Abstract

Title
Interdisciplinary rehabilitation, with its focus on physiotherapeutic and alternative techniques, as symptomatic therapy, and its effect on quality of life of multiple sclerosis patients: a literature review

Background
Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an autoimmune anti-inflammatory demyelinating disease that gives rise to multiple symptoms, which affect the patient's quality of life (QoL). Up to date, a cure does not exist, yet recent research with the use of mesenchymal and haematopoetic stem cells is promising. The first line of treatment is pharmacological management of the auto-immune response, followed by the management of the symptoms. That is why a comprehensive inter-disciplinary management is required with different interventions and techniques to provide more personalised care. Moreover, due to the unpredictable and progressive nature of the disease, the prevalence of MS patients seeking complementary and alternative therapies (CAM) has increased, specifically in the form of acupuncture and Qigong.

Aim
The purpose of this thesis is to outline and integrate the different methods and techniques that could be used within a comprehensive team, with the integration of acupuncture and Qigong towards the management of MS. With the main goal of achieving the most realistic and achievable QoL that a patient can acquire.

Method
This thesis is a literature review, reviewing books, journals and articles collected from the period of autumn 2011 to the spring of 2013. The sources collected are from databases (PubMed, Cochrane library and ScienceDirect), relevant journals with an impact factor higher than one and further from the references of reviewed sources.

Results
During the course of the research a variety of techniques and strategies were uncovered; that could be used within a comprehensive team to manage the variety of MS symptoms. Along with providing immune-mediated changes for the disease.

Conclusion
A comprehensive inter-disciplinary team which is focused on patient centered approach results in managing the difficulties MS patients encounter and improve their QoL.

Keywords
Multiple sclerosis (MS), interdisciplinary rehabilitation, complementary and alternative therapy (CAM), Quality of life (QoL).