

Rehabilitation

A statement made by the British Thoracic Society. Thorax. November (2001) Vol.56 #11 p 827.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation

There are currently 600,000 with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in the UK pop, mostly aged over 40. Causes of COPD are many, including bronchitis and emphysema.

The point being made is that rehabilitation for patients with shortness of breath (dyspnea) is effective and cheap (cost £400 to £700 P.a.) compared with potential savings on care costs.

Rehab should be individually tailored and designed to optimise physical and social performance and autonomy.

Multi-professional team suggested: physician, physiotherapist, nurse, dietician, social worker, occupational therapist, pharmacist, lung function technician, psychologists and exercise scientists.

Activities to be included:

- Reconditioning and stamina.
- Respiratory muscle training
- Education
- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Social intervention
- Nutrition advice

But the precise mix of these required for each case is case dependent.

Comment

The BTS is promoting good practice and, drawing attention to a current shortage of NHS clinics which are able to deliver such a service.

