

Assessment of functional independence in individuals with intellectual disabilities as part of special education diagnosis - case studies

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Abstract

We focus on the application of standardized tests aimed at assessing functional independence in children (WeeFIM test) and adults (FIM test) in special education diagnostics. The target group is two clients with a diagnosis of intellectual disability (N=2; client 1: mild mental retardation, according to ICD-10: F70; aged 6.5 years; client 2: moderate mental retardation, according to ICD-10: F71; aged 13.4 years). The primary intervention applied to the clients was a special education intervention focusing on the identified deficits in cognitive, motor and social skills. The presented results highlight the importance of applying these tests specifically in special education. Both probands after the intervention showed improvement in the observed indicators of the tests. The aim of the presented article is to point out the appropriateness of the use of tests of functional measures of independence in special education practice. The authors further discuss the implications of this application for future practice. It is estimated that up to 3% of people in the general population have some degree of intellectual disability. The actual diagnosis of intellectual disability is based primarily on clinical history, level of intellectual ability and level of adaptive function. In addition to clinical assessment, cognitive function or adaptive functioning in activities of daily living are also diagnosed on the basis of individually administered standardized tests [1, 2]. The conceptual framework of intellectual disability has evolved over the years primarily from the medical model. This model considers a person with an intellectual disability to be limited in his or her ability to perform expected individual and social responsibilities. Thus, the individual is attributed a functional limitation [3, 5]. Advances in science and medicine have contributed significantly to the increasing number of individuals with serious illnesses. We need to be aware of this increase and be able to respond appropriately. The attitudes of society and, where appropriate, educational staff are also important. It is these attitudes towards individuals with certain types of disabilities that determine future education and other approaches that develop the individual and thus promote social adaptability.

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Biography

Michal Vostry focused on issues related to the compensatory rehabilitation of people diagnosed with a form of dementia or other mental disabilities. Vostry studied occupational therapy and special education. He tries to combine these disciplines to create comprehensive approaches to these individuals. He has written a number of

publications on the subject, ranging from peer-reviewed articles to scientific monographs. He also regularly presents his theses at international conferences and, through discussion, tries to develop cooperation between the professions and thus improve intervention approaches.