

Rehabilitation Experience in Botswana - A Case of a Road Traffic Accident Victim

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ABSTRACT

Rehabilitation in developing countries is a critical area of focus due to the significant unmet needs of individuals with disabilities. The World Health Organization's Rehabilitation 2030 initiative emphasizes making rehabilitation accessible, integrating it into all healthcare levels, and recognizing it as an essential health service. The initiative has outlined ten priority areas for action, such as establishing robust leadership, enhancing integration within the healthcare sector, incorporating rehabilitation into Universal Health Coverage, and expanding financing for rehabilitation. This article addresses this issue in the context of Botswana, a middle-income country in Southern Africa, where it is believed that a lot of people suffering from different traumas do not receive any formal rehabilitation services. There is currently a shortage of rehabilitation specialists and comprehensive rehabilitation centers in Botswana. The available rehabilitation clinics only offer outpatient care, which is not enough for severely injured trauma patients. One of the state-owned institutions that is responsible for rehabilitating individuals is the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (MVA Fund). This Fund was established by the Act of Parliament and is responsible for compensating and supporting individuals who have been involved in road accidents in Botswana. Its mandate is to provide financial assistance for medical expenses or related expenses, compensation for loss of income and loss of support, as per the provisions of the MVA Fund Act. The overall aim is to return an injured claimant to their optimal level of functioning. For years, prioritizing rehabilitation in Botswana has remained a challenge, defeating the aims of the MVA Fund. A comprehensive policy framework that addresses the needs of trauma patients or any other person needing the services is needed. The Fund has been reporting over 80% of its claimants reaching positive rehabilitation outcomes for the past five years, and it is believed that this can be improved with the right framework. In conclusion, rehabilitation in developing countries is a complex issue that requires concerted efforts at various levels. It involves not only providing access to rehabilitation services but also integrating these services into the broader healthcare system and ensuring they are included in Universal Health Coverage. The experiences of these countries can provide valuable insights into the development of effective rehabilitation strategies and policies.