Foreword

Stroke Rehabilitation is a broad and diverse field of study. A wide variety of pharmacological and therapeutic interventions are available, some of which have been rigorously evaluated while others require further study. This review was designed to synthesize the results from over 4,500 studies evaluating the effectiveness of stroke rehabilitation interventions, including a careful evaluation of 1,699 randomized controlled trials.

This review arose from a vision for integrated stroke care in Ontario and is a direct result of one of the recommendations of the Ontario Stroke Rehabilitation Consensus Panel, 13 years ago in 2000. Little did the members of the Consensus Panel know that the SREBR would be the result or that it would be in its 17th edition. The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care of Ontario (MOHLTC) and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario (HSFO) provided the all-important initial financial support in 2001 until 2003. The SREBR was funded for 12 editions by the Canadian Stroke Network (CSN), a federally-funded Center of Research Excellence. This 17th edition was funded by the Canadian Partnership for Stroke Recovery and Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

This project has been the result of many individuals’ hard work. The updated 17th edition has been the work of a largely Andreea Cotoi with help from Ashna Jina, Jashan Brar, Shannon Janzen and Jon Serrato.

The Parkwood Hospital Foundation, now the St. Joseph’s Health Care London Foundation, sponsored and assisted with the initial proposal for this project. We are also grateful to Parkwood Institute, St. Joseph’s Health Care London and in particular the Lawson Research Institute for providing us with amazing research space.

The goal of this project has always been to produce an up-to-date, easily accessible evidence-based review of the stroke rehabilitation literature. We have made the process by which we arrive at our levels of evidence as transparent as possible. The information presented is continually modified as new data becomes available or as our interpretations are challenged. Stroke rehabilitation professionals are strongly encouraged to carefully critique their area of interest and send us any comments, care of Dr. Robert Teasell: robert.teasell@sjhc.london.on.ca

Over 250 peer-reviewed articles and published abstracts have arisen from the SREBR Research Group. Articles from the SREBR have been cited well over 2500 times (SCOPUS). Over the last year the website has received internet visits from 155 countries. Requests have been granted to translate parts of it in Chinese, Russian, Japanese, Spanish and Turkish. It has formed the basis for a number of national guidelines and development of models of care.

One of the great challenges of the 21st century in health care is translating research evidence into clinical practice and nowhere is this more than in stroke rehabilitation. We have had the unique privilege of over a decade of funding support for a comprehensive review of the stroke rehabilitation literature which has in turn has allowed free internet access to the SREBR since 2002. This 17th edition of the Stroke Rehabilitation Evidence-Based Review can be copied at no cost, for clinical use or for teaching purposes, but the content is the property of the SREBR.

Hopefully you will find this information useful in your clinical and research practices. You can access the entire evidence-based review at: www.ebrsr.com
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**Katherine Salter BA, MSc, PhD (candidate)** was also a research associate at Lawson Health Research Institute and has worked on all editions of the SREBR from 2004 to 2012 and served as a co-project coordinator. Katherine is an acknowledged expert in secondary prevention and stroke rehabilitation outcome measures. Katherine is in the Health and Rehabilitation Sciences PhD Program, Faculty of Health Sciences, Western University, London, Ontario, Canada.

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