

Specific Requirements of Physiotherapists on the Practical Use of Software in the Therapeutical Process

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Introduction and Background

- Current healthcare system requires more effective management
- Education of health professionals in Austria moved to a tertiary level (Bologna process in 2006)
- Increased use of new technologies is expected in this professional area
- New opportunities provided by software are to accompany and strengthen this improvement process

Introduction and Background

- Software in therapeutic practice is mainly used to streamline administration procedures
- Gap between the available advanced software solutions and their actual use in therapeutic practice is getting bigger



Practical use of software which cover the administration, documentation and evaluation of the entire therapy process, including a database with pictures/videos about exercises which can be adapted individually by the therapists

- How to improve the practical use of therapy relevant software in a therapeutic environment?

Methods

- Research strategy of mixed-methods
 - two-stage qualitative study
 - semi-structured qualitative interview guideline for the expert interviews (n=5); February - April 2014; One-on-One Interviews, 18 questions with further subquestions
 - Factors influencing the practical use of therapy relevant software
 - Competence that is needed to operate with software during the therapeutic process
 - Ideal conditions for the use, advantages and drawbacks
 - semi-structured qualitative interview guideline for the interviews with therapists (n=8); February - April 2014; One-on-One Interviews, 18 questions with further subquestions
 - requirements of typical action scenarios in which therapy-relevant software solutions are used
 - quantitative study (subsequent)
 - Standardized pretested questionnaire (n=306 totally)

Results – qualitative findings

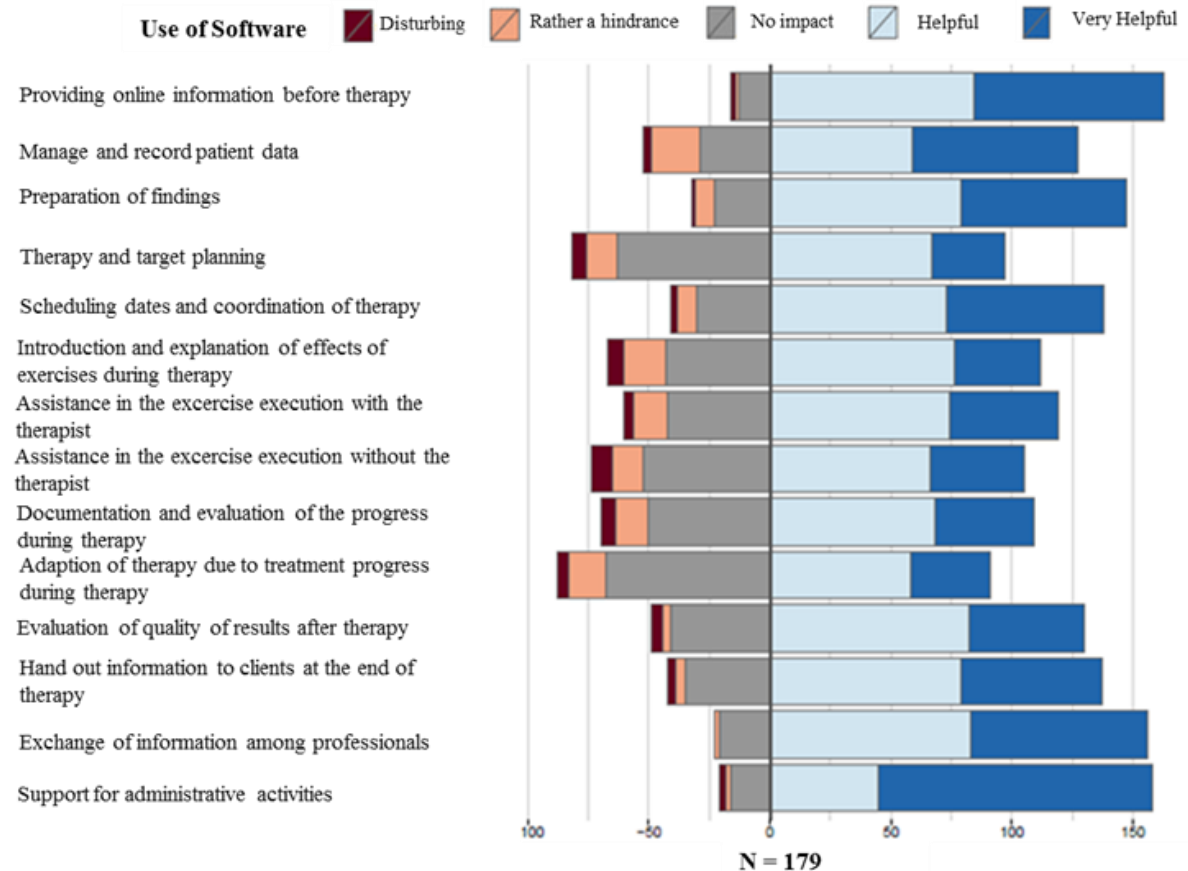
- 225 codings; thirteen documents; two groups of documents
- topic “requirements on software solutions used during the physiotherapeutic process”
 - (Prephase)
 - use of quality-assured exercises and information
 - only be performed under therapeutic supervision
 - Problem recognition
 - smooth exchange of data between institutions
 - possibility to guide through a standardized diagnostic assessment which can be adapted
 - Therapy planning
 - recording of the current situation
 - display individually selectable exercise suggestions
 - Stage of implementation
 - assemble individually tailored exercises
 - add individual hints and suggestions for the clients
 - data protection
 - Reminders and (game based) feedback functions
 - Stored information should be retrievable for later analysis
 - measuring and assuring the quality of results
 - Phase cross-cutting activities
 - Support all administrative activities (i.e. planning appointments, billing, documentation, interdisciplinary exchange of information)

Results – qualitative findings

- Fears exist
 - Data protection
 - Who assumes liability in case of damage
 - Additional expenses for the enrollment of the client and for the cost of software
 - Reduction of face-to-face-therapy sessions
 - Supervised entities are paid for by the clients/health insurance provider
 - Additional work because of not sufficiently mature software

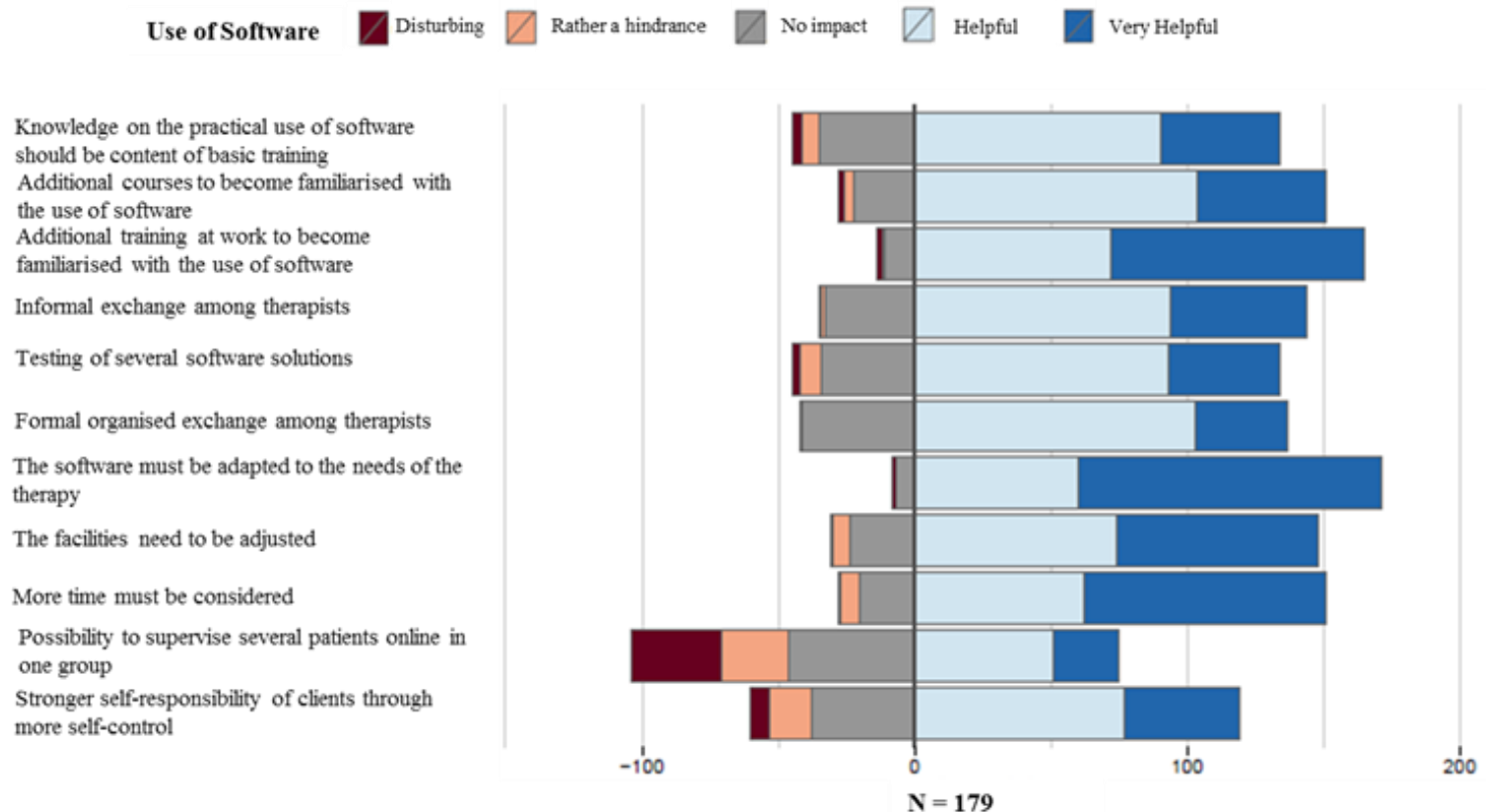
Results – quantitative findings

Scenarios – Software is perceived as helpful



Results – quantitative findings

Requirements for the Use of Software



Conclusion

- no holistic, continuous use and integration of software is part of the therapeutic process
- fulfill the specific requirements of physiotherapists on the practical use of software is the first step
- therapists need new competencies to understand and use software for the therapeutic process to gain the maximum benefit in their professional field of action as well as in the treatment process

Thank you!

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