

Experiences with brain performance training

Report by C. Wartenberg, experienced RehaCom user in the Neurological Rehab Centre in Magdeburg, Germany

Neurological Rehabilitation Centre Magdeburg

The MEDIAN Clinic NRC Magdeburg is a neurological centre for in-patient, part-time in-patient, and medical-occupational rehabilitation. All phases of the neurological rehabilitation are treated in one building. For all phases of the neurological rehabilitation the NRC offers special kinds of therapy. According to this the personnel issue as well as the room issue and the device equipment is variegated and challenging.

The cognitive rehabilitation is included in the Psychology department. Patients are treated by a team of Neuropsychologists daily.

Deficits and therapy forms

After the ingestion of a patient the cognitive deficits are assessed carefully. According to the diagnosis a therapy plan is set up, which is updated according to the current situation every week.

Most of the patients treated in our department show deficits in attention, concentration, memory, visual neglect, executive functions, spatial and visual perception (and other visual field deficits). The therapy of these disorders is possible with computer support as well.

Computer-assisted training

Herefore the clinic has got 7 computers to do this therapy with. Those are mainly standard computers. 1 PC is provided with a projector for the visual field training.

The procedures by the manufacturers HASOMED (RehaCom), Marker Software (CogPack) and Rigling are available for us. In most cases RehaCom procedures are used for the training.

Working

We do RehaCom therapy sessions every day. The biggest benefit is that patients can work with RehaCom independently for a certain period of time. At the beginning it is important to familiarize the patient with RehaCom. After that the patient's work will be observed by the computer. After solving a task the computer will evaluate the performance and choose the next appropriate task. The therapist can work with up to 2 patients at once. The therapist's work concentrates on the patient who needs the most support. The other

patient's work can be evaluated after the training since the data are saved automatically.

Working with severely affected patients

RehaCom, of course, also offers the possibilities to do single trainings with patients. With the aid of RehaCom procedures and an experienced therapist basics in several fields are put across to the patient.

Little useful things

RehaCom offers various therapy forms. Procedures for patients with severe deficits as well as for patients who can already be challenged a bit more are available. Besides the various choices of procedures there are also other little things which simplify the therapy. E.g. our RehaCom database is stored in the clinic information system's computer network. The benefit is that the patient can work at any therapy working station in the clinic. Right after choosing the patient out of the list information about the patient's state of performance are available. The patient starts the training right from that point where the therapy stopped during the last session.

Nobody is perfect

By now I have worked as therapist with RehaCom for 12 years. During this period I could watch at least parts of the therapy system's developments.

In RehaCom as well there are some problems, mostly due to the fact that patients with cognitive disorders are a difficult clientele. RehaCom, though, of all systems I know, offers the best customizing to that user group.

Besides, I always had HASOMED's attendance to improvement suggestions, so that the system could further improve within the last few years, on behalf of our patients.