

Title:

NEW APPROACHES TO REHABILITATION USING THE FACILITIES OF ACCIDENT
INSURANCE HOSPITALS

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Descriptive Abstract:

The BG-emergency-hospital has introduced a rehabilitation plan that systematically restores an affected person's fitness for work. The individual job description determines the content of rehabilitation.

Topic track:

Success Stories, Case Studies, and Solutions for Stakeholders

- Insurers

Many people experiencing accidents have difficulty readjusting to their old job after they have recovered from their actual injuries. The primary aim, wherever possible, is for rehabilitation to enable the person affected to return to work following a work-related accident. To tackle this problem, doctors and therapists from all disciplines, in collaboration with psychologists, disability managers and staff from social services, have developed a new rehabilitation concept at the BG-Unfallklinik Ludwigshafen that is unique in Germany. The "medical and professional rehabilitation" (MBO-Reha) concept aims to restore the patient's fitness for work. The route to this lies in targeted rehabilitation tailored to the individual needs of the person affected. As part of an assessment, a team of doctors and therapists works in tandem with the affected person to identify his personal abilities and diagnose what restrictions he has suffered as a result of the accident. The demands generally placed on the affected person by his occupation are also evaluated. This process produces a type of roadmap for the MBO-Reha programme, which lasts four weeks in total.

The new concept goes well beyond the existing rehabilitation method which, although it also uses occupational therapy, does not generally relate to the specific job of the person affected.

MBO-Reha aims to identify individual performance requirements in the workplace. The limitations on the affected person's performance are compared with the specific performance requirements of the job. The key element of MBO-Reha is therefore the assessment at the beginning and end of the treatment, i.e. identifying the personal weaknesses of the affected person with reference to the requirements of his job.

For example if, following an accident, an employee exhibits a loss of physical coordination that makes his previous work on scaffolding and walking on an uneven surface, such as a construction site, almost impossible, the doctors and therapists will take a focused approach. In the very first week of the programme, treatment takes place in unusual locations such as on scaffolding erected in the yard or on a sloping roof specially installed for MBO-Reha in the work room. This provides the opportunity to practise basic work operations under the guidance of occupational therapists, including walking on the sloping roof and carrying out plumbing work.

The occupational therapy is augmented by relaxation exercises and discussions with psychologists, pain therapists, disability managers and staff from social services. This gives the employee the opportunity to deal with his accident and take control of his fear of returning to work. Another assessment is scheduled for the end of the four-week programme. This determines whether the affected person still exhibits certain personal weaknesses as a result of the accident and to what extent the rehabilitation programme has succeeded in overcoming shortcomings and limitations. In conjunction with the therapists, a plan of action is devised for the affected person to enable him to successfully resume his career.

Initial experience with the new concept is promising.

Initial study results confirm the effectiveness of the concept. A study to evaluate its effectiveness has already been initiated.