

Integration of Psychological Services for Patients in Rehabilitation

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Background

-Rehabilitation psychology is a specialization that focuses on increasing function and quality of life for persons living with chronic illness, injury, and/or disability. Neuropsychology is a specialization that focuses on brain behavior relationships.

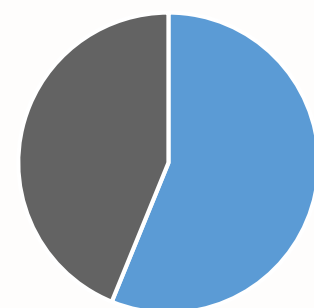
-In the Spring of 2017, rehab neuropsychology moved from a consult service to becoming a fully integrated member of the inpatient Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation team.

-This role is part of an emerging trend moving from multidisciplinary to inter/transdisciplinary integration, and extends beyond the traditional role of a psychologist as an outside consultation service.

“Sample Day in the Life”

Time	Activity
8:15 am	Morning Huddles: Floor and Consult Patients
8:45 am	Round with MD team
9:30 am	Co-treatment with PT for anxiety around falls
10:30 am	Patient Care: Adaptation to new level of disability
11:00 am	Team conference
1:00 pm	Patient care: Non-pharmacological pain management
2:00 pm	Family meeting to discuss progress and transition home
3:30 pm	Curbside consult with RN for behavioral management
4:00 pm	Neuropsych Evaluation: Feedback session
4:30 pm	Documentation

Time Allocation (1/14/2019 – 3/14/2019)



44% of time “provider-side” providing consultation, at rounds, or team support)
56% of time “patient-side” with patients (co-therapy, assessment, family meetings)

Survey Responses: Patients (n = 22)

	Agree/Strongly Agree
I was satisfied with the time and frequency availability of the neuropsychologist	72.7%
I feel that working with the neuropsychologist helped me make progress in my recovery.	86.4%
I feel that working with the neuropsychologist helped me to participate in my daily therapies.	81.8%
I feel that meeting with the neuropsychologist helped with my readiness for discharge.	77.3%
I feel that meeting with the neuropsychologist helped me better understand and manage my condition.	90.9%
Overall, I feel the neuropsychology service provided was beneficial to my recovery and reintegration into my life.	86.3%

Survey Responses: Family (n = 15)

	Agree/Strongly Agree
I feel that meeting with the neuropsychologist helped me/us cope with my loved one’s condition.	100%
I feel that meeting with the neuropsychologist prepared me/us for discharge.	86.7%
I feel that meeting with the neuropsychologist provided me/us with emotional support.	86.6%
Overall, I feel that the neuropsychology service was beneficial to our family.	93.3%

Survey Responses: Providers

-Do you prefer the current integrated role of the psychologist to the prior role of the psychologist as a separate consultant?

“ [The neuropsychologist]’s integrated role as a member of the interdisciplinary team is invaluable...For many of our rehab patients who are struggling to cope with their new disabilities or patients with cognitive impairments it poses significant challenges to the interdisciplinary team on how to best manage these patients’ behaviors and help them through the rehabilitation process. The neuropsychologist is often a first point of contact for many staff members who find themselves struggling with patients in these situations and her assistance has been extremely helpful.”

Discussion

Our initial goal was to examine the evidence supporting the psychologist as an integrated team member versus a “consult” service.

Across patients, families, and providers, results suggest that a more inter/transdisciplinary role is well tolerated and effective.

The rehab neuropsychologist’s services are well divided between “provider side” – including team support, and “patient side” – involving patients and families directly. With time and personnel, neuropsychology’s integration can move from multi-to inter/trans- disciplinary service delivery.

Future Directions

Streamlining service delivery, establishing a triage protocol, and educating staff about uses of psychology services could improve delivery.

Overall growth of the service is another fruitful future direction, as noted by one provider below:
“...the rehab neuropsychologist needs to be an integrated PM&R team member. It is essential to have neuropsychology input for the cognitive, behavioral, and mental health needs of our patients.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES

Karol, R. L. (2014). Team models in neurorehabilitation: structure, function, and culture change. *NeuroRehabilitation*, 34(4), 655-669.