



**Department of Clinical Neuroscience**  
Division of Insurance Medicine

### **Sick leave and disability pension due to hearing difficulties**

Hearing difficulties are common and tend to increase, at the same time the knowledge about the consequences of these difficulties for work, work capacity and sick leave or disability pension is very limited.

In Sweden, 1 040 000 persons reported that they had hearing difficulties in 2006. Moreover, this problem is most likely under reported, the number of people with measurable hearing difficulties is probably much higher. There is a difference between the sexes when it comes to hearing damages, which is more common among men, but the problems is becoming more and more common among women as well. In Sweden more than half of the persons with hearing difficulties are in the working ages. The knowledge about consequences of being on sick-leave or disability pension due to hearing diagnoses is more or less non-existent.

The aim of this project is to increase the knowledge regarding sick leave and disability pension due to hearing diagnoses, the meaning and the consequences both for the affected individual and for society at large. This knowledge can later be the base for future interventions.

We will use prospective data from a big database including all individuals of working ages in Sweden.

#### **Project group**

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#### **Publications in scientific journals**

1. Gustafsson K, Backenroth-Ohsako G, Rosenhall U, Ternevall-Kjerulf E, Ulfendahl M, & Alexanderson K. *Future risk for disability pension among*

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*persons sickness absent due to otoaudiological diagnoses; a population-based cohort study with a 12-year follow up.* Scandinavian Journal of Public Health. 2011 Jul;39(5):501-7.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21382840>

2. Friberg E, Jansson C, Mittendorfer-Rutz E, Rosenhall U, Alexanderson K. Sickness Absence Due to Otoaudiological Diagnoses and Risk of Disability Pension: A Nationwide Swedish Prospective Cohort Study. PLoS ONE 2012. 7(1): e29966.
3. Friberg E, Gustafsson K, Alexanderson K. *Hearing difficulties, ear-related diagnoses and sickness absence or disability pension - a systematic literature review* BioMed Central Public Health 2012, 12 (1):772
4. Pierre PV, Fridberger A, Wikman A, Alexanderson K. *Self-reported hearing difficulties, main income sources, and socio-economic status; a cross-sectional population-based study in Sweden.* BioMed Central Public Health 2012 Oct 15;12:874
5. Friberg E, Rosenhall U, Alexanderson K. *Sickness absence due to otoaudiological diagnoses; a descriptive nationwide study.* BioMed Central Public Health 2013, 13(1):635
6. Friberg E, Rosenhall U, Alexanderson K. *Sickness absence and disability pension due to otoaudiological diagnoses: risk of premature death - a nationwide prospective cohort study* BioMed Central Public Health 2014 Feb 8;14(1):137

#### Abstracts accepted for presentation at scientific conferences

1. Gustafsson K, Alexanderson K. *Sick leave due to hearing diagnoses and risk for disability pension; a population-based cohort study with 12 year follow-up.* European Journal of Public Health 2009; 19: Suppl 1, 103-104. 2nd European Public Health Conference, Lodz, Poland, Nov 2009
2. Friberg E., Rosenhall U., Alexanderson K. *Disability pension due to otoaudiological diagnoses and risk of all-cause and cause specific mortality; a Swedish nationwide prospective cohort study, 2005–2010.* European Journal of Public Health, Vol. 22, Supplement 2, 2012 European Public Health Conference, Malta November 2012
3. Friberg E., Mittendorfer-Rutz E., Rosenhall U, Alexanderson K. *Sickness absence due to tinnitus and risk of patient care due to mental diagnoses - a nationwide prospective cohort study.* European Journal of Public Health, Vol. 23, Supplement 1, 2013 European Public Health Conference, Brussels November 2013