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Centralisation of the treatment, rehabilitation and life-long care of persons with SCI

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on behalf of the ESCIF centralisation working group

The ESCIF policy statement makes two important assertions

- ESCIF will promote centralisation of rehabilitation for persons with SCI and the creation of dedicated centres of excellence
- The services offered by the centres will be available to **all** paraplegics and tetraplegics

What is successful treatment and rehabilitation?

... a progressive, dynamic, goal-oriented and often time-limited process...

... optimal mental, physical, cognitive and social level...

... rehabilitation means more than physical “coping” – it demands reintegration!

Why centralisation?

While the incidence of SCI is relatively low, the physical, medical, psychological, social and financial consequences are highly complex...

... in dedicated centres of excellence receiving a critical mass of patients

What does ESCIF mean by centralisation?

Rehabilitation is centralised when the care is concentrated in Spinal Cord Injury Centres (SCIC) that treat

- both traumatic and non-traumatic spinal cord lesions
- a minimum of 40 – 50 newly-injured persons per year

What is a Spinal Cord Injury Centre?

- located at a university hospital
- multidisciplinary teams with expertise in SCI headed by SCI consultants
- direct access to other medical and clinical specialisations
- regional/national/international SCI registry
- SCI organisations
- peer support and proactive support for families
- expert counselling, expert information and advisory services
- research and international research collaborations
- community-based health care personnel and future health care professionals

Stages of care provided by the SCIC

- acute and emergency care
- primary rehabilitation
- continuing care services
 - reintegration in the community resource
 - life-long follow-up consultations
 - rehabilitation periods
 - readmissions for treatment according to needs

Challenges to centralisation

The need for life-long follow-up care is frequently cited as an argument *against* centralisation: how can the system demand regular return visits to a centre that may be far away or difficult to access due to geographical or infrastructural problems?

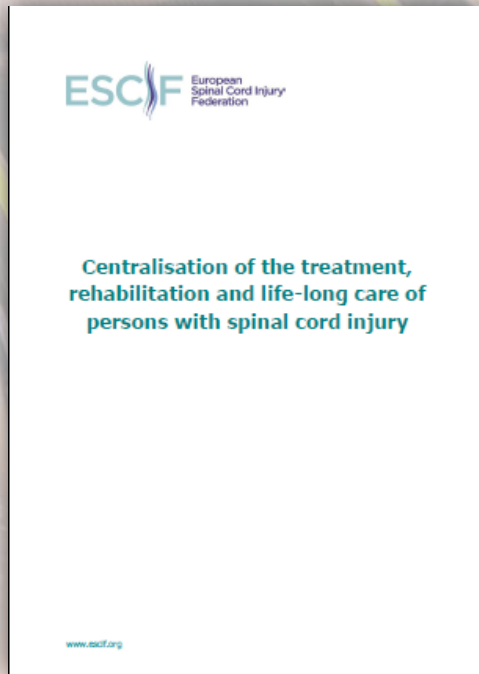
Quality over distance

... the consensus within ESCIF is that a centralised, dedicated service provides a better opportunity for individuals to gain the most from a rehabilitation program...

... quality of the service rather than distance to a person's home that should be of paramount importance.

Further information

Visit



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