

# Implementing Physiotherapy in an HIV Community-Based Care Setting: A Qualitative Study of Perspectives from People Living with HIV and Health Care Providers

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## Background:

- People living with HIV are living longer with the potential combination of physical, mental, and social health challenges associated with HIV, multimorbidity, and aging, known as disability (*O'Brien et al., 2008*)
- Rehabilitation providers, including physiotherapists, can play an important role in addressing disability, including impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions, experienced by people living with HIV (*Worthington et al., 2005*)
- In 2017, a new interdisciplinary day health program at Casey House in Toronto, Canada was implemented offering publicly funded physiotherapy to people living with HIV and complex health issues

**Purpose:** To understand the (1) strengths, (2) challenges, and (3) perceived impact of implementing physiotherapy into a day health program from the perspective of people living with HIV and health care providers working in HIV care

- **Methodology:** Qualitative descriptive study (*Sandelowski, 2000*)
- **Participants:** People living with HIV who had received physiotherapy care in the day health program as well as health care providers connected to the program
- **Data collection:** Demographic questionnaire + semi-structured interview
- **Data analysis:** Conventional content analysis (*Elo & Kyngäs, 2008*)

Interviews (people living with HIV + health care providers)



Interviews transcribed verbatim and reviewed for accuracy



Core research team reviewed one transcript and created initial coding scheme



Dyads of researchers coded each transcript



In-person meeting to discuss each transcript with entire research team

Characteristics	PLWH (n=15)
<b>Median Age (years) (IQR)</b>	57 years (55, 64)
<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Man</b>	8 (53%)
<b>Woman</b>	6 (40%)
<b>Preferred not to answer</b>	1 (7%)
<b>Median number of comorbidities (IQR)</b>	7 (3,12)
<b>Median Year of Diagnosis (IQR)</b>	1995 (1984,2010)
<b>Viral load undetectable</b>	13 (87%) (n=1 missing)

Characteristics	Health care providers (n=5)
<b>PT</b>	2
<b>MD, RN, SW, and/or Case Manager</b>	3

## IMPLEMENTING PHYSIOTHERAPY INTO DAY HEALTH PROGRAM

- STRENGTHS:**
1. Co-location of the physiotherapist within the health care team
  2. A tailored approach to physiotherapy care within the context of HIV, fulfilling a need for rehabilitation in the HIV community
  3. Improved access to rehabilitation interventions

- CHALLENGES:**
1. Perceived mismatch of expectations for care between physiotherapist and client (e.g. resolution of symptoms versus self-management)
  2. Inconsistent client attendance at clinic visits
  3. Managing clients with complex and diverse needs

- PERCEIVED IMPACT:**
1. Improved physical performance and function
  2. Benefits to psychosocial health
  3. Improved coordination of comprehensive care

- 1) Results provide in-depth perspectives on the implementation of physiotherapy into a day health program at Casey House in Toronto, Canada geared towards people living with HIV and complex health issues
- 2) Physiotherapy was perceived as a valuable service that filled an important need for rehabilitation services
- 3) Results provide insight for integrating physiotherapy into other HIV community-based care settings

**Closing the Gap Team:** Kelly O'Brien, Soo Chan Carusone, Kyle Vader, Puja Ahluwalia, Patty Solomon, Carol Strike, Francisco Ibanez-Carrasco, Ann Stewart, Larry Baxter, Carolann Murray, Greg Robinson, Rosalind Baltzer Turje, Patrick McDougall, Tammy Yates, Suzanne Paddock, Dawn James, Darren Brown, Rachel Aubry; Collaborator Organizations: Casey House, Toronto PWA; Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation; *Realize*, Nine Circles, Rehabilitation in HIV Association (RHIVA).

## Key References:

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