

Empowering Healthcare Access for Women with Spinal Cord Injury

Course ID 212

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Women with SCI report facing extreme challenges in obtaining healthcare information and identifying professionals who serve them in their community. As a result, these women often do not obtain the healthcare information and care that they need. The purpose of this course is to address the critical healthcare challenges faced by women with spinal cord injury (SCI) and facilitate discussions and avenues to bridge these gaps. The course content overviews a thoughtful exploration of healthcare access and support for women with SCI through a series of interconnected modules. We will begin by examining the barriers that can impede access to healthcare services and information for women with SCI. Next, we will discuss the results of a national survey study on health information seeking that included 91 women with SCI. This study aimed to understand women with SCI's use of the Internet to access online health information. This included their most often searched health topics, perceived usefulness of the information, and self-reported eHealth literacy and challenges in online health information seeking. We will then share findings from focus groups conducted with women with SCI and healthcare providers, identifying the specific healthcare concerns that women reported to matter most and be the most challenging. Important differences between groups will be discussed including the overlapping topics of importance: Access, Advocacy, Gynecology Bowel and Bladder, Mental Health, and knowledge level of healthcare providers. Finally, a national resource directory will be discussed with the introduction of a healthcare website specifically designed for women with SCI. This website, provides a platform for resource sharing and consumer support. The website includes access to a sustainable network of individuals interested in women's health after SCI and has the potential to continue to break barriers and increase the communication of information and services. A sustainable growing directory of resources, entitled Healthcare Resources for Women with SCI (HeRe for Women with SCI). At the end of this course, participants will have a more complete understanding of the challenges faced by women with SCI and potential avenues for positive change.

Learning Objective 1 Identify and analyze the various barriers that women with spinal cord injury (SCI) face when attempting to access healthcare services and information.

Learning Objective 2 Discuss online health information seeking among women with SCI, including the topics most often searched, the usefulness of the information found, and the challenges faced.

Learning Objective 3 Learn how to use the features and functionalities of the healthcare resources website designed for women with SCI (HeRe for Women with SCI), including the platforms, information sharing, and consumer support capabilities.