**Return to work rate of individuals after cardiac rehabilitation and the demographic and impairment factors that influence return to work in the Western Cape, South Africa**

**Abstract**

**Background**

Cardio vascular disease commonly affects individuals within the working age group, often resulting in unemployment, particularly in low- to middle-income countries. The purpose of the study was to determine the Return to Work rate of individuals with Cardiovascular Disease after Cardiac Rehabilitation and the impact of impairment and socio-demographics on the individual’s ability to RTW.

**Methods**

A cross-sectional survey, namely the Work Rehabilitation Questionnaire was used to gather the information. The IBM SPSS software (version 25) was used to manage the statistical analysis. Individuals who completed a Cardiac Rehabilitation program between the ages of 18 and 64 years made up a sample of 63.

**Results**

The return to work rate reported that only 30 (47.6%) of the participants successfully returned to work after CR and 33 (52.4%) of participants did not RTW. The results also indicated that the older the individual and the higher the degree of impairment experienced, the less likely RTW would occur.

**Conclusion**

The study concluded that only 47.6 % of individuals completing cardiac rehabilitation returned to work. Being older and the degree of impairment impacts on one’s ability to return to work. Factors such as the age and level of functional impairment of the individual with cardio vascular disease must be addressed more aggressively in cardiac rehabilitation programs, particularly if the goal of the individual with cardio vascular disease is to RTW.

**Keywords**

cardiovascular disease, cardiac rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation, return to work

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