



Scoping the Field: Identifying Key Research Priorities in HIV and Rehabilitation



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Background

- Since the advent of Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART), HIV increasingly is experienced as a lifelong, episodic disease, characterized by unpredictable cycles of wellness and illness.
- There is a need to develop research, clinical practice, and policy for HIV rehabilitation, to address the range of impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions associated with HIV and its treatments.

Objective

To identify key research priorities related to HIV and rehabilitation that will advance policy and practice for people living with HIV in Canada.

Methods – Scoping Study

Phase 1 – Literature Review

Search Strategy = 4724 abstracts
Searched MEDLINE, EMBASE, CINAHL and PsychINFO databases and Grey Literature to identify strengths and gaps in the research evidence. Focused on 1260 MEDLINE Abstracts
2 Abstract Reviewers coded content according to the *Episodic Disability Framework* which includes:
1) dimensions of disability (symptoms and impairments, difficulties with day to day activities, challenges to social inclusion, uncertainty)
2) contextual factors – extrinsic (e.g. level of support, stigma) & intrinsic (e.g. living strategies, personal attributes)
3) triggers of disability

Articles that Addressed HIV & Rehabilitation = 615
2 Reviewers met to determine consensus / coding agreements. Classified content as addressing:
A) disablement needs
B) effectiveness of interventions
C) roles of rehabilitation professionals

Full Articles Identified for Full Review and Data Extraction = 146
2 Reviewers met to determine consensus / coding agreements. Data extracted included: author, year, study location, intervention if any, duration of the intervention, study populations, aims of the study, methodology, outcome measures, important results, and important considerations for key research priorities.

Phase 2 – Qualitative Consultation

Key Informant Focus Groups (n=2) & Interviews (n=10)
To obtain perspectives and opinions on research priorities in HIV and rehabilitation.
N= 28 participants Included: people living with HIV, researchers, educators, clinicians and policy makers with expertise in HIV and rehabilitation in Canada and internationally.

Validity Check Consultation
CWGHR's Research Education Practice and Advisory Committee, Board, key informants & Consultation Workshop.
To review preliminary findings, refine and prioritize the research priorities.

Results – Strengths and Shortcomings of the Literature



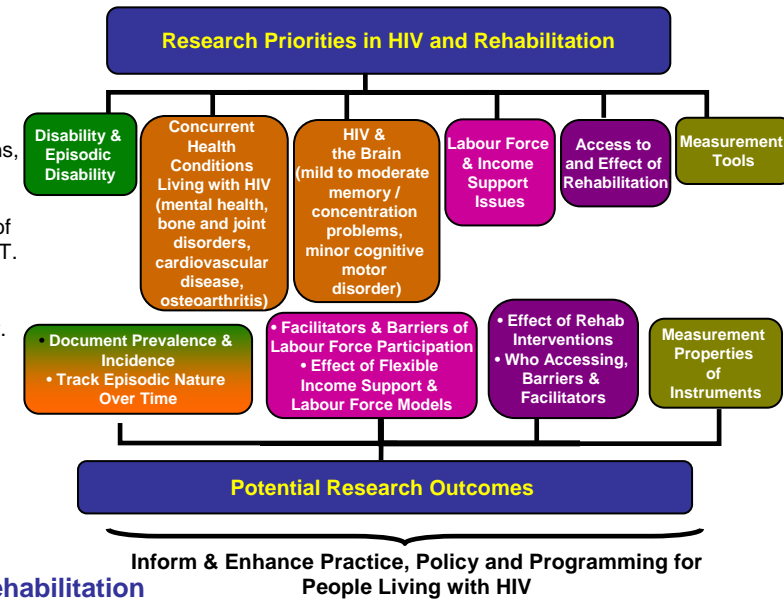
Strengths

- Increased intervention-based literature post-HAART (1997 onwards) mostly related to exercise.
- Importance of rehabilitation was identified early in the HIV epidemic – primarily in acute and palliative care settings.
- Evidence on physical impairments experienced by people living with HIV.

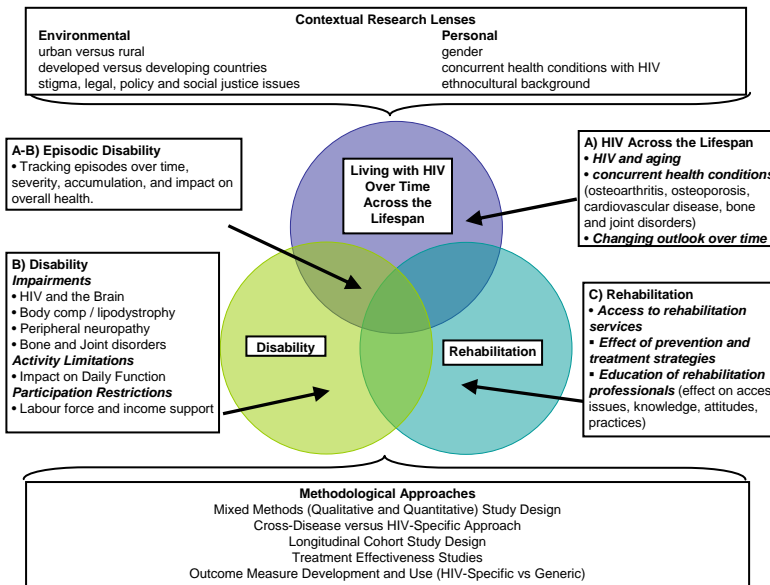
Shortcomings

- Very little randomized control trial evidence for the effectiveness of rehabilitation interventions, other than exercise.
- Less discussion on role of rehabilitation post-HAART.
- Little evidence on social inclusion and uncertainty.

Top Research Priorities in HIV & Rehabilitation



Framework of Research Priorities in HIV & Rehabilitation



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Conclusions

- Despite increasing evidence in this field, there is a need for future research in HIV and rehabilitation
- Future research should explore:
 - Disability & Episodic Disability over time
 - Concurrent Health Conditions (e.g. mental health, bone and joint disorders, cardiovascular disease, osteoarthritis)
 - HIV & the Brain (e.g. mild to moderate memory and concentration problems, minor cognitive motor disorder)
 - Labour Force and Income Support Issues
 - Access to and Effect of Rehabilitation
 - Measurement Tools – Identification, Development and Assessment
- Research priorities for HIV and rehabilitation research were identified through a collaborative scoping review process that integrated perspectives of multiple stakeholders.
- These priorities outline a future plan for HIV and rehabilitation research which may increase our knowledge to collectively enhance future practice, programming and policy for people living with HIV in Canada
- Next steps include disseminating these findings to key informants, researchers, and funding organizations to inform future research and call for proposals.

