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Adopting a commercial programme for memory rehabilitiation in traumatic brain injured patients

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ABSTRACT

Memory is a collection of systems in the brain that work in conjunction with other systems and modalities to effect encoding, storage, retrieval, and learning of information. It also plays a part in the executive and other higher order functions (Banich, 1997). Patients who suffered a traumatic brain injury frequently have impaired memory functioning and a host of consequential problems as well. Rehabilitation of TBI patients is focused primarily on helping TBI patients to cope with and compensate for their disabilities (Hart, Whyte, Polansky, Millis, Hammond, Sherer, Bushnik, Hanks & Kreutzer, 2003) and one of the most important aspects of rehabilitation is memory (Quemada, Cespedes, Ezkerra, Ballesteros, Ibarra & Urruticoechea, 2003). In this study, a commercially available memory enhancement program (Mega Memory® System) was used in an intervention with ten male TBI sufferers to evaluate its effectiveness in rehabilitation of memory. Subjects were assessed before and after the intervention on the Rivermead Behavioural Memory Tests and the Benton Visual Retention Test. Group results on Rivermead did not show any significant improvement of memory functioning, but the Number Correct scores on the Benton did. All subjects showed improvement on different aspects of memory functioning, especially in the domains of memory for everyday events, verbal, figurative, and spatial memory immediately following administration of the program. Overall the changes in memory functioning was not significant.

Key words: Memory, Rehabilitation, Working Memory, Baddeley, Traumatic Brain Injury, Male subjects, Wechsler Memory Scales – Revised, Benton Visual Retention Test, Rivermead Behavioural Memory Test.