

Coherence and patient empowerment in the rehabilitation process



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Introduction and Aims

Rehabilitation of persons with a spinal cord injury is an interdisciplinary task dependent on highly specialized professionals. At the Spinal Cord Centre of Western Denmark we recognized a need to optimize the rehabilitation process, through more individualized patient planning and involvement.

Rehabilitation at the Centre takes place in everyday activities throughout the day. Focus is on achieving and maintaining optimal functioning and returning to a meaningful life of the individual.

Material and Methods

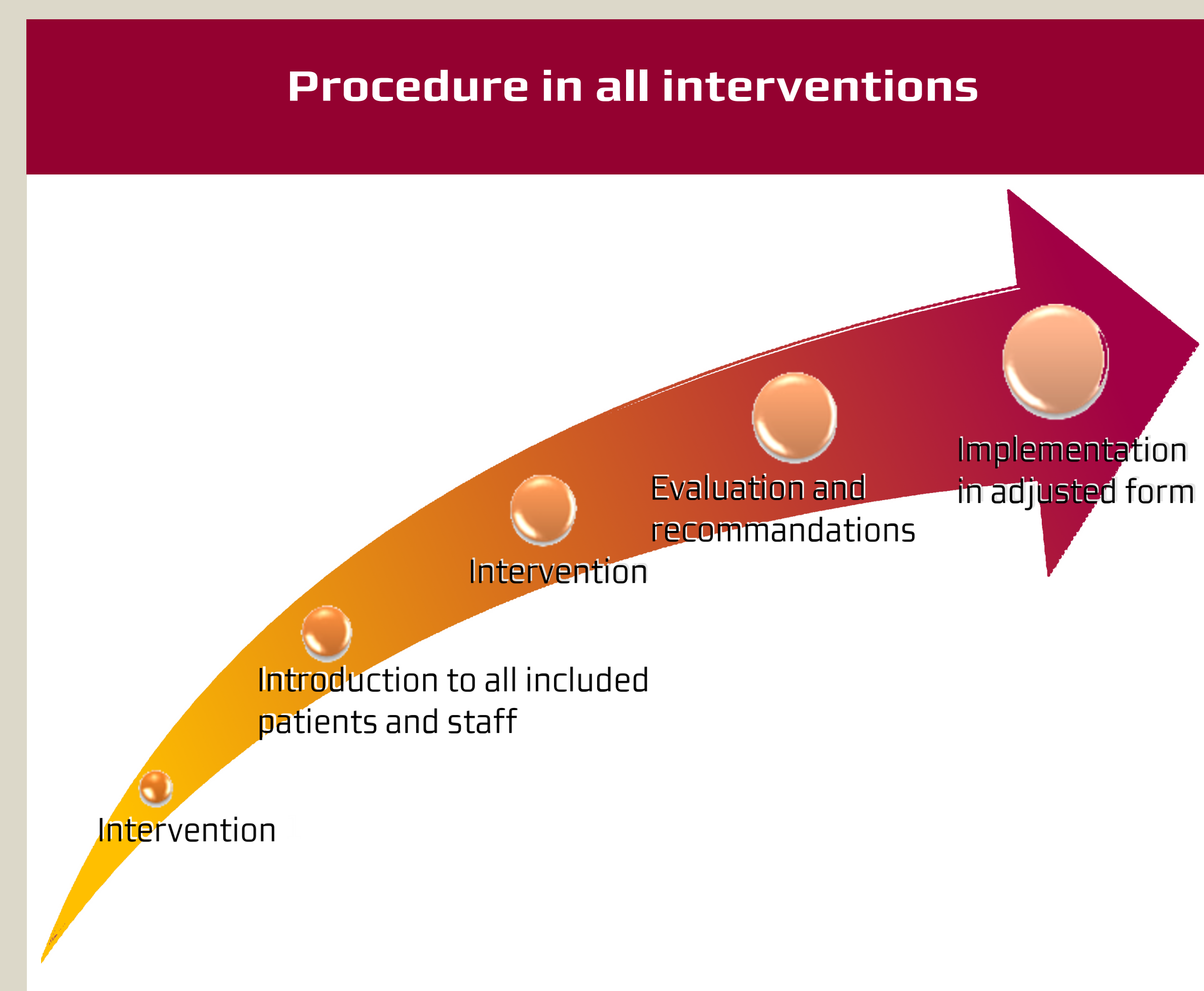
Inspired by Scharmer's "Prototypes" as described in "Theory U" an experienced interdisciplinary team of two project managers from the Centre's Department of Research and Development planned, described and introduced eight consecutive steps of well-defined interventions, each limited to a period of two to four weeks.

The intervention period started in November 2013 and is planned to end in October 2014.

All interventions are closely followed by the project managers in order to support staff and patients during the process. Each intervention is systematically evaluated by questionnaires to all included patients and staff. Individual interviews of four members of staff were conducted before start and will be conducted again after all interventions are completed. Evaluations and comments from all included patients and staff are considered and interventions are adjusted accordingly before implemented in daily practice.

	Interventions	Number of included patients	Number of included staff*	Status
1	Daily interdisciplinary coordination meeting (one PT, one OT, one nurse)	9	14	Evaluated and implemented in a slightly adjusted form throughout the entire Rehabilitation Centre. Further developed into intervention 6
2	Weekly specific and individualized goal setting	9	24	Evaluated and implemented in a slightly adjusted form throughout the entire Rehabilitation Centre
3	Individualized functional training in daily life	9	21	Evaluated and implemented in a slightly adjusted form throughout the entire Rehabilitation Centre
4	Optimizing ward rounds	20	9	Evaluated and implemented in a slightly adjusted form throughout the entire Rehabilitation Centre
5	Cooking activities in small groups (evening meals)	TBA**	TBA	Planned and described but not launched yet
6	Daily interdisciplinary coordination meeting (all members of staff)	35	***	Evaluated and implemented in an adjusted form throughout the entire Rehabilitation Centre
7	Extended physiotherapy training – regarding time and place	TBA	TBA	Planned and described but not launched yet
8	Patients' personally individualized schedule	35	TBA	In the planning phase

* Doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers
 ** To be announced
 *** All staff in day shift



Conclusion

Patients and staff express great satisfaction with the interventions and the method, and they feel they have real influence on the process. Changing the rehabilitation process into more individualized programs is possible and depends on motivation and flexibility of the staff and on a high level of support from management.



Spinal Cord Injury Centre of Western Denmark

Research and Development Unit