



STAR Protocol-A Diagnostic Tool for Prolonged Disorder of Consciousness (PDOC)

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Aims

To develop a protocol for performing the STAR (Sensory Tool for the Assessment of Responsiveness) assessment for establishing the level of awareness in individuals diagnosed with an acquired brain injury resulting in a low-level arousal.

Method

We as a Multidisciplinary team at CERU extended our Sensory Stimulation Assessment Programme (SSAP), which was originated at CERU in 1992 previously known as Royal Leamington Spa Rehabilitation Hospital (RLSRH) and incorporated this SSAP with a Modality Focussed Patient -Centred Assessment Programme (MFPCAP) which allows the multidisciplinary team to tailor assessment stimuli bespoke to each Client. The programme provides various forms of stimuli (e.g. visual, auditory and tactile stimuli) on a daily basis in order to provide multiple opportunities to stimulate responses. It also allows for further opportunities i.e. cause/effect switch activation to be explored. Thus, STAR provides us an accurate record of behaviours to inform diagnosis of a disorder of consciousness and establish any means of communication with the client.

Results

STAR Assessment for three sensory modalities; auditory, visual and motor functions, in addition to communication and emotional responses administered in a hierarchical order; reflexive, withdrawal, brief localisation, localisation and discrimination, distinguishing the level of responses expected in each condition, i.e., vegetate time state (VS), minimally conscious state (MCS) and emerging from the minimally conscious state (EMCS).

Conclusion

Thus Star, Sensory Tool for the Assessment of Responsiveness Protocol at CERU which comprises of a total 10-week programme with STAR assessments initially followed by an initial diagnosis, with a written report/review with a Multidisciplinary Team Approach followed by a Modality Focused Patient Centred Assessment Programme (MFPCAP), followed by reassessments finally leads to MDT confirmation of diagnosis in Prolonged Disorder of Consciousness (PDOC).

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