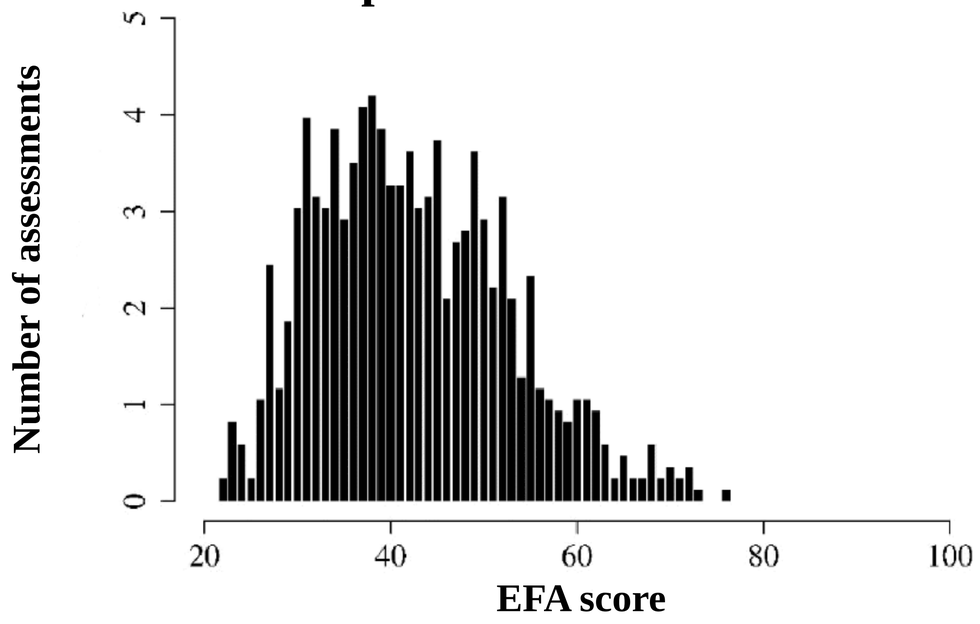
- From 1998–2010 all ABI patients with concurrent EFA/FIM scores during inpatient rehabilitation were retrospectively examined.
- 1251 patients [from 18–81 y/o: (median: 51)] tested 2–6696 days post-injury (median 35) were included.
- Diagnoses were anoxic brain injury (10%), subarachnoid haemorrhage (23%), stroke (26%), traumatic brain injury (31%), and others (10%).
- Patients ranged in severity of function.
- Scores were assessed on admission, discharge and (in general) monthly during hospitalization.
- The number of assessments per patient ranged from 1–14 (median 3) totalling 4076.

RESULTS

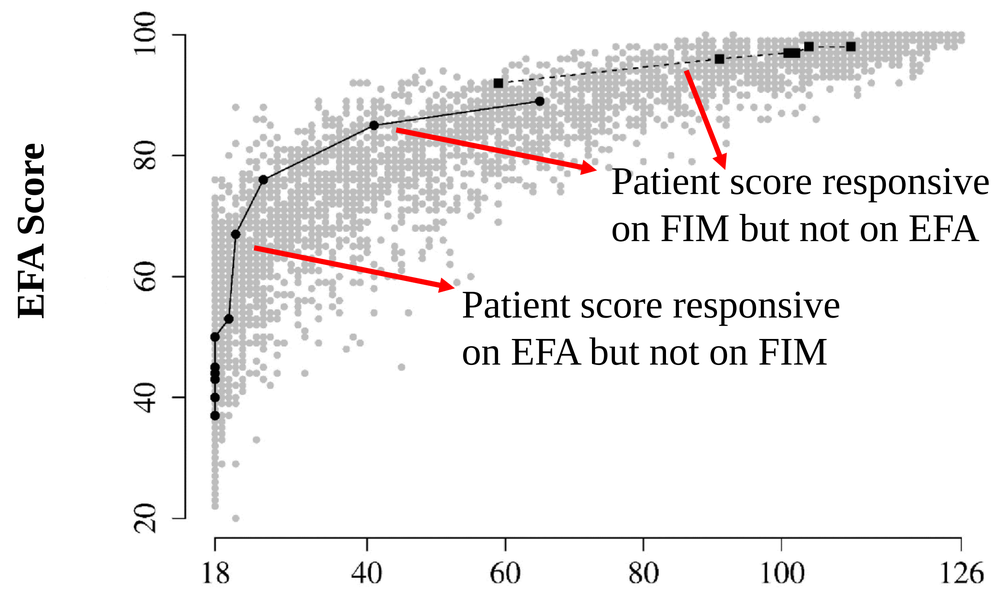
- 402 patients, totaling 857 assessments scored a FIM score of 18 with corresponding EFA scores ranging from 22 to 76.
- 58% of patients with an EFA score of 70–100 had FIM scores ranging from 18–126.

RESULTS

EFA scores for patients with a FIM score of 18



Concurrent EFA and FIM scores for all patients



Grey dots show concurrent EFA/FIM scores for all patients. Dark lines (dashed & solid) and data points (squares & circles) indicate the scores for 2 patients.

- There was a positive association between the concurrent EFA/FIM scores.

CONCLUSIONS

- Using the EFA AND FIM in combination provides a more complete view of the patient with the necessary range to describe the functional heterogeneity of patients with ABI
- EFA/FIM cover the limitations of each other
- Combined use of EFA AND FIM may be beneficial.

1. Heck G, Steiger-Bächler G, Schmidt T. Early Functional Abilities (EFA) – eine Skala zur Evaluation von Behandlungsverläufen in der neurologischen Frührehabilitation. Neurol Rehabil 2000; 6: 125–133.
2. Alvsaker K, Walther S, Kleffelgård I, Mongs M, Drægebø R, Keller A. Inter-rater reliability of the early functional abilities scale, J Rehabil Med 2011; 43: 892–899.

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