C3.1: What Do We Really Know? The Evidence for Health Promotion Interventions for Persons with Chronic and Disabling Conditions, 1990-2007

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Abstract:
Introduction: Although there is substantial interest among consumers, health care practitioners and policy makers in health promotion interventions, the body of evidence supporting the effectiveness of these interventions for persons with chronic and disabling conditions has not been comprehensively examined. Wellness/Health promotion interventions provide participants with knowledge and skills that allow the person to choose behaviors to sustain and enhance quality of life within the context of living with a chronic disabling condition. The purpose of this study was to systematically review and evaluate the evidence supporting the use of wellness/health promotion interventions among persons with chronic and disabling conditions.

Method(s): The authors conducted a Medline search (1990-2007) using terms related to health promotion cross-referenced with general and specific terms for chronic/disabling conditions (e.g. disability, arthritis, MS). Initially, 5,847 abstracts were reviewed for inclusion. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data extracted from the 190 publications that met all inclusion criteria (randomized controlled trial, wellness intervention with adults with chronic disabling conditions, published in English).

Results: Most (95%) studies focused on persons with a specific diagnosis such as cancer (17%), stroke (10%) and arthritis (10%). Types of interventions, outcomes and measures varied greatly. Almost half of the studies evaluated exercise interventions (53%) and the majority of interventions were delivered to individuals (53%) and over 12 weeks or less (60%). There was
little evidence of use of new technologies to deliver or monitor interventions. Most studies (91%) reported significant effects immediately post intervention; few (30%) followed participants for longer than 4 weeks.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** Findings suggest that health promotion interventions for persons with chronic and disabling conditions have positive short-term effects, however little is known about the effects of these interventions over time. Careful specification of primary outcomes and attention to the CONSORT guidelines in future publications will allow more detailed evaluation of the evidence.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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