

Is everybody suitable for telerehabilitation?

An assessment. Lukas Wohofsky*, Daniela Krainer, Sascha H. Fink | FH Kärnten



Background

Telerehabilitation can help patients to gain access to therapeutic services and help therapists to reach a broader target group, not just in terms of therapy location. Nonetheless it is not always obvious if teletherapeutic measures will work for every patient. Many factors can influence the suitability for telerehabilitation.

Development

In a participatory process, a questionnaire to assess the suitability of stroke patients for telerehabilitation and the potential factors influencing this suitability was developed. The questionnaire is based on existing assessments already used in clinical context as well as the experience and practices of therapists.

Assessment

The assessment contains 88 items (Likert scale, dichotomous and open questions), structured in following areas:

- cognition
- motor skills and sensitivity
- visual, hearing and speech impairments
- Activities of Daily Living
- pain
- social network
- technical skills and therapy-related items
- suitability for telerehabilitation

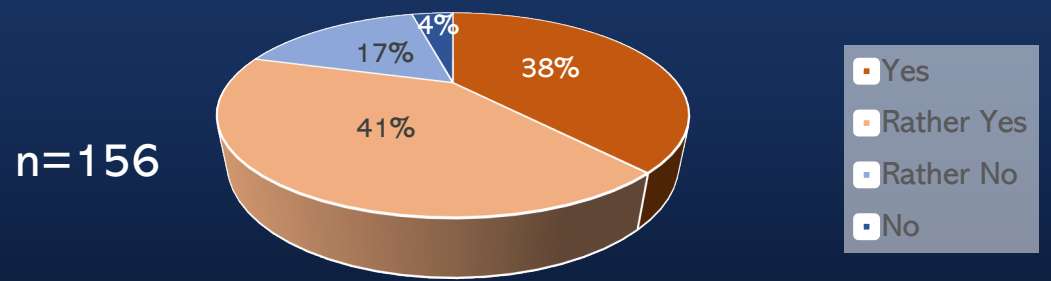
Data collection

The assessment was conducted with 160 patients in two rehabilitation clinics in Austria and Slovenia. It was filled out by therapists based on medical records and information from patients.

Results

A total of 160 stroke patients took part in the survey, 49 in Austria and 111 in Slovenia. The mean age was 59,6 years (SD 13,6) with a gender distribution of 101 male and 59 female patients.

Suitability for Telerehabilitation



Outlook

From all items, nine showed a highly significant correlation ($p < 0,001$) with the suitability for telerehabilitation. Examples are the compliance of the patient ($r = ,571$, $n = 153$), the usage of a phone ($r = ,477$, $n = 156$), visuoconstruction ($r = ,396$, $n = 131$) or the short term memory ($r = ,366$, $n = 134$).

Deeper analysis of the factors that influence suitability for telerehabilitation were made and will be published. The assessment can be further developed to serve as a clinical decision making tool.

*Contact: Lukas Wohofsky | l.wohofsky@fh-kaernten.at | +43 5 90 500 3219

