

IMPROVING SPINAL CORD INJURY SERVICES IN CANADA THROUGH ACCREDITATION

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BACKGROUND

Accreditation Canada is a not-for-profit, independent organization accredited by the International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua). Accreditation Canada provides national and international health care organizations with an external peer-review process to assess and improve the services they provide to their clients based on standards of excellence. Accreditation Canada's programs and guidance have helped organizations promote quality health care for over 50 years.

Rick Hansen Institute (RHI) is committed to **accelerating** the translation of **discoveries** and **best practices** into improved treatments and **quality of life** for people with spinal cord injury.

The Rick Hansen Institute and Accreditation Canada will develop the first ever comprehensive, evidence-based standards for spinal cord injury (SCI) services delivered in Canada.

OBJECTIVE

Develop Accreditation Canada standards for spinal cord injury (SCI) services across the continuum of care; including pre-hospital and acute care management, rehabilitation, and community reintegration. The addition of this program may accelerate the implementation of best practices and improve the quality of care.

DESIGN/METHODS

Accreditation Canada provides health care organizations with a rigorous and comprehensive accreditation process which consists of self-assessment against standards of excellence and on-site evaluation by surveyors with relevant expertise and knowledge.

A systematic review was conducted in collaboration with RHI to define current evidence based care and standards related to SCI. Using findings from the review, the Standards of excellence are developed with input from an advisory committee composed of Canadian experts and feedback obtained through a web-based national consultation. The standards are then piloted in selected Canadian health care organizations to reflect diversity and complexity of SCI care delivery.

The Rick Hansen Institute (RHI) is funding this project and providing results from its research findings to improve the knowledgebase on evidence-based care.

More than 30 acute care and rehabilitation centres delivering SCI services across Canada may benefit from these standards of excellence:



Figure 1. SCI Centres Across Canada

RESULTS

Implementing standards of excellence facilitates uptake of best practices by SCI care providers. By addressing key safety and quality issues, accreditation of SCI services may maximize health care outcomes, reduce economic burden associated with prolonged hospitalization and preventable complications, and may improve quality of life for those living with SCI.

CONCLUSIONS

By providing a framework to evaluate quality and safety of health services through accreditation, Accreditation Canada and Rick Hansen Institute have an opportunity to improve dissemination and adoption of best practices in SCI care. This collaboration may raise the bar of SCI services across Canada.

SUPPORT

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