Computer Practice & Cognitive Functioning in Persons with Multiple Sclerosis

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Background: Computer-assisted cognitive rehabilitation programs (CACR) have proliferated, yet empirical support for the efficacy of CACR practice, particularly outside clinical settings, is limited.

Objective: To investigate the relationship between the amount of CACR homework, neuropsychological performance, and perceived health status among individuals with MS.

Methods: A community-based correlational study combining group skills-building sessions and CACR homework, using the web-based program Neuropsychonline (NPO). Participants met weekly as a group over two months and were assigned a minimum of 45 minutes of CACR homework on at least three different days each week. They were instructed to work exclusively on each of four NPO tasks (Attention, Memory, Executive Functioning, and Problem Solving) in sequential two-week increments.

Conclusion: Findings from this study support the feasibility of a randomized clinical trial investigating the efficacy of a community-based intervention combining group skills-building sessions and CACR. Limitations include the lack of a comparison group. Future studies should investigate the effects of CACR practice using other web-based CACR programs in populations with more diverse demographic and clinical characteristics.

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