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Effects of individual tailored vocational rehabilitation in young adults with disabilities

Selected presentation:

- 1) Poster presentation

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Abstract

Background: Young adults (19-29 years) with disabilities who are not studying or working are a vulnerable group in society. Unemployment at a young age can result in negative consequences such as impaired health and economy, and reduced participation and influence in society. The purpose of this study was to evaluate an individual tailored vocational rehabilitation program aiming to increase work capacity and facilitate return to work for young adults with disabilities.

Method: A randomized study with data collected through registers and questionnaires ($n=130$) at baseline and completed participation in the rehabilitation program, during autumn 2012 to spring 2014. The program consisted of a close collaboration of officials from the Swedish Sickness Insurance Agency, and the Swedish Public Employment Services and the local municipality who worked together with the participants to support their rehabilitation process. The intervention was based on the participants' own needs and goals with an individualized plan to make contact with the labor market. The participants were offered various activities and courses based on individual needs. Data were analyzed with paired t-Test and Chi²-test.

Results: Preliminary results showed increased self-efficacy over time for the participating women (mean value from 2.4 to 2.6, $p<0.05$). No change was found for self-rated health. Participants reported an increased ability to perform lighter duties ($p<0.05$) and the ability to work more hours per day compared to baseline ($p<0.05$). At the end of the intervention 31% had begun to work or study and 70% believed they had good chances to get a job within a year.

Conclusion: Key success factors were the collaboration between officials from the different agencies, the good treatment and the individualized methods.

Implementation for practice:

Collaboration and individually tailored vocational rehabilitation increase the opportunity for young adults with disabilities to begin work or study.