

Quick Review of Model System Research

Development of a Conceptual Framework to Measure the Social Impact of Burns¹

What is the study about?

This project aimed to gain a better understanding about how well people re-integrate into society and social activities after burn injury. Understanding the social lives of burn survivors is important for improving burn survivors' quality of life. This research asked burn victims to help develop a questionnaire to measure the social impact of burns. Researchers were particularly interested in learning about individuals' social participation by measuring their participation in society and their individual relationships. Specific topics identified in this project are work, recreation and leisure, relating with strangers, and romantic, sexual, family, and informal relationships.

Who participated in the study?

The investigators did a thorough literature review using terms found from a variety of sources. They identified 7 areas of interest: work, domestic work, recreation and leisure, relating to strangers; romantic, sexual, family and informal relationships. The researchers identified 19 questionnaires that address these areas and asked experts and patients and care givers to evaluate their usefulness. There were 50 participants in four focus groups. The survivor focus groups were divided by gender. There were 23 participants—12 male and 11 female. The 27 providers were split into doctors and clinicians. The doctors included 12 surgeons and psychiatrists. The clinicians included 15 health professionals like nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, massage therapists, and social workers. The six experts were providers and included burn surgeons, rehabilitation physicians, psychiatrists who work with burn survivors, physical therapists, and a burn survivor trained as a nurse clinician.

How was the study conducted?

This research was a qualitative study to identify the social areas of life most impacted by a burn injury. The interviews provided feedback from experts and adult burn survivors. The researchers evaluated the information gained from the four focus groups with respect to the 7 themes using qualitative analysis of their replies. From this summary they recommended the topics the questionnaire should cover.

What did the study find?

From the qualitative results, the researchers developed a unique framework of social areas most impacted by a burn injury. The authors suggest that the information determined from this study will inform the development of an evaluation profile, Life Impact Burn Recovery Evaluation (LIBRE), which will be the first of its kind to measure the impact of a burn injury on the return of individuals into society. The researchers note that returning to work or employment is important for burn survivors and clinicians, and is most often used a target for recovery.

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¹ Marino, M., Soley-Bori, M., Jette, A.M., Slavin, M.D., Ryan, C.M., Schneider, J.C., Resnick, L. ... Kazis, L.E. (2016). Development of a Conceptual Framework to Measure the Social Impact of Burns. *Journal of Burn Care & Research*. DOI: 10.1097/BCR.0000000000000358