

Six lessons for COVID-19 rehabilitation from HIV rehabilitation[#]

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- ▶ Like HIV, COVID-19 presents with diverse functional problems, that is amplified by other health conditions and aging^{1,2}.
- ▶ Rehabilitation has been central in improving the lives of people living with HIV and can do the same for people living with COVID-19-related disabilities.
- ▶ Fourteen experts on HIV rehabilitation (from five different countries) collaborated to outline six key lessons from the field of HIV that can be utilized in implementing community-engaged responses to COVID-19³.

¹ Hargreaves J, Davey C, Group for lessons from pandemic HIV prevention for the COVID-19 response. Three lessons for the COVID-19 response from pandemic HIV. *Lancet HIV* 2020; 7:e309–e311.

² Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Rehabilitation considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak. 2020. <https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/52035>.

³ Brown, Darren A., et al. Six lessons for COVID-19 rehabilitation from HIV rehabilitation. *Physical Therapy* 2020; 100.11:1906-1909.

► Anticipate Disability During and After Acute Management of COVID-19 and Recognize Its Potentially Episodic Nature

The Episodic Disability Framework (EDF) describes disability experienced by people living with HIV and is relevant to other chronic health conditions⁴.

The EDF can be applied to the multidimensional, episodic, and unpredictable nature of COVID-19-related disability and can help inform interventions or service provision efforts to address disability⁵.

► Understand That the Disability Dimension “Uncertainty or Worry About the Future” May Play a Role in COVID-19–Related Disability

Uncertainty is at the center of the disability experiences of people living with HIV and can influence symptoms, daily activities, and social participation and can also contribute to stigma⁶.

People living with COVID-19-related disability may also live with fear, isolation, stigma, unknown long-term consequences, and uncertainty.

⁴ O'Brien KK, Bayoumi AM, Strike C, Young NL, Davis AM. Exploring disability from the perspective of adults living with HIV/AIDS: development of a conceptual framework. *Health and Qual Life Outcomes* 2008; 6:76.

⁵ Brown, Darren A., and Kelly K. O'Brien. Conceptualising Long COVID as an episodic health condition. *BMJ Global Health* 2009; 6.9: e007004.

⁶ O'Brien K, Hanna S, Solomon P, et al. Characterizing the disability experience among adults living with HIV: a structural equation model using the HIV disability questionnaire (HDQ). *BMC Infect Dis.* 2019; 19:594.

- Develop Disability- and Rehabilitation-Focused Responses to COVID-19, as in the 2016 Political Declaration of HIV and AIDS⁷

The biomedical, pharmacological, and impairment-oriented focus on HIV care have posed challenges for people living with HIV⁸.

People living with COVID-19-related disability would benefit from services that have a strong focus on disability and rehabilitation.

- Prepare for the long-term impact of COVID-19 on key and vulnerable populations to help prevent inequality, stigma, and unintended social consequences, making every effort to leave no one behind

COVID-19 has disproportionately affected vulnerable populations⁹. While there is an increasing awareness of the high prevalence of people now living with Long Covid, very little focus is being placed on this vital issue in the global South.

⁷ Hanass-Hancock J, Chappell P, Myezwa H, et al. Committing to disability inclusion to end AIDS by 2030. *Lancet HIV* 2016; 3:e556–e557.

⁸ World Health Organization. WHO Global Disability Action Plan 2014–2021: better health for all people with disability. 2015. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/199544>.

⁹ Abedi, Vida, et al. Racial, economic, and health inequality and COVID-19 infection in the United States. *Journal of racial and ethnic health disparities* 2021; 8.3: 732-742.

► Build on Existing Research Networks in HIV Rehabilitation to Provide Foundations for Developing the Field of COVID-19 Rehabilitation

The Canada-International HIV and Rehabilitation Research Collaborative (CIHRRC¹⁰) has bridged partnerships among professions dealing with HIV and other health conditions to inform clinical practice and research¹¹.

Building on networks like these and creating new collaborations will be of great benefit to people living with COVID-19-related disability.

► Include and Focus on People Living With and Affected by COVID-19 in all Responses to the Pandemic

Including the experiences of people living with HIV-related disability has been vital in advocating for accessible HIV prevention, treatment, and care¹².

It is equally important to include people living with COVID-19-related disability in all responses to COVID-19. Research and advocacy responses to Long Covid have largely been initiated and sustained by people living with Long Covid.

¹⁰ Canada-International HIV and Rehabilitation Research Collaborative: <https://cihrrc.ca/>

¹¹ O'Brien KK, Solomon P, Ibáñez-Carrasco F, et al. Evolution of an international research collaborative in HIV and rehabilitation: community engaged process, lessons learned, and recommendations. *Prog Community Health Partnersh* 2018;12:395–408.

¹² Mac-Seing M. Including Disability in HIV Policy and Programming: Good Practices Drawn From Country-Based Evidence. Lyon, France: Handicap International; 2014.