PATIENTS’ LIVED EXPERIENCES OF KNEE INJURY TREATMENT USING INTEGRATED PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAINING OR CARE-AS-USUAL: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INTERVIEW STUDY

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Introduction Despite recent literature recommending increased focus on psychological aspects of rehabilitation, injured athletes often do not return to sport despite having reached physical readiness. The aim of this study was to explore the lived experiences of patients undergoing treatment for knee injury according to either the novel Motor Imagery to Facilitate Sensorimotor Re-learning (MOTIFS) training model, which integrates psychological training into physical rehabilitation, or care-as-usual.

Materials and Methods This phenomenological interview study identified major and subordinate themes encompassing the lived experiences of rehabilitation of 5 patients undergoing MOTIFS training and 7 receiving care-as-usual.

Results Results indicated that patients in the MOTIFS group perceived increased focus on individualized and activity-relevant meaning during rehabilitation training. This included concrete strategies to influence psychological outcomes, and identifying an explicit biopsychosocial interaction in which confidence, motivation, and enjoyment encouraged both physical and psychological readiness to return to sport.

Conclusion Those in the MOTIFS group described this novel training model as focusing on understanding and providing strategies for coping with psychological factors in rehabilitation and subsequent return to sport. The care-as-usual group perceived a need for more focus on improving psychological well-being. Future research should focus on methods of improving both physical and psychological readiness to return to sport.