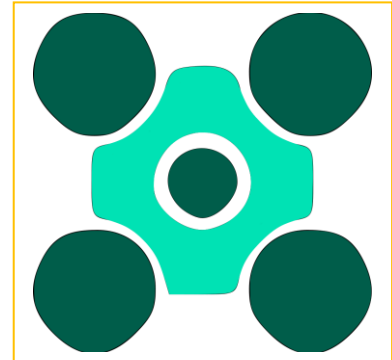


## Return to Work after Mental Illness: Development of Recommendations for Occupational Physicians

### Background

Mental illnesses are associated with long-term sickness absence and with early exit from the labour market. The return to work (RTW) process after a therapy could be positively influenced by the coordinative and mediating role of occupational physicians. The effectiveness of RTW measures is strongly determined by the divergent and mutual expectations and needs of the involved stakeholders. In-depth insights into these inter-relationships would enable occupational physicians to mediate between differing positions and interests and to act more effectively.



### Aims

In order to support occupational physicians we aim to explore mutual expectations and needs of involved stakeholders (i.e., of the affected employees, therapists, colleagues, and supervisors) (aim 1) and to uncover differing expectations and needs (aim 2). Based on these results, an instrument to measure stakeholders' needs related to the RTW process will be developed (aim 3). In a pilot study, occupational physicians will then review the instrument (aim 4).

### Methods

The data for aims 1 and 2 will be collected through qualitative interviews and for aim 3 group discussions will be carried out. Occupational physicians will be trained in the application of the instrument to address aim 4.

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