

Cost-effectiveness analysis of low vision rehabilitation programs

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Abstract: Rehabilitation programs and services for the blind and low vision are fairly widely studied in the field of interdisciplinary research, as revealed by meta-studies and general reviews (van Nispen et al., 2020; Binns et al., 2012; Ryan, 2014). Obviously, this is determined by the nature of the applied programs or the services themselves. Most of the time, the problems of program availability, content, application of individual measures, benefits for participants and other issues are raised and analyzed by ophthalmologist researchers, less often by optometry specialists. On the other hand, the research field has notable publications authored by occupational therapists, psychologists, sociologists or social work researchers (Ravenscroft, 2019). It is noteworthy that hundreds of publications have been published in various approaches, on different topics, since 1986, when international conferences (USA, Canada, and UK) sponsored by the American Foundation for the Blind developed the modern model of low vision rehabilitation programs (Markowitz, 2016). Similar content-responsive models have been developed for individuals with vision loss. On the other hand, both Samuel N. Markowitz, one of the leading researchers in the field, as well as some WHO and other researchers emphasize that there is no best and evidence[1]based "gold standard" (aka "Preferred Practice Pattern"). ; Markowitz, 2016; Mogk, 2016). The purpose of the research is to analyze the cost-effectiveness of services provided by social rehabilitation programs. Quantitative and qualitative evidence reflects that the lives of blind people can change significantly even within two weeks of social rehabilitation. Blind people get value for money when participating in a social rehabilitation program because they are offered real help. Blind persons gain a sense of peace, security and confidence, begin to live independently, improve their psychological health, and some of them find employment. On the other hand, the program creates opportunities for communication and socialization in society, because blind people are often left to their own devices.