

Activity patterns revisited: towards a qualitative approach of the relationship to activity in chronic pain sufferers after orthopaedic trauma.

Numerous biomedical and clinical studies have explored the behaviours toward activity of individuals suffering from chronic pain. Through the use of questionnaires, three major patterns of activity have been identified, i.e: avoidance, pacing and persistence. Several studies have been conducted to analyse these patterns, their interrelations as well as their associations with psychosocial factors.

However, personal strategies adopted by individuals to manage activity remain relatively unknown. This study intends to investigate the relationship that people have with activity following an orthopaedic trauma, and to bring to light the individual practices and strategies used for activity management. The goal is to understand the structured process that lead sufferers to one or another activity patterns, and to find out whether these mechanisms are stable over time or whether they evolve in the long run, particularly after participation in a rehabilitation program. A better understanding of the factors that underlie activity management will enable professionals to adapt rehabilitation approaches and will increase the effectiveness of interventions.

The planned study combines several approaches that contribute to its novel character. First, it is qualitative. Through a patient-centred approach, it's based on observations of professional workshops and on interviews with persons participating in the rehabilitation program at the Clinique Romande de Réadaptation (CRR) at Sion. Secondly, it is interdisciplinary, combining skills of researchers from human and social sciences, physiotherapy, physical medicine, to favour the emergence of pertinent conclusions from a theoretical as well as a practical point of view. Finally, it is a longitudinal study that will explore the maintenance of activity management practices one year after the participation to the rehabilitation program.

Research team

Josiane Mbarga, main applicant, HESAV

Claude Pichonnaz, other applicant,
HESAV

Rose-Anna Foley, other applicant,
HESAV

Céline Ancey, other applicant, HESAV

François Luthi, other applicant,
CRR, CHUV

Christine Favre, other applicant, CRR

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