

Stroke Rehabilitation Definition and Considerations

Stroke Rehabilitation is a progressive, dynamic, goal orientated process aimed at enabling a person with impairment to reach their optimal physical, cognitive, emotional, communicative, and social functional level.

Rehabilitation is NOT a setting, rather it is a set of activities, and begins soon after the initial stroke event, once the patient is medically stable and can identify goals for rehabilitation and recovery.

Considerations Regarding Stroke Rehabilitation:

- **Settings:** rehabilitation interventions, a key component of comprehensive stroke care, are provided in a range of settings, such as: acute care or sub-acute care; within rehabilitation units, on general or mixed rehabilitation units; in ambulatory or community settings such as outpatient or day clinics, early supported discharge services, home-based services, recreation centres, and outreach teams.
- **Duration:** length of service or stay for stroke rehabilitation varies depending upon factors such as the types of services required, accessibility of those services, goals and needs of the stroke survivor and family.
- **Timeframe:** Stroke rehabilitation requirements often continue for many months and even years after an index stroke. Current healthcare systems tend to allow for stroke rehabilitation interventions within the first six months following stroke onset, even though many stroke patients will require some of these services beyond that arbitrary time frame, since rehabilitation is an ongoing process.
- **Available Evidence:** The research literature in this area is rapidly evolving, with new evidence emerging for innovative therapies applicable at different stages of care. The writing group has carefully and thoughtfully examined all therapies with respect to the timing of the evidence. *Refer to methodology section for further details.*