

INFORMATION FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS ON REHABILITATION SUPPORTS FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV & Hepatitis C

This information sheet outlines how health care providers and HIV Services Organizations can identify the health-related challenges that their patients/clients may experience and outline the rehabilitation services that can help address these challenges. Effective rehabilitation can:

- Improve treatment adherence through supporting people to stay on HIV and Hepatitis C (Hep C) medications
 - Address negative side effects of medication (e.g. pain, neuropathy, fatigue, depression, cognitive problems) that may otherwise make adherence to treatment more difficult.
- *Improved adherence to HIV treatment helps to keep viral loads low which in turn can prevent transmission of HIV** (Horn, Tim July, 2011 http://www.aidsmeds.com/articles/hiv_prevention_hptn_2636_20845.shtml)

DO YOUR PATIENTS/CLIENTS...

- Experience fatigue, pain and other physical symptoms? Yes No
- Have difficulty managing:
- Personal care, chores, work or leisure activities? Yes No
 - The impact of HIV & Hep C on their life (e.g. financial situation, sex drive)? Yes No
 - Feelings (e.g. stress, anxiety) about having HIV and/or Hep C? Yes No
 - Their family and friends responses to HIV and/or Hep C? Yes No
 - How their partner deals with HIV and/or Hep C? Yes No

COULD YOUR PATIENTS/CLIENTS BENEFIT FROM LEARNING ABOUT...

- Types of exercises that can improve their overall health? Yes No
- Assistive devices that can help with their activities of daily living? Yes No
- How rehabilitation can help prevent HIV transmission? Yes No
- How rehabilitation can help to manage their health, including side effects of medication? Yes No
- How HIV and/or Hep C can impact their employment, income support and extended health-care benefits? Yes No
- How to talk about HIV and/or Hep C with their employer and colleagues at work? Yes No

If you answered YES to any of these questions, then your patient/client may benefit from accessing a rehabilitation service.

REHABILITATION TEAM

Referral (from a doctor) to a rehabilitation provider can help people with HIV and/or Hep C manage their health problems and provide them with the support to continue to live as independently as possible.

Physical Health:

- ✦ Physiotherapists
- ✦ Occupational Therapists
- ✦ Speech-language Pathologists
- ✦ Psychiatrists

Mental Health & Cognitive Rehabilitation:

- ✦ Psychiatrists / Psychologist
- ✦ Psychotherapists
- ✦ Other Mental Health Counsellors
- ✦ Occupational Therapists

Work Related Rehabilitation:

- ✦ Vocational Counsellors
- ✦ Rehabilitation Counsellors
- ✦ Occupational Therapists

Complementary Therapies:

- ✦ Acupuncture
- ✦ Massage therapy
- ✦ Chiropractic
- ✦ Traditional healing
- ✦ Yoga, meditation, tai chi

REHABILITATION PROVIDERS

A Physiotherapist can help your patient/client:

- ✦ Manage his/her pain and fatigue
- ✦ Build endurance and strengthen muscles
- ✦ Improve range of motion
- ✦ Address gait and balance problems
- ✦ Improve functional limitations
- ✦ Assess and ascribe assistive devices

An Occupational Therapist can help your patient/client manage everyday activities through:

- ✦ Home or workplace adaptation to meet his/her individual needs
- ✦ Assistive devices
- ✦ Implement cognitive and mental health strategies (e.g. to assist with medication schedules and organizing other activities)
- ✦ Support systems in his/her community

A Speech-Language Pathologist can help your patient/client by:

- ✦ Assessing and treating communication (speech, language, or cognition) and swallowing issues.
- ✦ Maximizing oral and written communication skills for staying at or returning to work

A Physiatrist can help your patient/client:

- ✦ Regain and/or improve movement or physical functioning
- ✦ Manage his/her chronic pain

Mental Health and Cognitive Rehabilitation

A psychiatrist, psychologist, psychotherapist, occupational therapist or other mental health worker can help your patient/client to:

- ✦ Cope with the emotional impact of HIV and/or Hep C through therapy/counselling
- ✦ Develop strategies and techniques to relieve anxiety and stress, reduce feelings of isolation, deal with a reduced sex drive and maintain personal relationships and support networks
- ✦ Connect with peer support groups and improve self-esteem
- ✦ Access prescribed medication if necessary (by psychiatrists only)

Work Related Rehabilitation

Occupational therapists, vocational rehabilitation programs and some AIDS service organizations can help your patient/client stay in or return to the workforce after a period of illness by assessing, evaluating, and managing disability that interferes with his/her ability to obtain and maintain employment, including work site adaptations.

Complementary Therapies

Some people with HIV and/or Hep C also find that complementary therapies are helpful to address the many physical, mental or emotional challenges they face.

These can include:

- ✦ acupuncture
- ✦ massage therapy
- ✦ chiropractic
- ✦ yoga, meditation, tai chi
- ✦ traditional healing

To find out more, please visit www.HIVandRehab.ca



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