

Thoughts on Disability, Language and Saving

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Letter to the editor

The idea that a larger investment in health resources for the rehabilitation of patients who have sustained a stroke, could reduce the expense of what this disability means for the society, made me review the literature and therefore publish the article "Efficient stroke rehabilitation with evaluation on disability saving" [1].

I continued to reflect and to ask myself questions about disability: are those individuals with the most significant physical disabilities... people unable to move a small distance walking? or people unable to reach, grab and manipulate objects? or people with a language disorder unable to find the words to express something, to inform something, to ask something or to complain of something? I work in a small hospital that is not specific to brain damage. Frequently in my patients, the rehabilitation efforts focus on achieving the first goal, which is the easier and more realistic target to achieve, but sometimes I feel the difficulty in communication is the most dramatic consequence for the patient. I miss more resources and comminatory strategies to help patients and relatives. We cannot separate the physical from the emotional or linguistic dimension, when we want to evaluate the impact of disability in stroke. From the point of view of disability saving, we consider as severe disability, if the patient is unable to perform activities of daily routine, including self-care, and the need of help from a third person. Therefore, it should be compulsory the presence of the occupational therapist in the intervention; trying to regain or compensate the function of the upper limbs and increasing participation in occupations [2].

On the other hand, when it comes to investing in rehabilitation resources, people would think that I refer only to technology investment, that's of course very important but also very expensive. I also consider very important language therapist research. Neurocognitive therapist shows how to guide the patient in the process of recovering from a stroke, it's necessary to understand how the patient perceives and feels his body, the space and the world around him. Perhaps it is important to recognize how the way therapist use the language when they speak to the patient, in order to guide and facilitate the activation of cognitive process and learning, is as important as the way he places his hands. Even in the case of rehabilitation using robots or virtual reality, it is necessary verbal instructions. Enough time and quality of healthcare professionals should never miss for efficient stroke rehabilitation.

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