

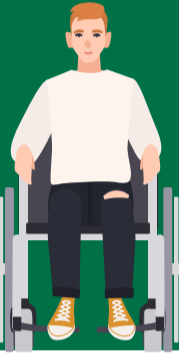
OUTCOMES OF PEER MENTORSHIP FOR MENTORS LIVING WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY

PERSPECTIVES FROM MEMBERS OF CANADIAN COMMUNITY-BASED SCI ORGANIZATIONS

Background



Mentors play an important role in community-based peer support/mentorship programs for people living with spinal cord injury (SCI).



Purpose

To investigate outcomes of peer support/mentorship programs for mentors.

Method



36 adults were interviewed

from 4 provincial SCI organizations (Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Ontario).

Peer mentors (providing mentorship)
Peer mentees (receiving mentorship)
Family members of mentees
Organizational staff



Findings

Eleven outcomes have been identified:

● Negative outcomes for mentors ● Positive outcomes for mentors

“

I have heard through some other groups of peer support that it's kind of – excuse my language – but it turns out into more of bitch fest than something productive. I try to steer away from those groups or some of the drama that's associated with them.

”

Maria (Staff)



Impact of Negativity



Giving Back/ Helping Others

“

It's also very affirming to feel that you're being helpful to someone. For people living with SCI who are often in a position of being particular, with respect to physical functional limitations, of requesting assistance from other people—which can be disempowering. To be in a world of giving assistance to another person is very affirming.

”

Donald (Mentor)



Boundaries



Disappointment



Gratitude from Mentees



Personal Growth



Lack of Engagement



Emotional Toll



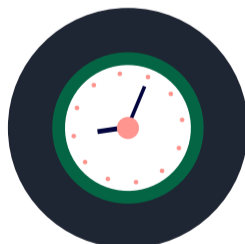
Purpose

“

Even if it's not difficult, it definitely requires energy. The mentorship – coaching sessions I did – even when they were positive, required a very substantial investment of energy

”

Donald (Mentor)



Time/ Energy Demands



Confidence & Pride

“

Getting you out of your comfort zone will build that confidence, making you feel like you've actually conquered the struggles you thought you never could because if you're helping someone that means you've got through it

”

Natalie (Family).

Conclusions

✓ Community-based peer support/mentorship programs can produce positive and negative outcomes for mentors living with SCI.

✓ SCI organizations and researchers may need to work together to identify strategies to support mentors experiencing the negative impact of providing peer mentorship

Reference:

Sweet, S. N., Hennig, L., Shi, Z., Clarke, T., Flaro, H., Hawley, S., Schaefer, L., & Gainforth, H. L. (2021). Outcomes of peer mentorship for people living with spinal cord injury: perspectives from members of Canadian community-based SCI organizations. *Spinal cord*, 59(12), 1301-1308.



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

Canada



Theories and Interventions in Exercise and Health Psychology (TIE) Laboratory



Centre de recherche interdisciplinaire en réadaptation



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Spinal Cord Injury BC



NEW BRUNSWICK ABILITY CAPACITÉ NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK



SPINAL CORD INJURY ONTARIO LÉSIONS MÉDULLAIRES ONTARIO



Spinal Cord Injury Alberta Lésions Médullaires Alberta