

# FACILITATING TO PARTICIPATE

## – a study of early rehabilitation of people with severe brain injury and low consciousness

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### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of factors that facilitate patients with severe acquired brain injury to participate and interact with interdisciplinary staff at a brain injury early rehabilitation unit.

### Methods

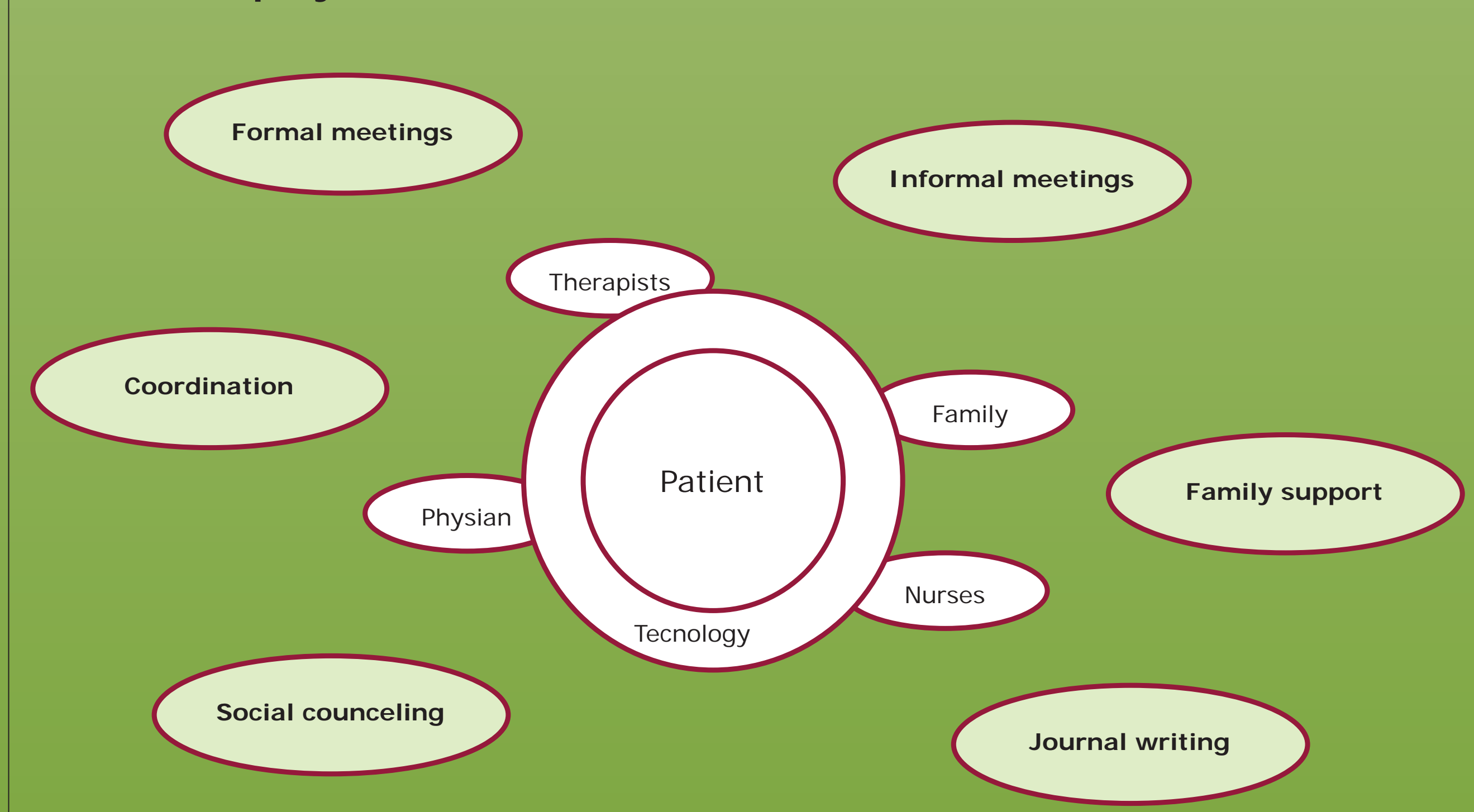
A qualitative study was chosen to provide an interpretative and naturalistic approach. The study involved six patients: three men and three women, aged 39-64 years, consciousness between 2-3 measures by Ranchos Los Amigos Scale (RLAS) in the beginning of the field study. The study included: Participant observation and video recordings of 41 rehabilitation situations, five single interviews and one focus group interview with multidisciplinary rehabilitation experts, document review of hospital charts and memos. Each patient was observed between 14 – 28 days. The data were analysed using N-VIVO 10 from the perspectives of phenomenology and sociology.

### Results

Several main themes emerged:

- (1) formal and informal meetings - different arenas in which participation of the patient comes into play (Figure 1)
- (2) the bodily meeting:
  - (a) the propitious meeting
  - (b) the mis-meeting
  - (c) the faltering meeting
- (3) different forms of ritual meeting that are of significance in relation to participation (Figure 2)

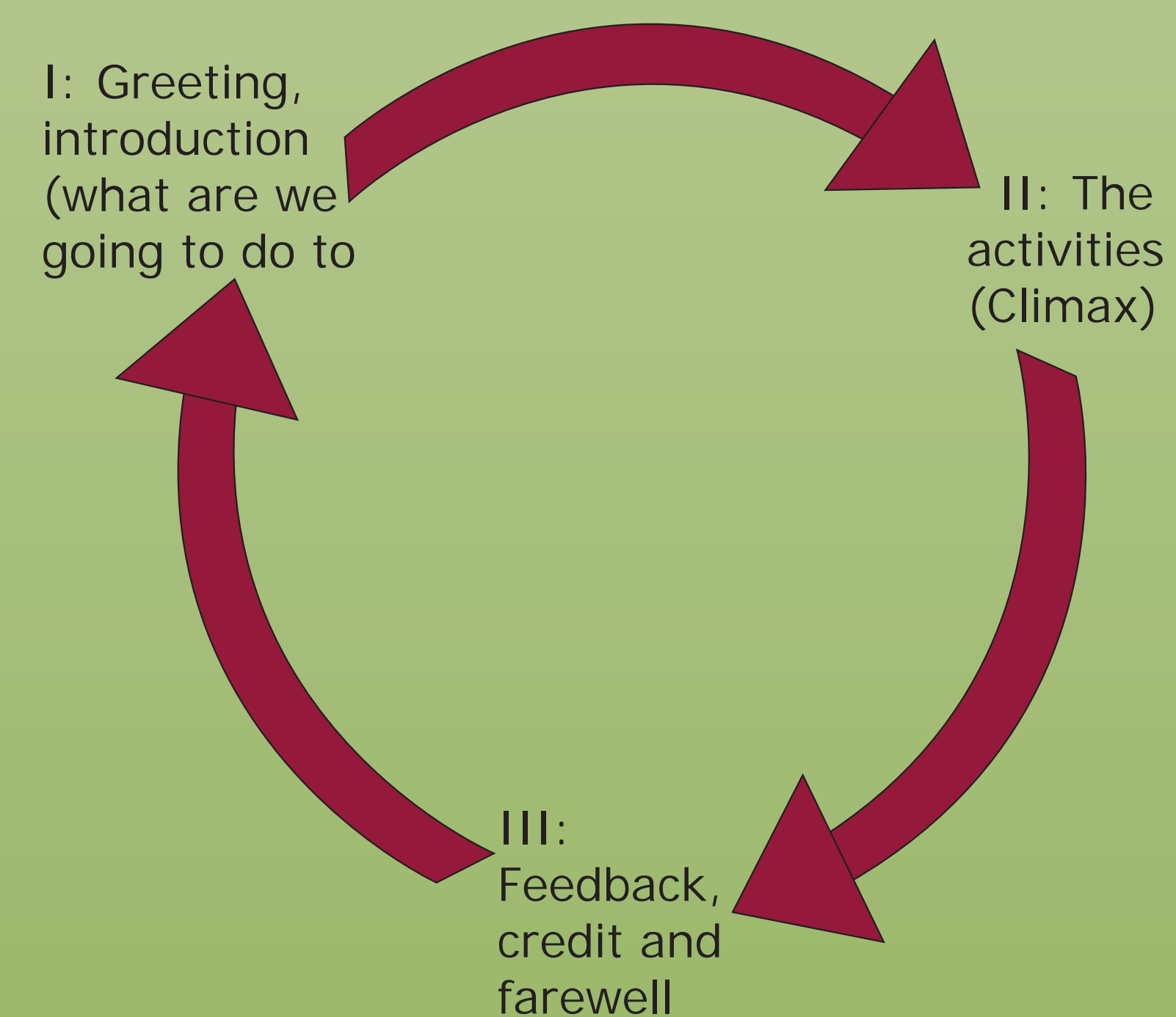
**Figure 1. The priminary identification of sceneries where participation comes into play**



**Figure 2**

Ritual meetings – a frame of the interrelationship between the professionals and the patient. The interrelationships were seen as a:

#### A. New Meeting



#### B. Habit emphasized meeting

– the patients seem to be a part of the ward family and to be “family members”; the activities are performed as a routine of the health professionals without any specific frame, introduction, explanation of what is going on.

### Conclusion

The results indicate that the rehabilitative process can be more successful if the facilitation of participation is consciously addressed. Furthermore the rehabilitative process can proceed more efficiently if the professionals are able to create the right rehabilitation environment to perform the activity, the right framework of the meeting, a suitable mode and an approach that facilitates fruitful interaction.

#### Declaration of Interest

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