

Clinical Trial ID:

NCT00000407

Title:

Improving Vocational Outcomes in Arthritis

Summary:

The long-term objectives of this research project are to enhance program participation and improve the employment prospects of people with work disability due to arthritis and related musculoskeletal disorders (ARMD) who are actively seeking vocational (job-related) rehabilitation (VR) services.

This study is designed to compare the employment situations of a group of people receiving a two-part intervention and a group that is not receiving the intervention. The intervention consists of training sessions to help prospective VR clients with ARMD successfully enter and complete the VR program, and training sessions for a randomly selected group of VR professionals to help them serve VR clients with ARMD more effectively.

Detailed Description:

The long-term objectives of this research project are to enhance program

participation

and improve the vocational outcomes of people with work disability due to arthritis and

related musculoskeletal disorders (ARMD) who are actively seeking vocational rehabilitation services.

Some researchers think that people with work disability due to ARMD seeking vocational

rehabilitation (VR) services who are exposed to an "agency access intervention" are more

likely to gain entrance to the VR system and be determined eligible for services than are

similar people not exposed to the intervention. Further, they think that people with work

disability due to ARMD who are determined to be eligible for VR services, and who are

exposed to an "agency enhancement intervention" while receiving services, are more likely

to become and remain employed upon completion of the VR program than are similar people

not exposed to the intervention.

The research design is a randomized, controlled, field experiment comparing the

vocational outcomes of a group receiving a two-part intervention to those not receiving

the intervention. The design allows us to evaluate separately each component of the intervention. The intervention consists of training sessions to help prospective VR clients with ARMD successfully enter and complete the VR program, and training sessions for a randomly selected group of VR professionals to help them serve VR clients with ARMD more effectively.

If this intervention strategy can significantly increase (1) VR utilization rates; (2) post-service employment rates; and (3) length of post-service employment in a previously underserved group with historically poor VR outcomes, it could have a significant role in reducing the immense impact, nationally, of work disability due to ARMD.

Eligibility Criteria:

Inclusion Criteria:

- Resident of Alabama**
- Previously employed**
- Currently unemployed due to musculoskeletal disability**

- **Feel capable of work**

- **Want to work**

Exclusion Criteria:

- **Not a resident of Alabama**

- **Unable to work**

Gender:

All

Minimum Age:

18 Years

Maximum Age:

55 Years

Phase:

Phase 2

Conditions:

- **Arthritis**

- **Musculoskeletal Diseases**

- **Rheumatic Diseases**

Interventions:

- **Vocational counseling intervention**

- **Reading materials for control participants**

- **Standard of care**

Locations:

- **University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama**