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PROGNOSTIC FACTORS FOR DURATION OF SICK LEAVE IN PATIENTS SICK LISTED WITH ACUTE LOW BACK PAIN: AN UPDATE OF A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Objectives In this study we examined which factors best predict return to work for workers away from work due to acute low back pain. Based on the International Classification of

Functioning, Disability and Health, we distinguish between factors related to LBP, to the worker, to the job and to the psychosocial environment that influence duration of an episode of being off work. We updated a previous review because of advances in the field.

Methods PubMed, EMBASE, and PsycINFO were searched up to March 2011. Quality of the studies was assessed on 19 methodological items. Levels of evidence will be determined and results will be pooled if possible.

Results 4947 titles and abstracts were retrieved and after screening of title abstract and papers for inclusion and exclusion criteria, 28 relevant publications from 25 studies were identified. Two studies that were selected in the previous review were excluded after contact with the authors and due to stricter criteria. Studies were from: Belgium: 2, The Netherlands: 7, USA: 10, Canada: 3, Norway: 2, and Greece: 1. After initial disagreement (overall ICC=0.63) consensus was reached on quality. The average quality of studies was 12.21 with a minimum score of 6 and a maximum score of 16. Approximately 220 factors were considered in these studies. Preliminary analysis shows that recovery expectations, radiating pain, disability and pain might be important factors.

Conclusions The review raises the issue of more theory based/biological plausible studies. At the conference we will present pooled results and feedback from stakeholders on relevance.