

THE ROLE OF TECHNICAL AIDS IN THE WORK CAPACITY REHABILITATION OF THE INSURED PEOPLE WITH LOCOMOTOR DISABILITIES

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Abstract

In Romania, the social insurance physicians (from the territorial services of work capacity assessment, subordinated to the County Houses of Pensions and from The National Institute of Medical Assessment and Work Capacity Rehabilitation) are in charge to assess the work-capacity of the insured persons who are on sick leave for more than 3 months and to guarantee their rights according to the law: sick leave prolongation until 9 months or invalidity pension (1st, 2nd or 3rd degree), indemnity for reducing working time with 25% (maximum 3 months), free access to rehabilitation programmes, re-training allowance, compensation for bodily integrity alteration, free technical aids in case of work accidents, etc.

According to the international standardization SR EN ISO 9999:2003 on "Technical aids for persons with disabilities", a technical aid is referred as any product, instrument, equipment or technology used by a person with a disability, especially produced or generally available for preventing, compensating, monitoring, relieving or neutralizing deficiencies, impairments or disability.

In Romania, the payment for the medical devices (prosthesis, orthoses, crutches, wheelchairs, special shoes, etc.) needed for the insured people with locomotor disabilities caused by diseases and accidents is partially supported by the health insurance system, through the intermediation of the County Houses of Health Insurance.

The payment for the medical devices needed for the insured people who suffered of work accidents is fully supported by the social insurance system, through the intermediation of the County Houses of Pensions and The National Institute of Medical Assessment and Work Capacity Rehabilitation. The payment for work accidents suffered after 2005, is granted by *The National Fund for Work Accidents and Occupational Disease Risk* while the same payments for the work accidents suffered before 2005, are reimbursed from special funds administrated by The Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity.

According to the legislation in Romania (Law 263/2010), the insured persons having more than 3 months of temporary work capacity impairment (sick leave) and the invalidity pensioners as well, are compelled to undergo a rehabilitation programme. In case of disregard, the payment of the benefits ceases.

The rehabilitation programmes for insured people with disabilities are carried on in rehabilitation centres subordinated to the County Health Insurance Houses and in the rehabilitation department of The National Institute of Medical Assessment and Work Capacity

Rehabilitation (INEMRCM – the Romanian abbreviation), a public institution whose activity falls under the subordination of The National House of Public Pensions.

In the Rehabilitation Department of INEMRCM the patients with locomotor disability are evaluated and treated by a multidisciplinary team consisting of: rehabilitation physicians, social insurance physicians, orthoprosthetics, physiotherapists, kinetotherapists, social assistant, psychologist.

Rehabilitation programmes includes not only medical treatment, physical therapy, kinetotherapy, psychotherapy, ergotherapy, but also provision of the prosthesis/orthesis and other technical aids for the disabled people due to work accidents, programme for life-long maintenance of prosthesis needs (replacement, repairs, adjustments), gait and gesture re-education with the new medical devices.

At the end of the rehabilitation programmes, the patients are re-evaluated. The professionals from the Institute have an important role in promoting return to a right type of work performed in adequate (adjusted) workplace. This aim becomes possible by effective communication and partnership with the County Houses of Pensions and the Workforce Agencies, especially in insured people with work-accident sequelae. The social protection for occupational accidents is settled by the law 346/ 2002 which became operative in 2005.

The authors analyse the outcomes over five years since the implementation of the new legislation.

The social protection legally provided during the last years, the free acces to tehcnical aids and rehabilitation programmes including gait and gesture re-education with this medical devices, increases the opportunities for the social and vocational rehabilitation of the insured people with locomotor disabilities.