

Transforming perspectives- living with post-COVID condition and experiences of Interprofessional rehabilitation

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Danderyds Sjukhus

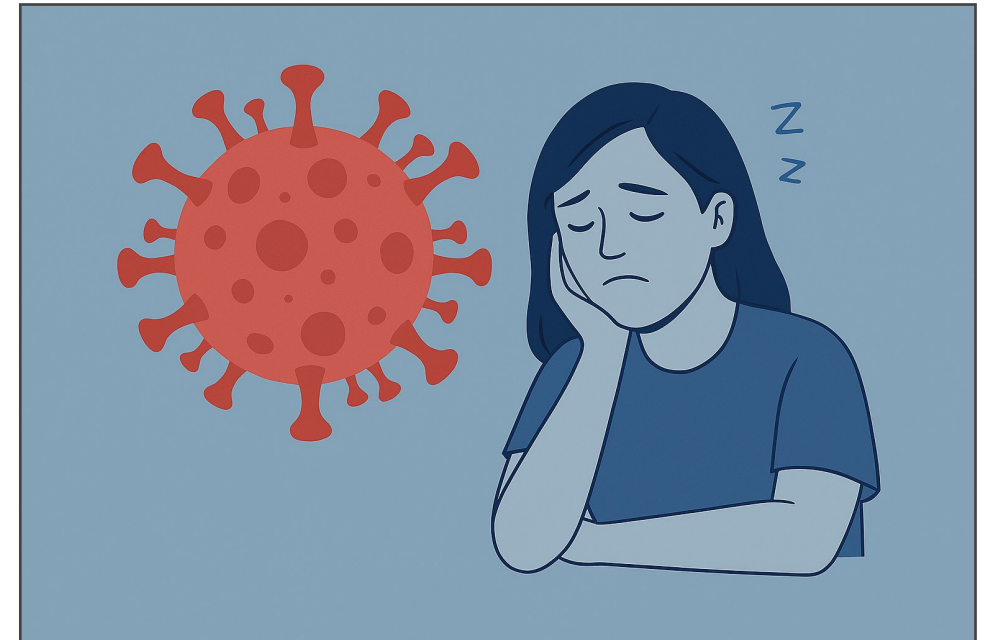
Post-COVID condition (PCC)

- WHO estimates 7 out of 100 develop long-term symptoms

World Health Organization definition:

“Individuals with a probably or confirmed COVID-19 infection, usually 3 months from the onset, with symptoms that last for at least 2 months and cannot be explained by an alternative diagnosis”

- Women, aged group 35-50 most common



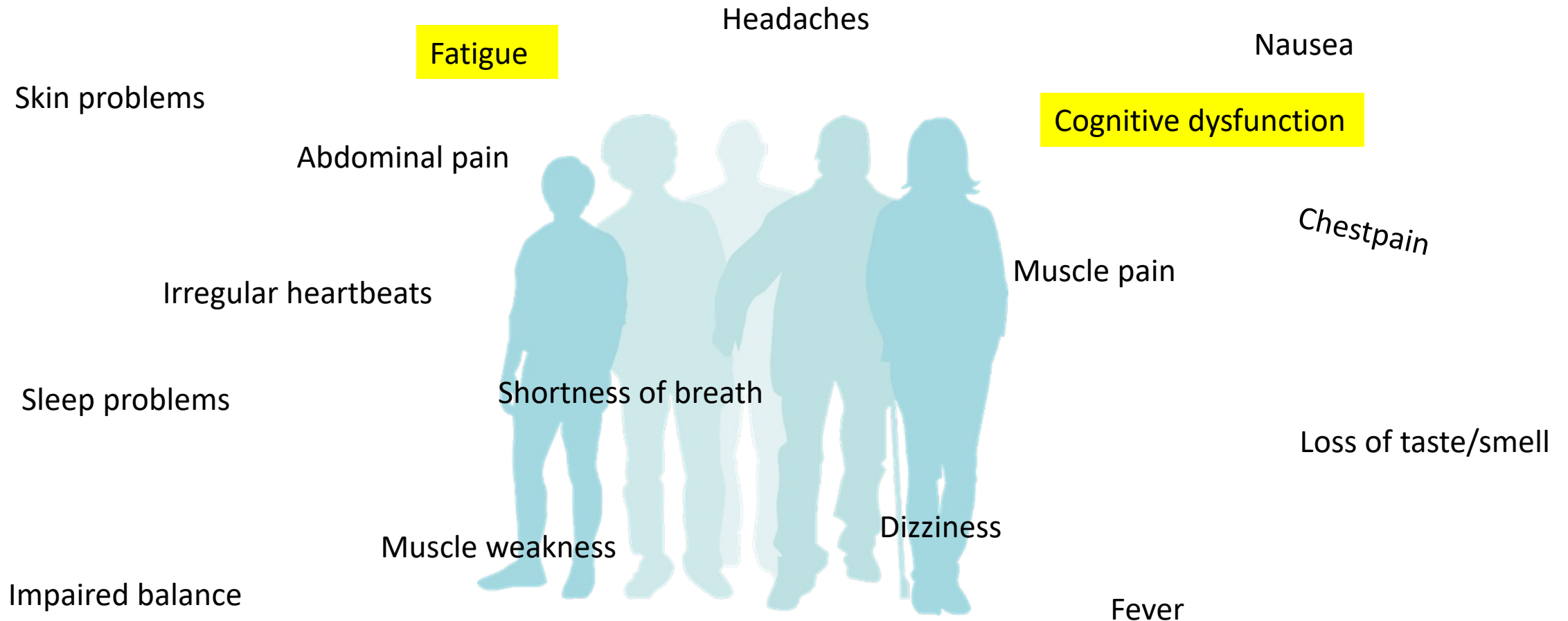
Complex symptoms



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PCC impact activities in daily life

- Post-Exertional Malaise (PEM)- setbacks
- Reduced work capacity- risk for long sick leave
- Rehabilitation is needed for this group!



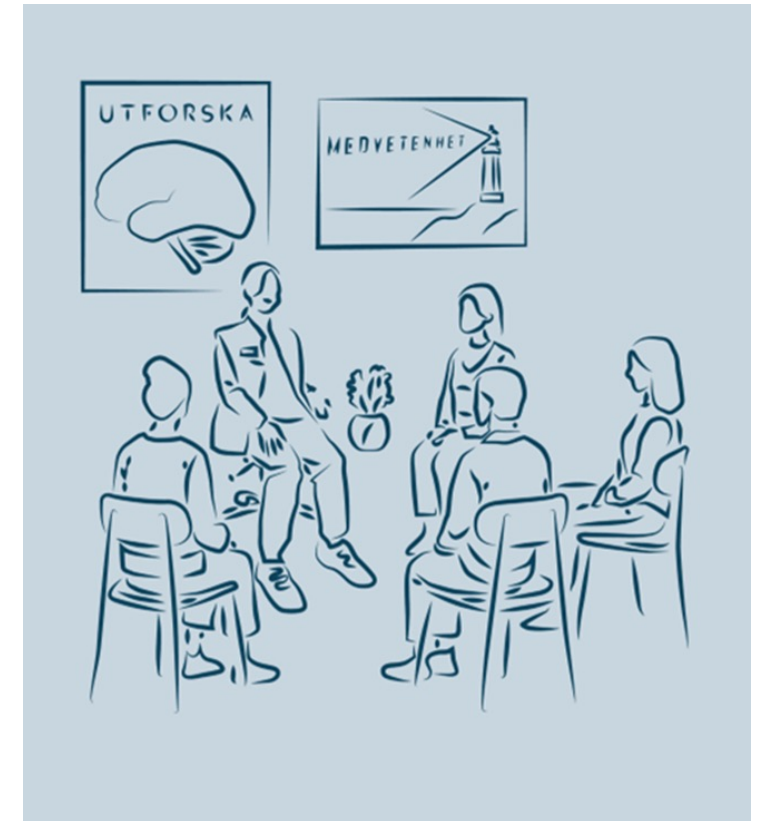
Images: Danderyds hospital

Interprofessional rehabilitation program, at Danderyds University Hospital

Group rehabilitation: 5-8 patients/group, 10 weeks
1/2 day a week

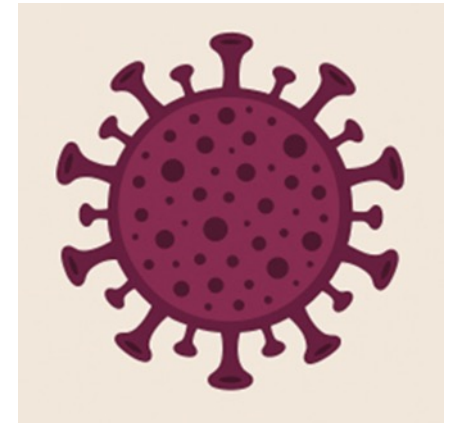
Team: physiotherapist, occupational therapist, medical social worker, psychologist and physician.

Overall aim: Increase knowledge about PCC and develop strategies to manage daily life.



Research questions

- How do patients with PCC experience living with PCC and how does it affect their activity and participation?
- What are their experiences of the rehabilitation program?



Interview study, participants characteristics

Variable	Description
Number of participants	16 patients, interviewed 6 months after rehab. 7 different groups
Gender distribution	5 men, 11 women
Age, mean (range)	49 (29-62)
Education level	More than 4 years at higher education (n=8)
Sick leave	100% on sick leave (n=6), part time sick leave (n=6) work full time (n=4)

Analysis: Qualitative content analysis, emergent design

Preliminary results

"Fall from a great high"



"Living lika a submarine"



2020

Time as a process

2025

Covid-19

Changes in capacity

Support

Rehab

To be believed

Finding new ways

Changes in capacity



”Who I am now”?



Quote, from a woman in the interview study

"You feel like this switch, and then it's like a wall, and your brain can't take it anymore, and you have to rest. I probably need to rest more than I do... Ehhhh, and then there's the fact that my legs feel so heavy and I get out of breath, so I find it really difficult that I can't walk at all... going down the stairs to take out the rubbish and then walking back up leaves me completely out of breath and I need to sit down and rest.... It's the same thing with showering, it's really hard, then I have to rest afterwards... And then, I can't stand for too long when I'm cooking and trying new recipes and stuff like that, it's hard because you have to concentrate.

So everything in everyday life has changed..."

Support- the power of being together



Quotes from a woman about rehabilitation and the group

"It was very valuable. Yes, I think we all felt that way. Yeah, umm... we've felt so alone in a way, and there has been—and still is—this mistrust surrounding postcovid. Is it really an illness? Or is it just some kind of cultural condition, like lazy people taking the opportunity to pretend to be sick? So it was such a relief to talk to others, because then it becomes so clear that it's not just me imagining this—it really is an illness."

Finding new ways...



Using aids
Adapt activities/Pacing
Yoga, mindfulness, breathing
exercises and stress
management
Plan for setbacks (PEM)



Take home messages:

PCC impacts daily life

Active rehabilitation strategies are helpful

Group support adds value

Thank's for listening!

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