

NEWSLETTER (April 2020)

Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine Articles published in April 2020

Editors' Choices of this month:

[Olle Höök Lectureship 2019: The changing world of stroke rehabilitation](#)

Katharina S. Sunnerhagen



Katharina S. Sunnerhagen

Comments by the authors: The paper presents a summary of the Olle Höök lecture, which was presented at the BNCPRM in Oslo, Sweden, in October 2019. The paper aims to provide a worldwide picture of stroke, developments in this field, and the evolution of stroke rehabilitation. It sets out the background to, evidence for, and content of the comprehensive stroke unit. The paper also describes some rehabilitation techniques based on neurophysiology, the use of robotics, and the evidence level for interventions. Organization of the stroke care chain and different aspects of rehabilitation during its trajectory are described. However, the need for rehabilitation is often not met, due to restricted and unevenly distributed resources. With increasing knowledge of neurophysiology and evidence from meta-analyses, the content of stroke rehabilitation will continue to evolve.

[Read more](#)

[Medical Rehabilitation in Pandemics: Towards a New Perspective](#)

Fary Khan, Bhasker Amatya



Fary Khan



Bhasker Amatya

Comments by the authors: This paper outlines the current knowledge and evidence to support rehabilitation services, due to the serious health risk posed by COVID-19 pandemic. Many COVID-19 survivors are reported to have a range of functional and psychological impairments, resulting in disabilities, in both acute and sub-acute stages of recovery. These disabilities are amenable to rehabilitation intervention. As patients are transferred to subacute care facilities for ongoing care, the healthcare sector faces many challenges in the short and longer-term. This overview highlights the role of rehabilitation professionals in this pandemic, the potential challenges and implications for service delivery; and recommendations for rehabilitation services. [Read more](#)

Further highlights of this month:

Describing return to work after stroke: A feasibility trial of 12-month outcomes. [Read more](#)

Kathryn Radford, Mary I. Grant, Emma J Sinclair, Jade Kettlewell, Connor Watkin

Multiple component analysis of attention early after complicated mild traumatic brain injury: a prospective cohort study. [Read more](#)

Yehuan Wu, Yu Zhang, Ya Wang, Yi Zhang

Rehabilitation of COVID-19 patients. [Read more](#)

Luigia Brugliera, Alfio Spina, Paola Castellazzi, Paolo Cimino, Andrea Tettamanti, Elise Houdayer, Pietro Arcuri, Federica Alemanno, Pietro Mortini, Sandro Iannaccone

EDITORIAL

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Covid-19 and Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine

Since our last editorial the world has changed a lot. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has spread globally and very rapidly. It has changed medical priorities; the focus is now on saving the lives of persons who still have long life expectancies, scaling up intensive care unit (ICU) resources and, not least, providing sufficient and adequate personal protective equipment to keep people working near the infected patients safe.

Most of the departments of clinical Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (PRM) in Europe have now closed part of their activities, at least for out-patients, and keep in contact with patients via telephone or telemedicine. Some PRM doctors and nurses have been transferred to other clinics and, in some cases, are directly involved in COVID-19 care. Other PRM professions, such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists, as well as social workers, have been trained as assistant nurses and are also working in COVID-19 care. Psychologists from the PRM departments are providing personal support to ICU staff. Thus, the work of the different professionals at the PRM departments has changed drastically, and this new way of working will continue for months.

Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine (JRM) has recently published 3 articles presenting overviews of the role of PRM in the COVID-19 pandemic (1-3). These articles, together with an informative video (4) concerning COVID-19 and rehabilitation issued by the European Academy of Rehabilitation Medicine (EARM), are also collected together on the homepage under the heading Covid-19 Corner. Upcoming articles concerning Covid-19 will also be shown here.

It is, of course, of utmost importance to continue the usual work within rehabilitation medicine in our core areas, including traumatic brain injury (TBI), stroke, spinal cord injury (SCI) and pain, and to keep these patients safe from infection with COVID-19. The virus affects not only the pulmonary function, due to acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), but also other organs, including the cardiovascular system and the central nervous system (CNS). CNS involvement leads to hyposmia and dysgeusia, as well

as alterations of consciousness and neuropsychological manifestations (3).

Mobilization of post-COVID-19 patients will often be a slow process, due to respiratory distress, with breathing problems and lung fibrosis, cardiovascular deconditioning and the long period of immobilization. Furthermore, psychological support and cognitive training are required (3). Due to the length of treatment on a ventilator in ICU one may also anticipate a large number of patients with acquired muscle weakness, including those with post-intensive care syndrome (PICS), who will need in-patient rehabilitation for longer periods of time (1-3).

Concerning the role of PRM in COVID-19, we conclude that now is the time to provide life-saving care for patients. However, the role of PRM in rehabilitation of patients in the immediate post-acute phase of COVID-19 is obvious. Following the acute phase of the pandemic there will be a surge in need for rehabilitation, including mobilization. The increased need for PRM efforts will last for months, if not years, including rehabilitation of secondary disorders, including PICS. This fact is well recognized by the different PRM bodies: the International Society of PRM (ISPRM), UEMS-PRM Section and Board, European Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine, European Society of PRM (ESPRM) and the European Academy of Rehabilitation Medicine (EARM). We hope that this increase in requirement for PRM will also be recognized by healthcare authorities in order that PRM departments can be provided with adequate resources.

REFERENCES

1. Stam H, Stucki G, Birkenbacher J. Covid-19 and Post Intensive Care Syndrome: A Call for Action. *J Rehabil Med* 2020; 52: jrm00044.
2. Khan F, Amatya B. Medical rehabilitation in pandemics: towards a new perspective. *J Rehabil Med* 2020; 52: jrm00043.
3. Brugliera L, Spina A, Castellazzi P, Cimino P, Tettamanti A, Houdayer E, et al. Rehabilitation of COVID-19 patients. *J Rehabil Med* 2020; 52: jrm00046.
4. Stam H, EARM video link. Available from: https://youtube/FiU2we_9f1s.

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Kristian Borg and Henk Stam

Editors-in-Chief of Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine

Total number of pdf downloads of published articles in JRM and JRM-CC

During 2019: **847 957** times
During 2020 (Jan–April): **269 292**

Downloads of the months (3 most downloaded papers published during the last two months):

<i>Title and authors</i>	<i>Downloads</i>
1. Rehabilitation of COVID-19 patients Luigia Brugliera, Alfio Spina, Paola Castellazzi, Paolo Cimino, Andrea Tettamanti, Elise Houdayer, Pietro Arcuri, Federica Alemanno, Pietro Mortini, Sandro Iannaccone	744
2. Covid-19 and Post Intensive Care Syndrome: A Call for Action Henk J. Stam, Gerold Stucki, Jerome Bickenbach	473
3. Editorial: Covid-19 and Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine Kristian Borg, Henk Stam	308

Top citations (3 most cited papers published during 2018–2020 - the top one for each year):

<i>Year</i>	<i>Title and authors</i>	<i>Citations</i>
2017	Effectiveness and safety of transcranial direct current stimulation in fibromyalgia: A systematic review and meta-analysis Chang-e Zhu, Bo Yu, Wen Zhang, Wen-hua Chen, Qi Qi, Yun Miao	24
2018	Rehabilitation: The health strategy of the 21st century Gerold Stucki, Jerome Bickenbach, Christoph Gutenbrunner, John Melvin	28
2019	Factors associated with persistent post-concussion symptoms following mild traumatic brain injury in adults Jennifer Ponsford, Sylvia Nguyen, Marina Downing, Marije Bosch, Joanne N. McKenzie, Simon Turner, Marisa Chau, Duncan Mortimer, Russell L. Gruen, Jonathan Knott, Sally Green	10

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