RETURN TO WORK

ISSUES, STRATEGIES, AND OPTIONS
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OCCURRENCE

- 21,000 people have a stroke each year
- 120,000 people living with stroke
- 25% of stroke survivors are people under the age of 65
- 10% under the age of 50
- (source=swostroke.ca)
HOW LIKELY IS RETURN?

- Less that 7% of Ontario stroke survivors return to work
- (source = swoostroke.ca)
FACTORS

- Gender
- Age
- Relationship to employer and co-workers
- Length of time off work
- Physical and cognitive deficits
- Person’s belief about their capabilities
- Availability of resources

ISSUES

• Confidence
• Fatigue
• Relationships with co-workers
• “Invisible” cognitive deficits
• Co-workers’ expectations
• Communication barriers
• Physical changes to abilities
2008 SWOSN FORUMS

• Need for return to work services identified
  • Assistance to navigate the process
  • Local provincial resources
  • Online self assessment and resources about readiness to return to work
READY TO RETURN TO WORK?

- Know the job
- Know the challenges
- Measure / chart fatigue or other symptoms
- Options available?
- Simulated work environments
THINGS TO CONSIDER

OPTIONS

• Graduated return to work
• Work hardening
• Modifications
  • Equipment or tools
  • Modified duties
  • Work simplification

GOALS OF VOC REHAB

• Same job with same employer
• Modified job same employer
• Different job same employer
• Same job different employer
• Different job with different employer
• Self-employment
THINGS TO KNOW

INCOME

• Employment Insurance sick benefits
• Short or Long Term Disability
• Ontario Disability Support Program
• Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits

RESOURCES

• Occupational Therapy
• Speech Language Pathologist
• Graduated return
• Work hardening
• Case management
• Opportunity Fund
• March of Dimes
• Human Rights Code
• Duty to Accommodate
RESOURCES/SUPPORTS

• Case Management
• Opportunities Fund
• Ontario March of Dimes
• Swostroke.ca
EI SICK BENEFITS

- Sick benefits if unable to work due to illness/ injury/ quarantine
- Must have worked minimum number of hours according to region
- Short term – up to 15 weeks
SHORT TERM/ LONG TERM DISABILITY

• May be available through employer
• Variable according to plan purchased
• Some plans require you to exhaust other benefits first, such as EI
• Own occupation for period of time, then disabled from any occupation.
• Any occupation from onset of disability
• Check with employer as to availability of resources
ODSP

- Income support
- Financial eligibility
- Employment supports
- For disability expected to last more than one year
- Long process - often start with Ontario Works
CPP DISABILITY BENEFITS

• Most difficult test to meet
• Severe and prolonged disability
• Under 65
• Must have contributed
• Child Rearing provision
ROLES

• Work roles
  • Changes
  • Social support
  • Volunteering
• Family roles (Parent, Spouse, Sibling, Adult Child)
• Social roles (Friend, Boyfriend/Girlfriend, Homemaker, Hobbyist, Sports Team Member)
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH FAMILY & SOCIAL ROLES

• Severity and type of stroke-related physical and cognitive deficits
• Presence/absence of mood issues
• Stage of life
• Person’s belief about their capabilities
• Availability of formal and informal support
• Gender
• Age