Evaluating the Effects of Multiple Intensive Comprehensive Aphasia Programs (ICAPs) on Communication Outcomes for Patients With Aphasia

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Strokes are a leading cause of disability and death in adults in the US and globally. Approximately 40% of stroke survivors develop aphasia, an acquired language and communication disorder that negatively impacts an individual's ability to read, write, speak, and understand language. For most, aphasia is a chronic condition, requiring years of rehabilitation. A novel and innovative therapeutic intervention called an Intensive Comprehensive Aphasia Program (ICAP) has been developed combining principles of neuroplasticity and patient-centered care to optimally treat aphasia. Although ICAPs have been shown to be efficacious, no studies have examined the effects of completing multiple ICAPs and it was hypothesized that this repetition would result in a more beneficial linguistic outcome. This study was a Phase 1, retrospective, clinical study investigating the effects of repeated participation in the University of Montana's ICAP on cognitive-linguistic outcomes for people with aphasia (PWA). Participant data from 2022-2025 was sorted into first-time participants and participants who repeated the ICAP more than one time. Cognitive-linguistic outcome measures were administered immediately before and after each ICAP to assess language, functional communication, communicative participation, and non-verbal problem solving and reasoning. Results from this study suggest that PWA who completed multiple ICAPs had positive improvement that was often higher than individuals who participated in the program only once. While a larger, prospective study is needed to validate these results, the cumulative effects of ICAPs suggest that it may be beneficial for PWA to enroll in multiple ICAPs to optimize rehabilitation during the chronic phase of recovery.

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