

Hospital-based sexual rehabilitation following moderate to severe acquired brain injury

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Introduction

Acquired moderate or severe brain injury often imply physical as well as emotional sequelae. Research indicates that patients may experience depression, loss of control, grief as well as changes in identity and intimate relationships.

Taking the WHO definition of rehabilitation into consideration it is equally important to address aspects of sexuality, and initiate efforts during the sub-acute rehabilitation phase in order to prevent sexual dysfunction later.

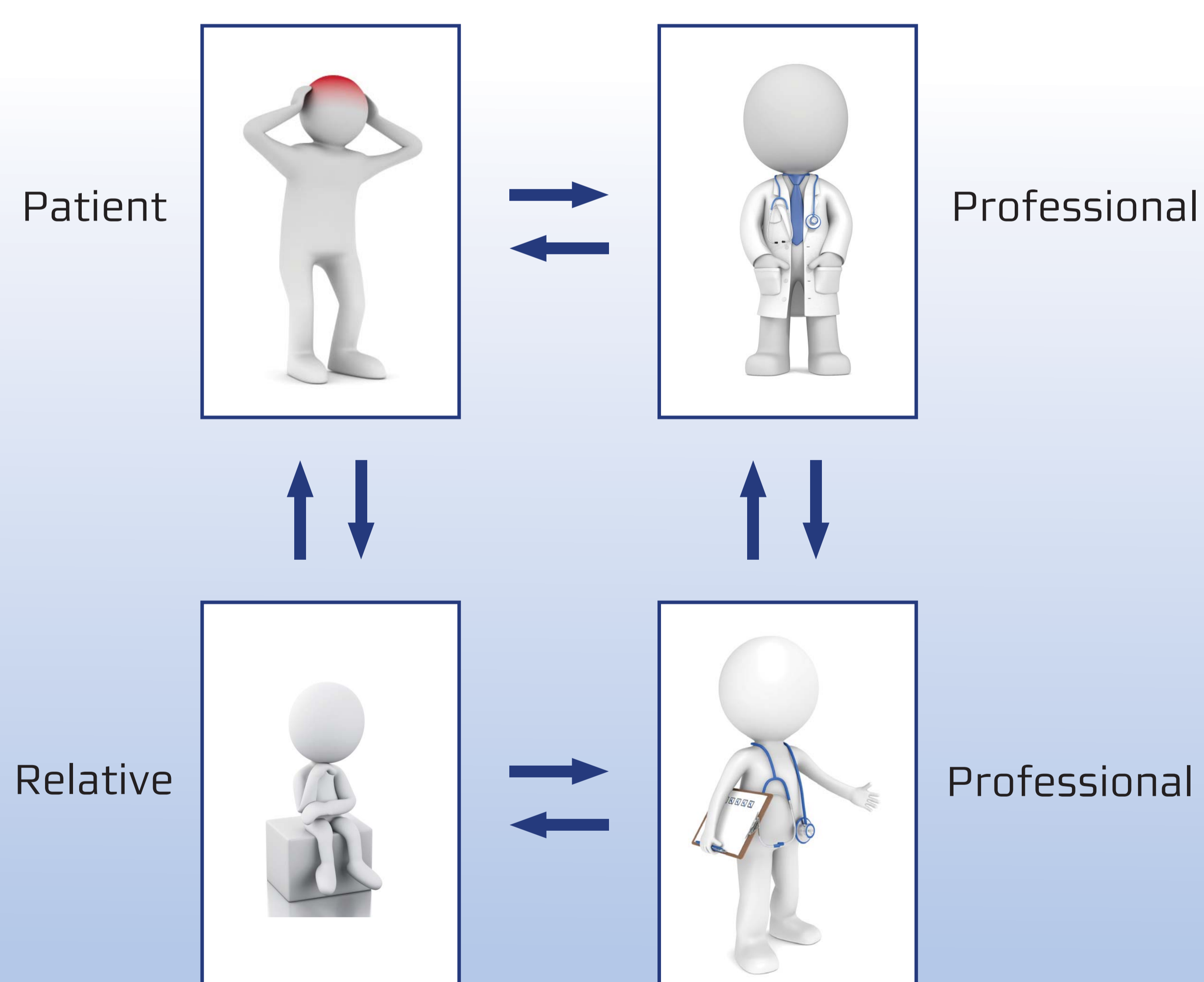
Aim

To identify experienced professional initiatives and challenges related to sexual rehabilitation as part of the hospital based neurorehabilitation following moderate or severe acquired brain injury.

Method

A focus group interview with interdisciplinary rehabilitation professionals representing ten wards at two different locations. The three authors conducted a four-step systematic content analysis of the verbatim transcribed text. Themes were identified through consensus oriented discussion.

* Multidimensional taboos



Results

Experience based knowledge

- Knowledge of the subject is personal rather than professional
- Interventions are unsystematic
- Professionals are insecure in their roles

Experience based challenges

- Balancing normality and possible violation of autonomy
- Taboos are multidimensional and implicate professionals, patients and relatives*

Further implications

- Professional ambassadors in each unit
- Interdisciplinary education of all employees
- Cultural changes in the organisation
- Focus on documentation strategies