

REHABILITATION MAY BE HELPFUL IN MAINTAINING ABILITY TO WORK AMONG DEPRESSIVE ADULTS

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Depressive disorders associate with loss of functional capacity and ability to work. Mental health rehabilitation programs are one means to help people suffering from depression to stay active in working life. We set out to examine whether rehabilitation helped persons with depression to remain at or return to work. We also investigated how their depression severity, functional capacity, self-reported working ability and health, quality of life, and cognitive functioning developed during the rehabilitation program. A one year group mental health rehabilitation program by six rehabilitation producers started in fall 2010. During the program, Individuals with depressive disorders were assessed in the start, middle and end of the rehabilitation year. The questionnaire included questions on mental and physical health, working situation, quality of life and cognitive resources, and the SOFAS was used to assess functional capacity. We report here the results of 58 subjects who have completed the one year rehabilitation. In the end of the rehabilitation course, the subjects reported less depressive symptoms in the BDI, less psychiatric distress in the GHQ, higher functional capacity, better self-reported working ability and quality of life, and fewer problems with memory, learning and concentration than in the start. Some of the subjects had found solutions to improve their working situation. A general experience was that the rehabilitation brought tools for life management. The results suggest that mental rehabilitation may improve functional capacity and cognitive resources as well as relieve depressive symptoms, which in turn may help in retaining the ability to work.