

**STEP-PILOT:** Stress reduction in practice - a pilot study to reduce psychosocial work stress of medical assistants in outpatient practices

**Background:**

Medical assistants (MAs) represent one of the largest occupational groups in outpatient care in the German health care system. Previous studies have shown that MAs report high levels of work stress. Those high work stress levels are associated with wishes for work-related improvements, the intention to leave the job as MA and with a reduced quality of patient care.

**Aims:**

Based on prior work by our group on the psychosocial working conditions of MAs, we aim to develop interventions in a participatory approach with general practices to potentially improve the psychosocial working conditions of MAs. STEP-PILOT provides the necessary preparatory work for the possible implementation of a larger intervention study, which should evaluate the effectiveness of the introduced measures.

**Methods:**

Health circles are to be carried out in general practices. Before and after the intervention (i.e. up to 4 meetings with a duration of about 2 hours) the MAs complete questionnaires covering MA-specific work stress, job satisfaction and health parameters (e.g. burnout). In order to evaluate whether the methods and procedures of the pilot study were acceptable and practical, group discussion will take place at the end of the intervention with the practice teams.

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