Department of Clinical Neuroscience  
Division of Insurance Medicine

Backpain and work disability

Back pain constitutes one of the most critical public health problems today. The disorder ranks among the most frequent causes of short and permanent work disability (i.e. sickness absence, SA and disability pension, DP) and covers a clinically heterogeneous patient group, ranging from unspecific pain to more specific disorders. Back pain is strongly interlinked with common mental disorders (CMDs, depressive and anxiety disorders), which may additionally worsen work ability. Despite the size of this public health problem, there are still a number of unresolved research questions with regard to the role of CMDs on work disability associated with back pain, the complex interplay with work related, socio-demographic and medical factors and the effect of surgery and social insurance policies.

Our study aims to investigate the effect of CMDs on work disability related to back pain in general and specifically after lumbar spine surgery considering different insurance policies. A further aim is to scrutinise if mental health worsens or improves after granting DP due to back pain.

The study is based on nationwide population based registers.

Financial support
AFA Insurance

Project members
Ellenor Mittendorfer Rutz, Associate Professor, project leader
Thomas Dorner, Medical University Vienna
Konstantinos Pazarlis, MD, Uppsala university
Magnus Helgesson, PhD, Karolinska Institutet
Mo Wang, PhD, Karolinska Institutet
Syed Rahman, PhD, Karolinska Institutet

Contact: Ellenor Mittendorfer-Rutz (ellenor.mittendorfer-rutz@ki.se)

Publications
