

PLENARIES

PLENARY 2: Enhancing Clinical Capacity in Rehabilitation Services: From Symptom Management to Functional Recovery

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Rehabilitation services face increasing challenges arising from complex patient needs, growing demand, limited resources, and the need to demonstrate meaningful clinical and functional outcomes. Enhancing clinical capacity requires rehabilitation professionals to move beyond predominantly symptom-focused management towards comprehensive, function-oriented care that promotes independence, participation, and quality of life. Strengthening clinical capacity also involves optimising assessment, clinical decision-making, intervention delivery, and rehabilitation pathways across the continuum of care.

A function-oriented approach requires consideration of how symptoms influence physical function, mobility, activities of daily living, participation, and overall quality of life. Systematic clinical assessment, individualised goal setting, appropriate intervention selection, and progressive rehabilitation are fundamental to addressing patients' functional needs, capabilities, and recovery potential. Effective clinical reasoning and patient-centred decision-making facilitate the translation of assessment findings into targeted interventions and meaningful functional outcomes.

Optimising rehabilitation services further requires coordinated multidisciplinary collaboration, efficient clinical pathways, and integration of appropriate technologies and innovative approaches. Strengthening the capacity of rehabilitation professionals to apply evidence-informed and function-focused strategies can enhance service efficiency while maintaining quality and patient-centred care.

A shift from symptom management towards functional recovery represents an important approach to contemporary rehabilitation practice, supporting more integrated, outcome-oriented, and sustainable rehabilitation services that enable individuals to achieve greater independence and meaningful participation.