

# Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation Services status with case series in Saudi Arabia: Special focus on spinal cord injury group

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## ARTICLE INFO

Published on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2024  
Doi:10.54878/80wj5f60

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## KEYWORDS

*Vocational Rehabilitation, Spinal Cord Injury, Rehabilitation Programs, Patient Outcomes, Education and Employment*

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## HOW TO CITE

Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation Services status with case series in Saudi Arabia: Special focus on spinal cord injury group. (2024). *World Congress on Rehabilitation 2024*, 1(1).



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## ABSTRACT

Introduction: Vocational rehabilitation (VR) services help people with all types of disabilities to gain more advantages for improving income, job satisfaction, optimizing skills, and enhancing job mobility.<sup>1</sup> Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Humanitarian City (SBAHC) is a considerable non-profit hospital that provides a range of rehabilitation programs, including VR services for SCI patients. This study aims to analyze the VR services offered to SCI individuals at SBAHC and compare them to other rehabilitation programs offered at the facility. Material and methods: The study analyzed records of adult patients aged 14 and above who were admitted to SBAHC between 2018-2023, focusing on spinal cord injured patients due to trauma or other causes. All results were presented as percentages. Verbal consent was obtained to share the process of VR service. Results: VR services offered to SCI individuals accounted for 50.8 ± 34.1% of all the rehabilitation programs between 2018-2023 (total n=339). These percentages were 98.0%, 72.7%, 96.4%, 13.6%, 14.5%, and 42.7% for the years 2018-2023 respectively. To assess the outcome of the VR program for SCI, clients were divided to four groups of either returned or commenced education/ work, and percentages fulfilled either one of the categories accounted for 77.9%. Male individuals accounted for 75.0% of all VR service users. Patient no.1 is a male mathematics teacher of 46 years old, with incomplete quadriplegia cervical 7 American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA) classification D, since 2022. After evaluation, writing training was done with increased difficulty, focusing on speed, quality, and font size. Work hardening and simulation sessions were time-controlled. Following 10 VR sessions, he successfully returned to work with appropriate accommodations and assistive technology support. Patient no.2 was 23years old male university student with paraplegia thoracic 3 ASIA A. He went through counseling to assess his readiness to return, the preparedness of the educational facilities and entering to the labor market. Afterward, a plan for his academic subjects, timetable and prevention of further injuries and safety measures was provided. After 10 VR sessions, he resumed his studies in a computer engineering program. Conclusion: VR services status in SBAHC showed a high number of SCI individuals benefits from VR services with positive outcomes. Patients and families of injured ones should receive more education about their rights and services available together with raising awareness about the needs of spinal cord injured patients to facilitate their entry to either education or labor market.<sup>2</sup>