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COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THE REHABILITATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORK

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Abstract

The paper examines rehabilitation technologies with people with disabilities in Ukraine as a response to war-related trauma. The author explores strategies for a comprehensive rehabilitation approach within Ukraine's community-based protection system during wartime, with particular attention to current challenges related to safety, security, and the increasing number of veterans and civilians with trauma-related disabilities. The research methodology involves qualitative analysis of four case studies of best practices implemented by four rehabilitation service providers in Ukraine (N=4). The article underscores the importance of integrating various dimensions of the rehabilitation process to enhance outcomes and improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities. It argues that the success of rehabilitation efforts largely depends on effective management and the role of social workers as coordinators of multidisciplinary teams.

Keywords

Social rehabilitation, comprehensive rehabilitation, local community, person with a disability, person with an acquired disability, types of rehabilitation.

1. Introduction

As a result of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, many citizens, adults, and children received injuries and wounds that led to disability. Injured persons with acquired injuries must undergo a complex rehabilitation process in medical institutions. After that, they are expected to return home and adapt to life in the community. Nowadays, there are various forms of providing rehabilitation assistance to persons with disabilities. At the same time, special studies have shown that the absence or limitation of comprehensive rehabilitation assistance to persons with disabilities in the community leads to the emergence of complex life circumstances for them. These violations, in the absence of timely assistance to a person with a disability, lead to social maladaptation. The basis is not one, but many factors: psychological and pedagogical, socio-psychological, personal, socio-economic, etc. These factors act at the level of psychological prerequisites and complicate the social adaptation of the individual. While these are steps in the right direction, the fact remains that Ukraine still lacks a systematic approach to comprehensively assisting people with disabilities at the community level.

The purpose of the article is to investigate the effectiveness of comprehensive rehabilitation with people with disabilities and persons with acquired trauma during military operations in the context of social welfare and engagement in the community.

In world science, many scientific studies have studied acquired disability. For example, a survey of Narrative Family Therapy and Group Work for Families Living with

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Acquired Brain Injury (Butera-Prinzi *et al.,* 2014). Acquired disability forces the environment to reconsider their lives and challenges children and their parents as they adapt to the new reality of life. The sooner the diagnosis is made, the easier it is for parents to adjust to the new realities of life (Haspel & Hamama, 2021). Psychological adaptation, social rehabilitation and integration into society after acquired injuries face many psychosocial issues and processes related to adaptation or adjustment to acquired disabilities and chronic diseases. Some theories and models help a person with a disability and the family control the adaptation process after a sudden change in health status (Yates, 2003). According to Tagaki (2017), the scientific community has an evolutionary process from research on recognizing acquired disability to the meaning of their condition for people with disabilities.

Thus, significant experience among Ukrainian scientists has been accumulated in researching problems of correctional work on psychophysical development (L. Barteneva, V. Bondar, L. Vavina, V. Masenko, A. Kolupaeva, S. Maksymenko, L. Fomichova).

2. Methodology

Although our research continues, the main period this paper addresses runs through December 2024. In this part, we look back at the context of the recent social and economic situation, which has reawakened several problems surrounding the conditions of war in Ukraine and the process of reforming and developing the social welfare of persons with disabilities. It is based on different methodological approaches and strands of research, merging ethnographic fieldwork, case studies, and interviews. We analyzed four real-life cases of people with acquired trauma, using veterans as examples - participants of reintegration programs of the Veteran Hub NGO and case practice activities of local organizations that are providing services. We combined observations in Ukraine with analyzing posts and threads taken from social media and official data.

3. Findings

Among the problems and difficulties for people with acquired disabilities, the following can be distinguished: financial and economic, psychological, medical, underdevelopment and unavailability of early diagnosis technologies, the problem of information support, non-acceptance of people with disabilities in society, inaccessibility of particular objects and structures, and imperfection of regulatory approval. One of the main problems is how to help people with acquired disabilities adapt to new realities and the need for comprehensive rehabilitation, including physical rehabilitation and reintegration into society or social rehabilitation, given the relevance of the problem of implementing innovative forms of comprehensive rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and the need to improve the quality of life of persons with various forms of disabilities.

Social rehabilitation is a type of social action aimed at implementing a system of organizational, economic, legal, cultural, educational, medical, health, and other social measures to restore the physical condition, honor, dignity, rights, and freedoms of children and youth who need them due to social vulnerability, illness, or other social reasons.

The basis of the comprehensive rehabilitation model is a multidisciplinary approach involving psychologists, occupational therapists, social workers, and other

specialists. Veterans' communities play an essential role in facilitating socialization, emotional support, career development, and access to resources. Their activities are aimed at maximizing the integration of people with acquired trauma into society and ensuring their self-realization. One of the aspects of comprehensive rehabilitation is the activity of rehabilitation centers. A systematic review showed that the return of persons with severe disabilities to family life had a negative impact on the quality of life of their family members, leading to a loss of partnership, free time and social contacts.

4. Discussion

Here are some practical examples of comprehensive rehabilitation programs for people with acquired trauma:

1. The UNBROKEN Rehabilitation Center. For example, communities that adopt UNBROKEN's experience are forming their rehabilitation units and adapting the best approaches to local conditions. There is an increasing emphasis on training specialists, including psychologists, to work with military families, who also have a significant demand for assistance.
2. The Halychyna Rehabilitation Center uses modern technologies to rehabilitate people with physical and psychological trauma. It implements community integration programs through art therapy, physiotherapy, and psychological support.
3. The Lisova Polyana Center for Mental Health and Rehabilitation of Veterans is a state-owned institution run by the Ministry of Health, which is the first medical center in Ukraine to specialize in the treatment of psycho trauma, the effects of mild traumatic brain injury (post-communication syndrome), assistance to survivors of captivity and torture and other prolonged effects of severe traumatic factors on the psyche, their multimodality and the peculiarities of psychopathological impact during military operations. The Center focuses on the post-traumatic growth of patients, which is necessary for the survival of trauma.

5. Conclusion

The study's findings clearly show a serious gap between the needs of people with disabilities, including those with acquired trauma, and the capacities of service providers. It is precisely visible in the study that a significant achievement has been the identification and withdrawal of the comprehensive rehabilitation of acquired trauma in the community, which is to create an institutional mechanism for the implementation of legal provisions of mass-level awareness, but not on the ground level, specifically in communities.

An analysis of the results of implementing comprehensive rehabilitation for people with acquired trauma demonstrates the significant impact of an individualized approach. At the same time, a long period of adaptation indicates the need for sustained support from specialists, which helps reduce depression, increase independence, and improve quality of life. However, challenges remain related to insufficient attention from members of the communities to the psychosocial aspects of rehabilitation, including the need to increase access to specialized psychologists and support groups.

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