

Department of Clinical Neuroscience
Division of Insurance Medicine

Sickness absentees' experiences of encounters with professionals from healthcare and social insurance

There is little knowledge on factors that influence return to work among long-term sickness absentees. So far, mainly the effects of different rehabilitation measures have been studied, however, not the effect of the encounter with professionals. Some of our results indicate that this might be of importance for return to work, why we have continued to study this in different projects.

The aim is to get knowledge on how long-term sickness absentees experience their encounters with professionals and the possible influence of this for return to work, to get knowledge bases for preventive measures.

Interdisciplinary studies are conducted, using different methods for data collection and data analyses. Data from focus group interview, individual interview, and questionnaires have been analysed. Based on these results a comprehensive questionnaire was constructed and in 2004 sent to the home addresses of a sample of 10 000 long-term sickness absentees in Sweden. An equivalent questionnaire was in 2013 sent to 17 400 long-term sickness absentees and 1000 people who had had their claim for prolonged sickness benefits declined. Also, such questions are included in other, diagnoses specific studies, e.g., of women with breast cancer or of patients undergoing insurance medicine assessments. In these studies, we also collaborate with researchers from e.g., Monash University in Australia.

Project leader:

Professor Kristina Alexanderson
08-524 832 00 Kristina.alexanderson@ki.se

Assistant project leader: Ass Prof Emilie Friberg emilie.friberg@ki.se

Publications

PhD thesis

1. Müssener U. Encouraging encounters. Experiences of People on Sick Leave in their Meetings with Professionals. Division of Social Medicine and Public Health, Dept of Health and Society, Linköping University, Sweden. 2007.

PhD thesis that are partly based on such data

2. Nilsson M. Psychosocial situation and work after breast cancer surgery - women's experiences. Division of Insurance Medicine, Karolinska Institutet; 2013.
3. Wessel M. Negative experiences of encounters in healthcare. LIME, Karolinska Institutet; 2013.
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Publications in international scientific journals

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11. Lynöe N, Wessel M, Olsson D, Alexanderson K, Helgesson G. Respectful encounters and return to work – empirical study of long-term sick-listed patients' experiences of Swedish healthcare. *BMJ Open* 2011;2:e000246. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2011-000246.
12. Nilsson M, Olsson M, Petersson LM, Wennman-Larssen A, Alexanderson K. Return to work after breast cancer: women's experiences of encounters with different stakeholders. *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, 2011;15:267-74.

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1. Friberg E, Alexanderson K. Sickness absentees' experiences of encounters with healthcare; differences between women and men. At the 22nd EUMASS Congress: Maastricht, the Netherlands, October 2018
2. Wennman-Larsen A., Alexanderson K, Friberg E. Factors of importance for work (dis)ability during the two years after breast cancer surgery? – a content analysis of women's open answers. At the 22nd EUMASS Congress: Maastricht, Netherlands, October 2018
3. Friberg E, Grant G, and Alexanderson K. Administrative justice, denied sickleave benefits and encounters with the Social Insurance Agency in Sweden. 4th Work Disability Prevention and Integration Conference; Amsterdam, Netherlands, September 2016
4. Grant G, Friberg E. Diagnosing justice? Claimant encounters with officials in the Swedish Social Insurance System: Law and Society Association of Australia and New Zealand Conference: Adelaide, Australia, December 2015.
5. Friberg E, Alexanderson K. Positive and negative encounters with the Social Insurance Agency and healthcare, among individuals on long-term sick leave, and return to work. 3rd Work Disability Prevention and Integration Conference; Toronto, Canada, September 29th – October 1st, 2014.