Did the therapists, doctors and nurses talk to you and ask what you learned in rehab? Least important? Your experience in therapy? What didn’t work in therapy? What do you do that is most important to you?

### BACKGROUND
- Individuals with traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI) experience an abrupt and profound change in all aspects of life.
- Research has shown that individuals with spinal cord injury have better outcomes if they have adequate access to transportation, education, and family/social support.

### OBJECTIVE
- Purpose: To learn about the personal health care experiences of individuals with SCI.
- Aim: Examine statements about adaptive equipment, goal setting, need for information, and characteristics about health care practitioners in order to derive implications for practice.

### METHODS
Conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded. Themes were examined from relevant data.

### Questions Asked
What do you do that is most important to you? What things do you do that you most enjoy? When thinking about your experience with your health care since the time of your injury what do you think worked with your experience in therapy? What didn’t work in therapy? What do you think was the most important thing that you learned in rehab? Least important? Did the therapists, doctors and nurses talk to you and ask about your needs? How did they do that? Can you give me an example? What kind of advice do you (or would you like to) give to people who have new spinal cord injuries?

### VALORATED CHARACTERISTICS OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS
- Marcus, age 36.
  - SCI Etiology: Gunshot wound, 17 years ago
  - Social history: Marcus lives in his own apartment in Milwaukee, WI. He is unmarried and has lived on his own for 5-6 years. He has a college degree and currently works full time.

- Ian, age 28
  - SCI Etiology: Alcohol related diving accident, 1.5 years ago
  - Social history: Ian is 2 children from a previous relationship. He sees them every other weekend. He’s unmarried. About a year ago he moved to Madison, WI in order to be closer to the services he needs. Ian is planning to take courses on computer aided design.

### HEALTH CARE EXPERIENCES

#### APPROPRIATE SELECTION OF ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT
- “At the time I couldn’t do anything but get bed baths so I remember like right after I was going to get out of the hospital... They finally gave me a towel where it’s like you stick your...” — Marcus

- “Well like the eating utensils that we use to hold forks and spoons. [Yeah] I don’t use those. It’s embarrassing first of..." — Marcus

- “Um I think they tensorial splint was huge. That gave me the ability to grab um easier um the teaching of how to use a rocker knife was very good. So you can use it to cut meats and vegetables and stuff. Um, They taught me how to um make a special cutting board to use to prepare sandwiches and vegetables and stuff.” — Ian

- “Well, I picked the chair itself because it’s lightweight. Um being a quad it’s hard to push around without hands. Um, I picked power assist wheels because I was told that they were really good. I come to find out that the batteries just don’t last and I wish that I would’ve gotten more information on that. [Yeah] I do have regular wheels, but because of my shoulder pain it’s hard to push around with them... but yeah. If I had more knowledge I think I would’ve just gone for a power chair.” — Marcus

#### GOAL SETTING
- “I needed help because I didn’t know exactly what the level was that I was capable or able to do. I mean you look at a person, he’s a quad, they don’t have full dexterity in their fingers, and you think to yourself all the stuff that you did before when you were walking around and had dexterity in your fingers like could be...” — Marcus

- “I don’t think like I’d be able to cook and like anything was possible. The whole thing like dressed and cleaning everything...” — Marcus

- “Like the eating utensils that we use to hold forks and spoons. [Yeah] I don’t use those. It’s embarrassing...” — Marcus

#### NEED FOR INFORMATION AND CONNECTIONS TO RESOURCES
- “Well like the eating utensils that we use to hold forks and spoons. [Yeah] I don’t use those. It’s embarrassing first of...” — Marcus

- “The other thing they need to do for OT’s and PT’s is to let your people know that have CP, MS, uh MD, spinal cord injuries you can go...” — Marcus

- “I wish they would’ve talked to me more about wheelchairs. [Yeah] So I wouldn’t have gotten this thing, because I’m not happy with the chair I’m in. Um which isn’t bad because you only get a wheelchair every 5 years or 5 to 7 years. [Inhale] So I’m kind of stuck with this.” — Ian

- “You just got to get in contact with the right people and stuff like that. I mean hang around.” — Marcus

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