

## RHAB J710

### Mid-Term Examination

Javier is a twenty-seven year old man with a spinal cord injury. He comes from a large Honduran-American family that is very close-knit. He was riding from his home to school on his Moped when, at age seventeen, he was involved in a crash that resulted in a complete spinal cord injury at L-3, leaving him a paraplegic. Javier had been a cross country runner for his high school and had won State championships in his sport two years in a row. Javier had Olympic aspirations and had been told by his coach and trainers that these dreams were in fact possible. Javier became severely depressed. His weight dropped to 92 pounds and he no longer resembled the handsome young man his friends knew and loved. Eventually, they stopped coming around and Javier was left alone with no direction.

Like most young men his age, Javier wanted to be up and about as much as possible and was infamous for sitting his wheelchair for hours on end without changing position. In spite of the use of many different types of cushions, Javier's thin body was constantly sporting a severe pressure sore on his back, shoulders, or the base of his spine. He paid little attention to his personal hygiene so he was unaware that the decubitus ulcer near his coccyx had grown and become badly infected. The infected sore eventually turned into septicemia and Javier was near death. Skillful and consistent medical treatment saved his life, but he had lost a great deal of weight and the bony protuberances of his body became the canvas for an increasing number of burgeoning pressure sores. Javier was on Medicare and Medicaid and qualified, while in the hospital, for an intermittent pressure mattress that at the time was state of the art. Javier lay on a soft, smooth, and transparent surface providing a light support for his body. Beneath the surface, the bed blew puffs of cool wet sand through jets to the surface in an alternating pattern. At no time, while on the mattress, did any area of Javier's body bear weight for more than a split second. The mattress worked wonders and Javier's sores began the long tedious process of healing from the inside out.

The treatment for Javier's sores involved exposure to air and heat. As his wounds began to heal, the tissue forming across the surface of the wound was removed to allow air and heat to reach the deepest parts of the sore. The healing took over a year and during the time Javier was unable to sit in his chair for more than ten minutes each day. Once he was out of danger, he returned home to his apartment. Javier's physician ordered a mattress to be placed in his apartment. However, the payors refused to cover the cost of this mattress saying that there were other products that were also effective that would cost less. Javier's physician wrote multiple appeals with no success indicating that this specific product was the appropriate and best treatment for Javier. Still, the most important part of Javier's recovery involved his own decision to "just lay in bed until I die." His depression and the resulting lack of interest in doing what was needed to heal kept him completely dependent on others for his care.

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Javier has been referred to you for development of a rehabilitation plan that will guide the provision of assisted living and vocational services. Javier lives alone with the aid of a personal assistant since the death of his father three years ago. Since the loss of his father, Javier has isolated himself from his family. As the oldest male, Javier has told you that he feels a strong responsibility to be a provider for his extended family. Due to his disability, he feels less than capable of doing that. Prior to that time, he worked as an office manager for an entrepreneur who owns a chain of auto parts stores.

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Using your understanding of the medical aspects of Javier's situation AND your understanding of other cultural and psychosocial factors that may be affecting him, prepare an analysis and rehabilitation plan for Javier that reflects your comprehensive understanding of Javier's disability and its implications for future practice. Your analysis should contain the following:

#### PART 1 – Analysis

1. A description of Javier's functional limitations using the ICF Checklist as a guide.
2. A description of other factors that may be affecting Javier's situation such as environmental barriers and other issues that stand out in the consideration of the case.
3. A vocational profile for Javier. (see next page for additional highlighted text)

4. An exploration of the psychological, social, and cultural issues that are inherent with Javier's case. How might these cultural factors influence the medical aspects of this case? How might they impact Javier's function and how they might influence his influence Javier's rehabilitation plan.

**PART 2 – Rehabilitation Plan**

5. Finally, develop a **specific and comprehensive rehabilitation plan** that addresses specific services Javier may need immediately and in the future. Be sure that you are addressing not only vocational issues, but also issues related to independent living, education, medical care, and other pertinent areas. NOTE about the format of the rehabilitation plan: You may use any format you choose, however, if you are unfamiliar with treatment and rehabilitation plan formats, it might be useful to organize the plan in terms of specific target areas (e.g., mental health care, etc.). Each target area could then include a rationale, long-term and short-term goals, specific interventions to address the goals, and the responsible persons. If you have another format in mind, that's fine.

**Please submit your exam to Dr. Lachance via e-mail (as a Word document attachment).**

**Enjoy thinking through this case.**