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## Psychosocial factors impacting workplace injury rehabilitation: Evaluation of a concise screening tool

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**Statement of the Problem:** Psychosocial factors have been linked with delayed injury recovery in workplace injuries. Those workplace injuries that are of a pathophysiological minor nature often exhibit prolonged recovery timeframes. Current screening tools to detect those at risk workers are often time consuming for the therapist to implement. With a simple screening tool therapists could quickly and conveniently detect those at risk workers early and tailor their rehabilitation to return the worker to full capacity more expediently.

**Purpose:** To evaluate whether a new concise screening tool is effective at predicting those workers at risk of delayed injury recovery due to psychosocial factors.

**Method:** A quick and concise screening tool called the “How are you coping gauge?” (HCG) was developed. This tool was implemented as part of the initial physiotherapy assessment for all new workplace injuries. Participants were excluded if they did not meet the strict criteria used to classify a musculoskeletal injury as simple. The HCG score was then compared to the time taken for the worker to recover. It was hypothesized that those workers indicating a poorer level of workplace and home support would take longer time to recover.

**Findings:** A sample of 254 participants was included in analysis. Significant correlation ( $p < 0.001$ ) was observed between HCG scores for self-reported work and home support and recovery time thereby confirming the hypothesis. Path analysis found workplace support to be a highly significant moderate-to-strong predictor of recovery time.

**Conclusion & Significance:** The HCG is an effective tool to quickly and easily identify those workers at risk of delayed injury recovery due to psychosocial factors. Through early detection of at risk workers, rehabilitation can be tailored to mitigate these factors early in the injury recovery process, reducing the time taken for a worker to recover, potentially reducing economic costs.

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