Which are contextual factors that are important to predict return to work – Results of a mapping exercise using evidence from scientific literature and experts’ opinion

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Abstract

A mapping exercise has been carried out in the scope of the project “Predicting the rehabilitation outcome after trauma based on the ICF – icfPROreha”, a joint effort of eleven German rehabilitation clinics and departments aiming to establish an ICF-based outcome prognosis to predict return to work (RTW) in patients with musculoskeletal injuries. Aim of this poster is to present the results of the mapping exercise of the evidence retrieved from scientific literature and experts’ opinion to contextual factors (environmental and personal factors) of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). We used data of (1) a systematic literature review comprising of 36 research articles published between 2007 and 2017 and (2) a national expert survey of 123 health professionals that aimed to identify factors that are important for predicting RTW in persons with musculoskeletal injuries. The mapping exercise was completed using established linking rules. For personal factors we used the proposal of Geyh and colleagues published in 2018.

Results - continued

Most frequently identified environmental and personal factors are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

In total, 123 experts participated in the survey (90 male/33 female) and provided 252 factors that are relevant to predicting RTW, of which 48% were mapped to contextual factors (Fig. 2).

Conclusions

There are several contextual factors that are relevant to predicting RTW in patients with musculoskeletal injuries. Some of these factors could not be mapped to the ICF and the proposed codes provided by Geyh et al.

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Methods & Materials - continued

Factors identified as predictors in the literature and by experts were linked to the ICF using the ICF Linking Rules (Cieza et al., 2016). Personal factors were assigned to the categories proposed by Geyh et al. (2018).

Return to work (RTW) after long-term sick-leave is a complex phenomenon affected by several variables that goes beyond disease- and injury-related factors. Empirical research focusing on the broad range of potential predictors of prolonged RTW is scarce. Thus, the impact of many variables on RTW remains unclear. The project “Predicting the rehabilitation outcome after trauma based on the ICF – icfPROreha”, a joint effort of eleven German rehabilitation clinics and departments, aims to develop a prognosis of RTW in patients with musculoskeletal injuries based on the bio-psycho-social model of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). In this poster, we present the results of a mapping exercise of the evidence retrieved from scientific literature and experts’ opinion to the contextual factors (environmental and personal factors) of the ICF.

Methods & Materials

For the mapping exercise we used data from:

1. a systematic literature review: empirical studies focusing on factors associated with RTW of patients with musculoskeletal injuries were searched, selected and data extracted (9 databases, years 2007-2017, English or German)

2. a national expert survey: German health professionals with experience in the rehabilitation of patients with musculoskeletal injuries (e.g., physicians, therapists and rehab managers) were asked to identify variables that affect RTW in this patient population.

Introduction

The poster presents the results of a mapping exercise of the evidence retrieved from scientific literature and experts’ opinion to the contextual factors (environmental and personal factors) of the ICF.