brain injury rehabilitation:
Treatment and challenges for civilian, military, and veteran populations

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Introduction and objective: Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a major health problem in civilian, military, and veteran populations. Individuals experiencing moderate to severe TBI require a continuum of care involving acute hospitalization and postacute rehabilitation, including community reintegration and, one would hope, a return home to function as a productive member of the community. This article discusses four treatment models for community reintegration, reviews treatment standardization and outcome issues, and describes a manualized rehabilitation pilot program designed to provide community reintegration and return to duty/work for civilians, veterans, and military personnel with TBI.

Methods: Science Direct, Pubmed, Cochrane, CINAHL, Embase, ProQuest Dissertations, scopus, (1998 through 2014) were searched for English-language studies using a list of keywords. The books about physical therapy and orthopedic were studied too.

Results: In the military, the goal is to help individuals with TBI return to active duty or make an optimal return to civilian life if the extent of their injuries necessitates a “medical board” discharge. Whether civilian, military, or veteran with TBI, individuals who move beyond the need to live in a facility must be reintegrated back into the community.

Conclusion: Military and civilian patients with moderate to severe brain injuries require a continuum of care that involves acute hospitalization and postacute rehabilitation, including community reintegration and hopefully a return to duty and function as productive members of their respective communities. Many treatment models for community reintegration exist; however, the evidence for effectiveness of these programs is limited because of lack of standardization of intervention strategies and limited controlled outcome research. This article describes a manualized TBI rehabilitation pilot program designed to provide community reintegration and assist individuals with TBI to return to duty and work.

Key words: rehabilitation, TBI, military, treatment.