Employment satisfaction of individuals with spinal cord injury.

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Community reentry after a spinal cord injury is a long-term integrative process, because individuals must adjust to an extraordinary new set of circumstances. In this study, quality-of-life and work satisfaction variables associated with employed or unemployed individuals with spinal cord injury were examined.

METHODS: Quality-of-life and work satisfaction variables associated with 109 employed or unemployed individuals with spinal cord injury were examined by using an employment satisfaction survey.

RESULTS: Most of those employed indicated that they would either change jobs or some employment variable such as duties, supervisor, or hours worked. Participants who were not working attributed unemployment to an array of factors including ongoing health problems, lack of transportation, and impact of and/or lost disability benefits. Both groups offered feedback related to information provided to them by medical professionals about return-to-work resources.

CONCLUSIONS: The following three themes emerged from this analysis:

1. more comprehensive provider training about spinal cord injury is needed;
2. increased communication between consumer and family would be beneficial;
3. an increase in the flexibility and availability of services would help to ensure access to essential care.