


# ENHANCING REHABILITATION THROUGH REGULATION AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION IN PAKISTAN

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Rehabilitation forms an important tire in well operating health care systems. Within the areas as mentioned on the World Health Organization factsheet about rehabilitation the therapeutic professions such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, prosthetists and orthotists and clinical psychologists play an important role. They do not only treat people's conditions such as diseases, disorders, injuries or trauma; they furthermore promote good health and help to prevent diseases. This can significantly lead to better overall wellbeing of the population. To gain the best client outcome and support the health care system in an effective way, regulation is as important as interprofessional collaboration. Thus there is an intense need to highlight these two main aspects to ensure quality rehabilitation provided by therapeutic professionals.

Different studies have emphasized the evidence regarding regulation is not high due to various reasons. But it is noticeable that by regulating a profession, the needs of three different stakeholders can be addressed simultaneously. Clients can be confident to receive high quality service provided by an individual who has undergone certified training and is adhering to recent guidelines and standards. Their interest is protected and public trust in the professions is strengthened. Governmental bodies additionally have better understanding about the resources of the professions that can be integrated in the health care system of the country. And of course for the profession itself it is a great opportunity for professional growth and development. Through the process of developing or being involved in the development of a regulatory framework, professionals associations are engaging in fundamental aspects that form the profession. This way the associations are making sure to pave the way for a sustainable workforce.

As rehabilitation in most cases happens in a multidisciplinary team, regulation of involved professions can be also looked at from a multidisciplinary angle where applicable. Combining hands- on therapeutic professions in one regulatory framework can be beneficial if their unique contributions and challenges in the rehabilitation process are described. It can especially support the alignment of the education and foster later interdisciplinary work. These professions share the main aspects of the therapeutic process like evaluation, goal setting, client centered intervention and re-evaluation, but are following different goals and techniques to enhance client outcome. The associations can support each other and regulatory bodies with the development of a clear structured, comprehensive framework including aspects like ethical standards, continuous professional development framework and further documents.

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