

Health related rehabilitation and human rights: Turning fine aspirations into measurable progress

The studies presented in this thesis have identified essential components of a rights based strategy that are important to improve health and participation outcomes of persons with disabilities. Specifically, it has identified the obligations of States under the CRPD in relation to rehabilitation. These extend across several commitments, including among others public participation, informed consent, non discrimination, accessibility, affordability, availability and quality of services. The combined input of experts who participated in the concept mapping study resulted in a framework of 107 indicators to monitor these obligations grouped into 11 clusters. The final framework successfully combined normative and operational requirements for strengthening rehabilitation in health systems and serves as a preliminary template for integrative monitoring.

Rehabilitation is considered a vital resource for the improvement of functioning and social participation of persons with disabilities. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to access health related rehabilitation and emphasizes the need to collect appropriate information to enable the formulation of relevant policies and help assess their implementation. Today there is a widespread acknowledgment that alignment of rehabilitation policies with CRPD standards can strengthen health systems and lead to better and more sustainable outcomes for all. However, a firm academic clarification of these standards is lacking and concrete knowledge on monitoring progress with their implementation is lacking. The objective of this thesis was to develop an indicator framework to assist governments and those seeking to support them monitor efforts to strengthen rehabilitation services in health systems in line with CRPD standards.