

6th International Conference & Exhibition on

Physiotherapy & Physical Rehabilitation

August 13-14, 2018 | London, UK

Home-based, physical therapy, tele health consultation over skype with individuals with Rett Syndrome - A pilot study

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Introduction: Rett syndrome (RTT) is a developmental disorder, affecting mainly females. Due to the challenges faced by the individual with RTT and her family, her rehabilitation program should support her throughout different daily activities, contexts, and surroundings. In such cases the primary care givers should implement a supplementary/home based intervention that will enhance client's ability. This pilot study presents a physiotherapy support for RTT over long distances.

Methods: Five families of individuals with RTT living in Ireland participated in a six month bi-monthly home based program via Skype consultation sessions by the first author residing in Israel. Program results were evaluated through the use of goal attainment scale (GAS) and followed a Participatory action research (PAR) model, a collaborative study design where all participants take part in assessing, goal setting, acting, reflecting and evaluating progress.

Results: All participants showed improvements in achieving their set goals and parent/care givers were extremely satisfied with the engagement over large geographical distances.

Conclusions: This presentation will discuss a model for physical therapy tele health consultations in home based intervention, which was applied by parents/caregivers, of children with RTT in accordance to the child's and the family's abilities. All participant (presenting different degrees of severity) showed significant improvements thereby, supporting authors' belief that constructing a home based intervention program is essential for the person with RTT to achieve her best state of being. The GAS was found a useful tool to evaluate clients' progress. Participatory action research (PAR) was found as a useful model when implementing such a program.

Biography

Meir Lotan, MSc PT, PhD is a Physiotherapist working as Senior Lecturer at the School of Health Sciences, Department of Physical Therapy, Ariel University, Israel. He is affiliated with the Israeli National Rett Syndrome Evaluation Team and is a world expert in Physical Therapy for Rett syndrome. He has a special interest in physiotherapy and persons with intellectual disability, children with autism, Snoezelen and physical activity for people with intellectual disability.

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