

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM COGNITIVE REHABILITATION

- **Mild Cognitive Impairment**

Mild Cognitive Impairment is considered to be the “grey zone” between normal functioning and dementia. People diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment present with deficits to one or more cognitive functions (memory, attention and concentration, organization, planning, speech etc.), while they remain functional in their daily life. A certain percentage remains in this situation while the remaining proceeds to dementia. Cognitive Rehabilitation has been shown to benefit these patients as it improves the deficits, slows the progression of symptoms and, in many cases, it prevents dementia.

- **Alzheimer’s Dementia and other forms of dementia**

Dementia is a neurodegenerative state characterized by deterioration in one or more cognitive functions with parallel deficits in daily functioning. Gradually, these deficits get worse and, until today, no cure capable to reverse its progression has been found. In the first stages of dementia, Cognitive Rehabilitation contributes much to the slowness of symptom progression or even to their improvement, thus giving more years of quality to the patients. In the moderate and severe stages, patients benefit more from group Cognitive Enhancement programs which focus on socialization, mood improvement and training in simple strategies of cognitive deficits management.

- **Traumatic Brain Injury and Stroke**

Traumatic Brain Injuries after accidents and strokes are a major cause of cognitive deficits in young people. They cause structural and functional lesions in the brain that can influence one or more cognitive functions. Cognitive Rehabilitation plays a major role here since most patients are young and they must return to work, they have responsibilities towards their kids and families and they need quick improvement in cognition, emotion, behaviour and overall functioning. Evidence from numerous studies suggest that, depending on size and severity of lesion, Cognitive Rehabilitation can bring substantial improvement and, even, complete restoration.

- **Multiple Sclerosis (MS)**

MS patients present with a variety of cognitive disorders, depending on the site of brain lesion. The most common are reduction in the speed of information processing and difficulties in

thought organization. However, problems in memory, attention and concentration are not uncommon.

Cognitive Rehabilitation can help MS patients improve their cognitive deficits through structured programs focused on each patient's needs.

- **Parkinson's Disease**

Besides movement symptoms, Parkinson's Disease presents also cognitive deficits even from the initial stages that often lead to dementia. Cognitive Rehabilitation helps patients improve their symptoms or keep them stable for a longer period, offering them a better quality of life.

- **Learning Disorders/Developmental Disorders/Academic Achievement and behavioral problems**

The above disorders concern children and adolescents. Each one is accompanied by specific cognitive deficits that cause the observed symptoms. We frequently find difficulties in thought organization, planning and executing a task, goal achievement, attention and concentration, memory, mental control and other functions, depending on the disorder. A structured Cognitive Rehabilitation program can help the child and the adolescent improve their cognitive function and learn how to manage their problems. In this way school performance is ameliorated and general life success is promoted.

- **Psychiatric Diseases**

It is widely accepted that psychiatric disease, whether we talk about depression and anxiety disorders or schizophrenia, affect cognition. Memory, attention and concentration problems are very common while we often encounter difficulties in mental control, though organization, planning and goal achievement. These deficits worsen the already affected psychological state of the patients, as they feel they cannot cope with daily living anymore. Cognitive Rehabilitation can restore these deficits and strengthen patients' self-esteem and self-confidence.

Prevention

Our body needs exercise and so does our brain. A Cognitive Rehabilitation program can help healthy people practice their cognitive functions, maintain their brain fit, since it has been shown that when the brain is exposed to novel and complex tasks, the possibility of dementia is being reduced.