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Social rehabilitation system in Estonia

Dear Mrs Evita Kaléja

Thank you for your interest in the rehabilitation system and organization in Estonia. The SOcial Insurance Board organizes social rehabilitation across the lifespan, and the health sector organizes rehabilitation based on need. We also forwarded your appeal to colleagues in the health field of the Ministry of Social Affairs, who will forward you an overview on the field of rehabilitation as a separate reply.

Social rehabilitation service in Estonia

Social rehabilitation is a social service designed to support a person¹ with a disability or reduced work capacity in coping with their everyday life. Through social rehabilitation, the person and their family learn how to manage daily life with the special health needs arising from their condition.

Service organization: The social rehabilitation service is organized by the Estonian National Social Insurance Board. If the assessment of the need for service reveals that the person requires social rehabilitation, the Board assumes the obligation to pay for the service, referring the person to the appropriate services.

Objectives: The aim of the social rehabilitation service is to teach and develop everyday skills, enhance opportunities for social participation, support learning, and prepare for employment.

Service nature: The service is active, requiring the person to engage in activities necessary to achieve their goals, such as exercising or learning to dress using a technical aid. These skills are practiced with the help and guidance of a rehabilitation specialist, who also provides exercises and tasks for home practice, either independently or with a family member/caregiver.

Complex service: Social rehabilitation is necessary when a person has multiple issues that cannot be resolved through individual services (e.g., support person, rehabilitation, caregiver, or personal assistant) but require the intervention of a multidisciplinary rehabilitation team.

Specialists involved:

- Occupational Therapist
- Creative Therapist
- Social Worker
- Psychologist
- Special Education Teacher
- Speech and Language Therapist

¹ both children and adults

- Physiotherapist
- Experience Advisor
- Doctor
- Nurse

Services are provided individually, to families, or in groups, except for doctor services, which are individual. A detailed list of services and their descriptions can be found on the relevant website.

Service duration: The service is time-limited, provided for the necessary period to achieve the set goals. At the end of each rehabilitation period, the service provider assesses the effectiveness and the need for continuation. If further service is required, a new application and assessment must be completed.

Participation requirement: Active participation according to the action and rehabilitation plan is mandatory. Failure to do so may result in the Estonian National Social Insurance Board refusing to pay for the service as per clause 21 (1) 3) of the General Part of the Social Code Act.

Note: Treatment, including rehabilitation, is not considered social rehabilitation. For treatment and rehabilitation needs, consult your family physician or other doctors.

Physiotherapist service: This includes assessing motor performance skills and the operating environment (e.g., school, home), recommending adaptations, preparing and teaching physiotherapeutic programs, teaching the use of technical aids, and sustainable assistance techniques to family members. Passive activities such as massages, baths, salt chambers, and cold therapy are not included.

Doctor and nurse services: These are consultative and do not include treatment activities like diagnosis, treatment planning, prescribing medication, performing procedures, or issuing referrals for specialists or tests.

Yours sincerely,

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