

BACHELOR THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Principles for Choosing an Electric Wheelchair for a Person with a Spinal Cord Injury from the Perspective of an Occupational Therapist

Abstract:

There are not enough sources in the Czech Republic which would summarize this topic, and therefore the main goal of this thesis is the description of the selection process when it comes to an electric wheelchair for people with a spinal cord lesion at the C4-C6 level from an occupational therapy point of view. A subsidiary aim of this thesis is a survey of the Czech market with electric wheelchairs, the selection of several different models suitable for tetraplegics, their assessment by an occupational therapist and recommendations to certain groups of clients. When it comes to the case studies, this theoretical information is applied in the clinical practice. Another partial goal represents a compilation of a form for occupational therapist in the Czech Republic which combines the acquired theoretical and practical knowledge, and further guides them through the process of selecting an electric wheelchair.

The theoretical part presents the description of a spinal cord and spinal cord lesions. It addresses a spinal program and the role of occupational therapist in this field. Moreover, this section includes information on electric wheelchairs including the process of obtaining them. The conclusion of this section provides an analysis of the sitting posture since the correct manner of sitting may prevent the development of discomfort and defects.

The practical part contains a survey of the Czech market which includes an occupational therapy assessment and recommendations of a few models of electric wheelchairs to people with spinal cord lesions. This section also introduces five case studies of people with spinal cord lesions who were attempting to choose a new electric wheelchair. The collection of data was performed by using a structured interview, the SCIM test and the assessment of the sitting posture via the MAT test.

The most suitable wheelchairs were selected based on the obtained results and negotiations with the clients. The acquired practical experience resulted in compiling a form for Czech occupational therapists for the purposes of choosing an electric wheelchair. The survey of the Czech market shows a large number of electric wheelchairs and their

appurtenances, which enables the patients to select a wheelchair in a maximally individualized manner.

Keywords: Spinal Cord Injury, Electric Wheelchair, Principles of Choosing a Wheelchair, Occupational Therapist, Tetraplegia