

Original Article

TEAM SKILLS OF SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS AS A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM MEMBER IN STROKE REHABILITATION

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Abstract

Background: Multidisciplinary team improves patient condition and limits the unfavorable state of patients to make them satisfied. The post stroke patients with communication difficulties Speech-language pathologists (SLP) play important role in assessment and their management. Co-ordinate multidisciplinary team work effectively to make stroke patients functional and improve their quality of life.

Objectives: The objective of this research was to determine the team skills of speech language pathologists as multidisciplinary team (MDT) member.

Methodology: A descriptive cross sectional survey was carried out with the 31 speech language pathologists (SLP) having two year of professional experience. This study was conducted in three major cities of Pakistan: Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. Data was collected through standardized team skills scale (A self- assessment measure) which measures the measure the perceived interprofessional team skills aspects. The questionnaire includes 17 items with 5 point likert scales to analyze different professional aspects. Data was descriptively analyzed using frequencies and percentages of responses on each items through SPSS version 20.

Results: The descriptive score was calculated of each item of scale. In each statement most of the SLP professionals manifest high score in team work collaboration.

Conclusion: It is concluded from the result that contribution of SLP for management of patients while working with MDT enhance patient health and their quality of lives.

Key words: Multidisciplinary team, Speech language pathologist, stroke

Introduction

A multidisciplinary healthcare team is important and augments preventative care in neuro rehabilitation of patient. A good teamwork is one of the most fundamental factors in neuro rehabilitation medicine. Multidisciplinary team depends on professionals belongs to different specialties of health care with comprehensive knowledge and skills working under one roof to rehabilitate patients and provide quality care.⁽¹⁾

Speech language pathologist are key part of multidisciplinary team and play vital role for stroke rehabilitation patients to rule out the problems through screening and management plans including feeding issues and communication skills. They also train the supportive staff for bedside evaluation of dysphagia patients. They also work with family members to guide and work on patients expressive skills, and cope better their challenges.⁽²⁾

The stroke is the most common cause of disability worldwide. The prevalence of stroke in a year is 15 million and 1/3rd die from them. In Pakistan 250/100,000 rate of stroke yearly mean 350,000 new per year.⁽³⁾ It has been estimated that 82.37% of stroke patients have speech problems⁽⁴⁾ from which 30.25% - 42.4% are aphasic.^(5,6) Aphasia affects the quality of life of patients.⁽⁷⁾

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This article describes the role of SLPs as important stroke rehab team members to deal with swallowing and speech problem of patients. They have essential role to provide quality services to meet patients' needs and to train staff regarding their management.

Methods & Materials

This article is part of major descriptive cross sectional study aiming to determine the performance and contribution of speech language pathologists as multidisciplinary team (MDT) member. The study underwent ethical approval procedures from authorized bodies. The purposive non probability sampling was used to recruit the professionals from three major cities of Pakistan i-e Islamabad Lahore and Karachi. Sample comprised of 31 professionals with minimum two years' experience in working with multidisciplinary team. The procedure began with an

informed consent. Data was collected through standardized team skills scale (A self- assessment measure) which measures the measure the perceived interprofessional team skills aspects. Questionnaire includes 17 items with 5 point scales to assess different perceived professional aspects. Data was descriptively analyzed based on frequencies and percentage of responses on each item through SPSS version 20.

Results

The study determined the performance and contribution of speech language pathologists as multidisciplinary team member. The results evidently indicated that the contribution of SLP for management of patients with MDT enhance patient health and their quality of lives through acquisition of team skills.

Table 1: Frequencies & Percentages (Team Skills Scale)

Items (Items Code)	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Function effectively in an interdisciplinary team	4(12.9%)	4(12.9%)	3(9.7%)	12(38.7%)	8(25.8%)
Treat team members as colleagues	3(9.7%)	4(12.9%)	3(9.7%)	12(38.7%)	9(29.0%)
Identify contributions to patient care that different disciplines can offer	3(9.7%)	7(22.6%)	7(22.6%)	7(22.6%)	7(22.6%)
apply your knowledge of geriatric principles for the care of older persons in team care setting	3(9.7%)	7(22.6%)	10(32.3%)	7(22.6%)	4(12.9%)
Ensure that patient/ family preferences goals are considered when developing the teams care plan	4(12.9%)	3(9.7%)	7(22.6%)	9(29.0%)	8(25.8)
Handle disagreements effectively	2(6.5%)	3(9.7%)	10(32.3%)	10(32.3%)	5(16.1%)
Strengthen cooperation among disciplines.	2(6.5%)	6(19.4%)	5(16.1%)	6(19.4%)	12(38.7%)
Carry out responsibilities specific your disciplines role on a team	1(3.2%)	6(19.4%)	5(16.1%)	12(38.7%)	7(22.6%)
Address clinical issues succinctly in interdisciplinary meetings	6(19.4%)	7(22.6%)	5(16.1%)	7(22.6%)	6(19.4%)
Participate actively at team meetings	1(3.2%)	3(9.7%)	5(16.1%)	7(22.6%)	14(45.2%)
Develop an interdisciplinary care plan	4(12.9%)	4(12.9%)	5(16.1%)	14(45.2%)	4(12.9%)
Adjust your care to support the team goals	2(6.5%)	4(12.9%)	7(22.6%)	10(32.3%)	8(25.8%)
Develop intervention strategies that help patient attain goals	2(6.5%)	5(16.1%)	8(25.8%)	10(32.3%)	6(19.4%)
Raise appropriate issues at team meetings	1(3.2%)	9(29.0%)	5(16.1%)	12(38.7%)	4(12.9%)
Recognize when the team is not functioning well		7(22.6%)	8(25.8%)	11(35.5%)	5(16.1%)
Intervene effectively to improve team functioning	4(12.9%)	5(16.1%)	6(19.4%)	14(45.2%)	2(6.5%)
Help draw out team members who are not participating actively in meetings	3(9.7%)	2(6.5%)	6(19.4%)	16(51.6%)	4(12.9%)

Discussion

The main aim of study was to determine the performance and contribution of speech language pathologists as multidisciplinary team (MDT) member. The research showed that intensive team work with different health care workers limited the problems and improve outcome of patient which satisfied the staff services towards patients. The another article focuses that services of multidisciplinary team with stroke prove fundamental and effective rehabilitation interventions.⁽⁹⁾

Present study showed during more than 50% SLPs considered that development of care plan patients/attendant ensured patient preferences along with development of multidisciplinary care plane. According to systematic reviews SLP manage the dysphagia in acute stroke with MDT.⁽¹⁰⁾ Research showed that home plan and speech and language cure avoid further health complications, and unnecessary hospital stay.⁽¹¹⁾

The study revealed that participate effectively for team functioning among SLPs were excellent. The other study revealed that SLP working with other

members of the multidisciplinary team for patients with communication and swallowing problems become very effective.⁽¹²⁾

This study endorsed that SLPs were very much effective in developing an interdisciplinary care plan. Other research also revealed that an multidisciplinary team and its continuous sharing of knowledge influence the intervention approaches.⁽¹³⁾

The study also marked that SLPs while working in multidisciplinary team member they usually address highlight issues in MDT. The evidence support rehabilitation of stroke patients in MDT for early support through repetitive task to improve their functional skills including speech management of dysarthria and dysphagia.⁽¹⁴⁾

Conclusion

After the conduction and analysis of this study, it is concluded that SLPs usually function effectively as a team member and strengthen cooperation among other health care team members. They were able to plane goals of treatment effectively and able to raise appropriate issues at team level while working as multidisciplinary team member.

Limitations & Recommendations

Sample size was also too small to ensure generalizability of current research findings. Exceptional role and skill of speech therapist as a member of multidisciplinary team demands to serve as a predictor of their productive role in team in stroke rehabilitation. It is also recommended that in stroke intensive care units their role as team member should be incorporated for bedside assessment in stroke patients particularly.

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Author's Contribution:

Muhammad Naveed Babur: Conception, design and drafting the work, acquisition, analysis, and interpretation of data, revising it critically for final approval. Accountable for all aspect of intellectual content.

Shaista Habibullah: Conception and design of the work, revising it critically for final approval. Accountable for all aspect of intellectual content.