

# EFFECTIVENESS OF A HOLISTIC DAY TREATMENT REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR PATIENTS WITH ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY IN THE CHRONIC PHASE IN GREECE

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## Abstract

**INTRODUCTION:** Most ABI survivors exhibit a variety of chronic neurobehavioral sequelae, as well as impaired self-awareness, hindering independent functioning and social re-integration. A great amount of evidence-based studies has suggested that ABI survivors are best treated by holistic day treatment programs, offering integrated, multidisciplinary rehabilitation. However, there is limited research regarding the effectiveness of holistic rehabilitation in ABI patients in the chronic phase.

**OBJECTIVES:** The primary aim of the current study was to evaluate the effectiveness, in cognitive functioning, self-awareness and independence in daily activities, of a day treatment program treating Greek outpatients with ABI in the chronic phase.

**PARTICIPANTS AND METHODS:** A prospective study with 30 ABI patients in the chronic phase (mean=6,5 years since injury, SD=5,8) who underwent a holistic day treatment program (5 hours/day, 4 days/week) for 12 months and 10 controls (mean=8,8 years since injury, SD=7,8) who did not receive rehabilitation. The effectiveness of this intervention was evaluated with performance on neuropsychological (NP) testing, altered self-awareness and changes regarding independence in activities of daily living.

**RESULTS:** NP functioning significantly improved for the rehabilitation group. In addition, after rehabilitation, patients showed better awareness of their difficulties especially in the cognitive and behavioral domain, and improvement in daily activities according to the proxy. In the control group, no significant change was observed at NP testing, awareness or daily activities.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The findings support that holistic day treatment rehabilitation programs can improve cognitive functioning, increase self-awareness and consequently enhance functionality in daily living in ABI patients even in the chronic phase.