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Title: Developing the ABLE 1.0 program aiming at enhancing ADL ability in persons with chronic conditions – a systematic approach to developing complex interventions

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Abstract

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Introduction: Previous studies indicate that persons with chronic conditions have decreased ADL ability. Therefore, persons with chronic conditions are often offered a variety of health care services e.g. physical exercise to improve body functions. Such intervention is founded on a belief that improved body functioning will result in improved ADL ability. However, research indicates that improvements in body functions do not necessarily translate into improved ADL ability. Thus, there is a need to develop and evaluate interventions directly aiming at enhancing ADL ability.

Objective: To develop an occupational therapy intervention program aiming at enhancing ADL ability in persons with chronic conditions.

Method: The process was guided by the British Medical Research Council’s guidance on how to develop and evaluate complex interventions. An occupational therapy program was developed based on a review of occupational therapy theory and scientific evidence as well as two studies gathering information about clinical experience and needs and expectations of persons living with chronic conditions. A joint display was created to translate the information into specific intervention components. Further, a basic logic model and a theory-of-change logic model were developed. Two half-day workshops were conducted with 6 months in between, where experts discussed and revised preliminary versions of the intervention program.

Results: An eight-week intervention program aiming at enhancing the ADL ability in persons with chronic conditions was developed. The program was based on the Occupational Therapy Intervention Process Model (OTIPM) and the ADL-Interview (ADL-I), the Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (AMPS) and the Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) were integrated.

Conclusion: Integrating information from different sources and following a structured process during intervention development resulted in the first version of a theory- and evidence-based occupational therapy program aiming at enhancing ADL ability in persons living with chronic conditions – the ABLE program.

Key words: Occupational therapy, activities of daily living, developing complex interventions, evidence.