

# **Prioritization of patients with Communication Disorders**

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**Abstract** — Current prioritization tools in rehabilitation services are rendered insufficient by their inability to discriminate among different mix of patients, besides there are insufficient medical resources available to treat all those patients simultaneously. Then there is a need for an accurate prioritization tool in order to improve effectiveness and the equity of access to these services. This project aims to develop an accurate prioritization framework by identification of accurate and comprehensive set of criteria for prioritizing patients with communication difficulties. Main criteria for prioritization of patients with communication problems have been identified using some quantitative and qualitative tools and after several observations and interviews with patients, clinicians, policy and community stakeholders at the Institut de réadaptation en déficience physique de Québec (IRDPQ), (a rehabilitation center serving the population of the eastern part of the province of Québec, Canada). In this study, we discuss our developed methods which have been used successfully in the IRDPQ rehabilitation center to identify the potential criteria and to prioritize patients with communication disorders. Using the proposed framework, decision makers can manage waiting lists properly, consider group of clinicians' opinions simultaneously, handle available uncertainties and risks, increase quality of care, and most importantly diminish rate of injuries to patients with communication difficulties due to long waiting times.

**Keywords** — *Prioritization; Communication disorders; Risks; Uncertainty; Group decision making; Rehabilitation centers.*