

Exploring Choice and Outcomes in Worker Injury Rehabilitation

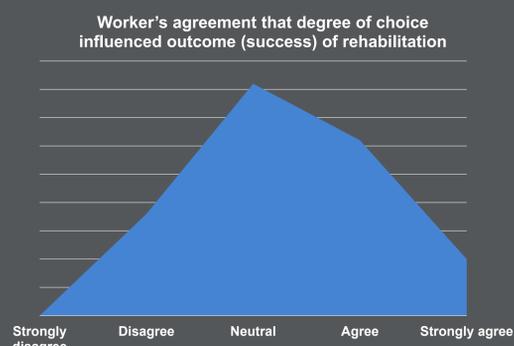
Olwen Anderson, Vanette McLennan, Christine Randall
Griffith University

Introduction

- Rehabilitation of work injuries is a growing expense, consuming 4% of Gross Domestic Product in 2013¹.
- Despite burgeoning costs of injury rehabilitation, the impact of choice on outcomes remains unclear. For the worker, the ability to engage in choice may be hampered by systemic constraints, misalignment of stakeholder expectations, and the worker's ability to engage in the choice process^{2,3,4,5,6,7}.

Key Findings

- Choice influenced the workers' sense of success of their rehabilitation.
- Choice is there, but the worker needs to know that it exists, and how to access it.
- Supportive relationships between the worker and stakeholders promotes choice. Ineffective or ruptured relationships between stakeholders hinders.



Implications for Rehabilitation

- Engagement in decision making can be affected by the worker's ability to choose as well as their relationship with stakeholders.
- Blocked access to choice can rupture the occupational bond, leading to disputes.
- Family members and external advocates can help workers navigate the rehabilitation process.
- The quality of the worker's relationship with other stakeholders (their employer, the insurer and practitioners) influences their sense of satisfaction with the outcome of their rehabilitation.

Purpose and Methods

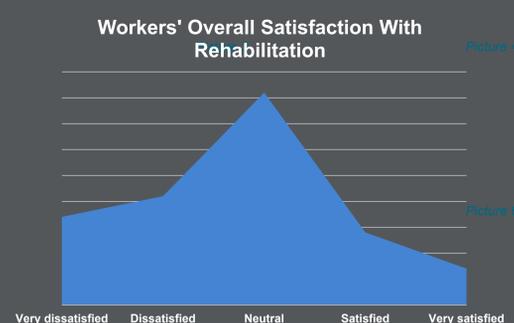
- Mixed methods study: survey plus phone interviews. 11 interviews conducted, 29 survey responses.

Research questions

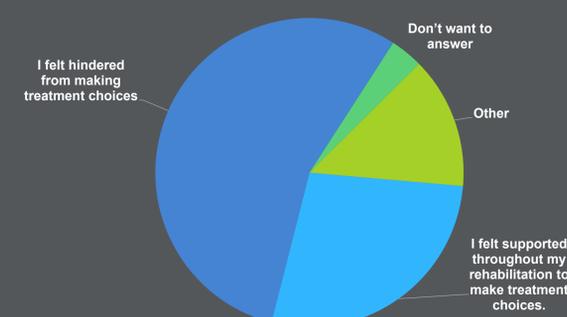
1. What choice are workers offered within injury rehabilitation?
2. What hindered or helped the worker's ability to choose around provider and treatment type in injury rehabilitation?
3. Does the worker perceive that the degree of choice influenced the outcome of their rehabilitation?

Results

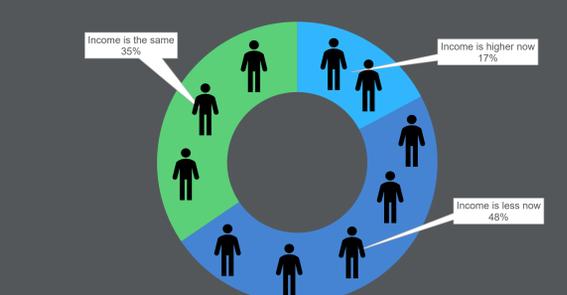
Access to choice was affected by lack of knowledge of the rehabilitation system, misinformation, communication difficulties between the workers and stakeholders, and by rupture of the occupational bond.



Hindered or Helped in Treatment Choices



Change in Worker Income Before and After Injury Rehabilitation



Literature Cited

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Further Research

In order to generate better outcomes for workers, further research is needed into the factors that lead to this disconnect between the choices that are available and those which are accessible.