

520-1 ASSESSMENT OF FIBROMYALGIA TRAINING, FIRST RESULTS

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The aetiology of Fibromyalgia is still unclear. The clinical experience shows that the patients themselves may overtake a key role on the symptom recovery and are able to overcome the symptoms by understanding the disease and change of their behaviour (Brueckle et al. 2004). Since the 90's the German Society for Rheumatology developed patient training courses for several rheumatic diseases aiming a better information and understanding of the diseases, as well as an improvement of coping strategies. Within this framework a special program for Patients with Fibromyalgia has been developed (Brueckle et al. 1997).

Since an evaluation is not present so far, we have accomplished a study about the acceptance of the training and to evaluate changes in the coping with the disease as well as possible changes in therapy and behaviour.

108 patients (105 women, 3 men in the average age of 54 years) with FMS (ACR criteria) took part in the educational course and were evaluated with a standardised questionnaire. The courses were performed within the framework of two inpatient rehabilitation clinics and four groups of out patients. The courses were carried out by trained doctors and therapists according to the training course manual. The questionnaires referred to general social and vocational data, the present therapy, the current condition and malfunctions, pain-referred sense of coherence (Flor et al. 1988). Additionally the satisfaction with the modalities and contents of the training were investigated. The questionnaires had to be filled in before the beginning of the training and 3 months after their completion. The setting and contents of the training has been rated to be good or very good in all items.

As expected the knowledge about the disease increased highly significantly. 3 months after the end of the course the demand of medical interventions decreased and self performed therapies increased. With the coping strategies the helplessness decreased only slightly, the resourcefulness increased highly significant. The first results of the limited period of 3 months show a good acceptance of the training and point particularly to stabilization of the resources, aiming at the management of pain and the overcome of the disease. Our results are corresponding with the evaluations of the educational training courses for patients with rheumatoid arthritis and spondylosis ankylosans.

Further investigations over longer periods are needed to confirm these results. In the rehabilitation of Patients with Fibromyalgia a structured education program performed by a trained team of physicians, psychologists and physiotherapists should be the basis of the rehabilitation process.

Keywords: *Fibromyalgia, patient education, rehabilitation, acceptance, helplessness*
