

An Investigation of Allied Health and Medical Clinician's Viewpoint on Prosthetic Rehabilitation and Cognition

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Abstract : Background: In a population where adapting to new devices is often necessary post-surgery, this can pose significant challenges. This study aimed to explore the factors that influence clinicians (occupational therapists, physiotherapists, vascular surgeons, and rehabilitation medicine physicians) when prescribing prosthetic rehabilitation. Additionally, the study aimed to gain insight into clinicians' perspectives regarding the role of patient cognition in prosthetic rehabilitation. Method: This research constitutes one segment of a broader action research study. A combination of group and individual interviews, as well as surveys to engage key clinicians who are involved in the amputation and prosthetic rehabilitation pathway within a local health district in Australia, were conducted. Major findings: Several factors emerged as essential considerations when prescribing prosthetic rehabilitation. These included patient's goals, medical history, quality of life, cognitive abilities, and the support available on discharge. Cognition has a far-reaching impact on prosthetic rehabilitation and should be considered at every stage of the amputation journey, from obtaining pre-operative consent to fitting prosthetics, ensuring patient safety upon discharge, and ongoing rehabilitation. This study also revealed variations in opinions among different disciplines concerning prosthetic rehabilitation. The biggest variance was seen between the opinions of vascular surgeons and those in allied health on the appropriateness of prosthetic prescription with patients, with vascular surgery believing most should not receive prosthetics and allied health believing that most should have an attempt with a prosthetic. Conclusion: The complex area of care and journey for clinicians has been made much more approachable by the identification of key areas for consideration when prescribing prosthetic rehabilitation. Should clinicians wish, these could be made into a framework to guide pertinent conversations regarding prosthetic rehabilitation and are closely linked with the patients' cognition. Whilst discipline specific differences existed on prosthetic rehabilitation appropriateness, there was a desire to build a consensus around a shared approach of identification for patients and clinicians.

Keywords : aging, cognition, multidisciplinary, prosthetic rehabilitation

Conference Title : ICHAA 2024 : International Conference on Healthy and Active Aging

Conference Location : Montreal, Canada

Conference Dates : May 23-24, 2024