Goal identification before Spinal Cord Stimulation: a qualitative exploration in potential candidates.

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Introduction
Due to the difficulties encountered in the treatment process of patients with chronic pain, it is of utmost importance to involve patients themselves in their rehabilitation trajectory. Patient engagement can be obtained by motivating patients to select their own treatment goals. We hypothesize that applying goalsetting, as a form of patient empowerment, in potential candidates for Spinal Cord Stimulation (SCS) may further improve the outcome of SCS. As a first step in creating patient empowerment, patients' goals that they aim to achieve with SCS will be explored.

Material and Methods
Fifteen patients suffering from Failed Back/Neck Surgery Syndrome and scheduled for SCS were in-depth interviewed. All interviews were audio recorded and analysed using in vivo coding. Afterwards, the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health framework was used to structure the responses of patients.

Results
In the domain of bodily functions, all patients mentioned pain reduction and one patient wanted to regain his previous sleep pattern. In the domain of activities, walking, sitting, driving a car, bending down and picking up were the highest ranked goals. Regaining a social life was the highest ranked goal for participation. Eleven patients wanted to regain a feeling of happiness and five patients wanted to focus on avoiding depression.

Conclusion
The interviews revealed a broad spectrum of individual patients' goals, highlighting the need of individually targeted rehabilitation trajectories in the field of neuromodulation. Goal identification could entail the first step towards individualized medicine in the SCS trajectory.