

Call for papers

Special section of Torture Journal: Journal on Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and Prevention of Torture

Physiotherapy for torture survivors: Is there evidence of its utility in in torture rehabilitation?

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Background

Physiotherapy, whilst a classical domain in torture rehabilitation since the 1980s, has since been subject to a gradual incline in scrutiny. Although some studies suggest positive outcomes, especially in the framework of combined treatment packages, there is a dearth of both meta-analyses and reviews that support the claim that physiotherapy per se significantly contributes to the overall results of an intervention with survivors of torture.

Some authors suggest that physiotherapy should be part of more holistic Body Awareness Therapy or Narrative Sensorimotor Therapies, thus integrated with psychological therapies. Others suggest that its main field of application is to treat chronic pain in complex cases, although results appear unclear and are subject to debate. Similarly, some authors suggest that excessive psychologisation of pain might hinder the fact that many patients experience physical pain from physical torture that requires both proper medical and traumatological assessment and treatment. They argue against lending excessive weight to psychosomatic theories.

The scarce research available suggest that the best results are obtained through a medical and traumatological in-depth assessment of pain in addition to therapies in which physical exercises and psychological therapy are integrated. Such therapy and physical exercises should be structured to focus on mobility or pain whilst working simultaneously with the memories, emotions and physical consequences of the situations that caused the pain, including, but not limited to, the way in which it is experienced in the body, the relationship between pain and torture and the ways this can be expressed when under pressure. There are a lack of studies however contrasting different approaches to this idea.

Call for papers

Torture Journal encourages authors to submit papers with a psychological, medical or legal orientation, particularly those that are interdisciplinary with other fields of knowledge. We welcome papers on the following:

1. Reviews, meta-analysis or analytical reflections on models of work.
2. Evidentiary studies on the efficacy of physiotherapy in the work with torture survivors and victims of sexual violence.
3. Selection of patients and programmes – Short-term versus long-term physiotherapy. Minimum interventions in conflict areas.
4. Coordination with primary care, trauma departments and pain units.

5. Measuring pain in multicultural complex environments. Concepts and measures of pain and suffering.
6. Monitoring and measurement tools, beyond pain management. Functional and well-being, psychosocial and mental health measures.
7. Models integrating physiotherapy and psychological processes feasible in low- and middle- income countries.
8. Avoiding dependency with the physiotherapist: models fostering self-sufficiency and promoting resilience in patients.
9. Experiences in group work.
10. Models and evidence in somatosensory therapies.

Added value for relevant research papers:

- Papers that try to isolate the effect of physiotherapy from other elements in a global package of care.
- Papers that show effects that can reasonably be attributed to physiotherapy.
- Papers that include outcome measures besides qualitative and satisfaction measures.
- Sample sizes that allow for meaningful conclusions with a recommendation of 30 cases as a minimum when conducting statistical analysis.

Deadline for submissions

31st August 2020.

For more information

Contact Editor-in-chief (pauperez@runbox.com) and Guest-Editor (e.weerts@hi.org) if you wish to explore the suitability of a paper to the Special Section.

Submission guidelines and links

To make a submission, navigate here: <https://tidsskrift.dk/torture-journal/about/submissions>

Author guidelines can be found here:

<https://irct.org/uploads/media/2eefc4b785f87c7c3028a1c59ccd06ed.pdf>

Read more about the Torture Journal here: <https://irct.org/global-resources/torture-journal>

For general submission guidelines, please see the Torture Journal website (<https://tidsskrift.dk/index.php/torture-journal/index>). Papers will be selected on their relevance to the field, applicability, methodological rigor, and level of innovation.

About the Torture Journal

Please go to <https://tidsskrift.dk/torture-journal> - a site devoted to Torture Journal readers and contributors – to access the latest and archived issues.