

# SERVICE PROVIDER FACT SHEET: REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

The purpose of this fact sheet is to help health care providers (e.g. family physicians, HIV specialists) as well as AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) to identify the health-related challenges that their patients/clients may experience and outline the rehabilitation services that can help address these challenges.

## DO YOUR PATIENTS/CLIENTS..

Experience fatigue, pain and other physical symptoms? Yes  No

### Need support:

Carrying out personal care and household chores? Yes  No

Dealing with the overall impact of HIV on their life (e.g. financial situation, sex drive)? Yes  No

Addressing feelings (e.g. stress, anxiety) about having HIV? Yes  No

Dealing with the way their family and friends respond to HIV? Yes  No

Dealing with the way they and their partner deal with HIV? Yes  No

## COULD YOUR PATIENTS/CLIENTS BENEFIT FROM LEARNING ABOUT..

Types exercises that can improve their overall health? Yes  No

Assistive devices that can help with their activities of daily living? Yes  No

How HIV can impact their employment, income support and extended health-care benefits? Yes  No

How to talk about HIV with their employer and colleagues at work? Yes  No

How rehabilitation can help to manage their disease? Yes  No

*If you answered YES to any of these questions,  
then your patient/client may benefit from accessing a rehabilitation service or provider.*

## REHABILITATION TEAM

Referral to a rehabilitation provider can help people living with HIV manage their health problems and provide them with the support to continue to live as independently as possible.

### *Physical Rehabilitation:*

- ✘ Physical Therapists (Physiotherapists)
- ✘ Occupational Therapists
- ✘ Speech-language Pathologists
- ✘ Psychiatrists

### *Psychosocial Rehabilitation:*

- ✘ Psychiatrists
- ✘ Psychotherapists
- ✘ Mental Health Counsellors
- ✘ Occupational Therapists

### *Vocational Rehabilitation:*

- ✘ Vocational Counsellors
- ✘ Rehabilitation Counsellors
- ✘ Occupational Therapists

### *Complementary or Alternative Therapies*

- ✘ acupuncture
- ✘ massage therapy
- ✘ chiropractic
- ✘ yoga, meditation, tai chi
- ✘ traditional healing (e.g. sweat lodge, Sundance)

# REHABILITATION PROVIDERS

Referral to a Physical Therapist (Physiotherapist) can help your patient/client:

- ✘ Manage his/her pain and fatigue
- ✘ Build endurance and strengthen muscles
- ✘ Improve range of motion
- ✘ Address gait and balance problems
- ✘ Improve functional limitations
- ✘ Assess and ascribe assistive devices

Referral to an Occupational Therapist can help your patient/client:

- ✘ Adapt his/her home or workplace environment to meet his/her individual needs
- ✘ Use assistive devices
- ✘ Implement strategies to improve cognition (e.g. to assist with medication schedules and organizing other activities)
- ✘ Use support systems in his/her community

Referral to a Speech-Language Pathologist can help your patient/client by:

- ✘ Assessing and treating communication (speech, language, or cognition) and swallowing issues.
- ✘ Maximizing oral and written communication skills for staying at or returning to work

Referral to a Physiatrist can help your patient/client:

- ✘ Regain lost movement or physical functioning
- ✘ Manage his/her chronic pain

## Psychosocial Rehabilitation

Referral to psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, occupational therapists and mental health counselors can help your patient/client to:

- ✘ Cope with the emotional impact of HIV through therapy/counselling
- ✘ Develop strategies and techniques to relieve anxiety and stress, reduce feelings of isolation, deal with a reduced sex drive and maintain personal relationships and support networks
- ✘ Connect with peer support groups and improve self-esteem
- ✘ Access prescribed medication if necessary (by psychiatrists only)

## Vocational Rehabilitation

Occupational therapists, vocational rehabilitation programs and some AIDS service organizations can help your patient/client stay in or return to the workforce after a period of illness by assessing, evaluating, and managing disability that interferes with his/her ability to obtain and maintain employment

## Complementary & Alternative Therapies

Some people with HIV also find that complementary or alternative therapies are helpful to address the many physical, mental or emotional challenges they face. These include:

- ✘ acupuncture
- ✘ massage therapy
- ✘ chiropractic
- ✘ yoga, meditation, tai chi
- ✘ traditional healing (e.g. sweat lodge, Sundance)

*Source:* Written by Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation [CWGHR] for Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange [CATIE]: "Managing Your Health" Rehabilitation Chapter 2008 Edition.

