

## **Physiotherapeutical management of neuromuscular diseases in the private sector: feasibility and cost-benefit study in the Angers (France) experience**

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Privately taking charge of patients suffering from neuromuscular diseases does encounter various difficulties such as competences of physiotherapists, technical problems, pricing. Objective: Present the activity of a private practice of 6 physiotherapists, opened for 2 years and taking care of these pathologies in association with various public care providers (University Public Hospitals, Rehabilitation Centres, Specialized Education and Home Care Services, health associations, etc). Strategy: Advice from occupational therapists was sought to optimise the accessibility of the equipments whatever the patient's disability (no-step ground-floor building, easy access to the premises for ambulance coaches, rehabilitation exercise rooms accessible to stretchers). The facilities consist of a hydrotherapy pool and a few accessible changing cubicles, an electric vertical tilt table, Bobath plinths, parallel bars and rehabilitation corner steps. One room is dedicated to exercising children's neuro-motricity. There is a 7-day-a-week on-duty service for respiratory emergencies. Private physiotherapists contribute to their patients' global assessment through (all) the public specialized consultations. One employee deals with secretarial tasks. Results: The practice handles 550 weekly appointments, of which 36% relate to patients suffering from neurological or neuromuscular pathologies. Every 30-minute session concentrates on one-to-one treatment. The hydro-pool is used on other time schedules for recreational activities (adapted water-gym classes). This project was funded with private capital (land € 170,000 and building € 530,000). The monthly charges per physiotherapist amount approximately to € 3,000 and the monthly income averages € 2,300.

This experiment illustrates the medical, technical and medico-economical feasibility of a private physiotherapy organisation com-

plying with professional recommendations and suitable for very dependent disabled patients. A joint private structure permits to divide up the start-off investment extra costs. The technical difficulties remain minimal and, against preconceived ideas, the income of the professionals involved is close to the national average income of € 2,500.

Keywords: physiotherapy, private sector, neuromuscular diseases.