

Enabling return to work (RTW) through preventive sickness allowance during adjuvant treatment for breast cancer



Ann-Marie Brudin
Zarah Nettervik
Susanne Ottosson

MD, Medical advisor, Swedish Social Insurance Agency
Project manager, Swedish Social Insurance Agency
MD, oncologist, Sahlgrenska University Hospital

Background

- The Swedish Social Insurance Agency (SSIA) formed insurance medical network in 2012 concerning oncological diagnoses
- Problem inventory together with RCC:
 - Sick listing for cancer is complicated, current activity limitations may be absent, making sickness certification difficult
 - Treatment often causes incapacity
 - Often full sick listing during treatment, regardless of capacity for work
 - Preventive sickness allowance (PSA) is a useful option, but underutilized and not uniformly managed

Objectives and methods

➤ Objectives

- Compare RTW during adjuvant treatment for breast cancer for patients with PSA versus ordinary sickness allowance (SA)
- Identify potential obstacles and difficulties, both in specialised care and at the SSIA

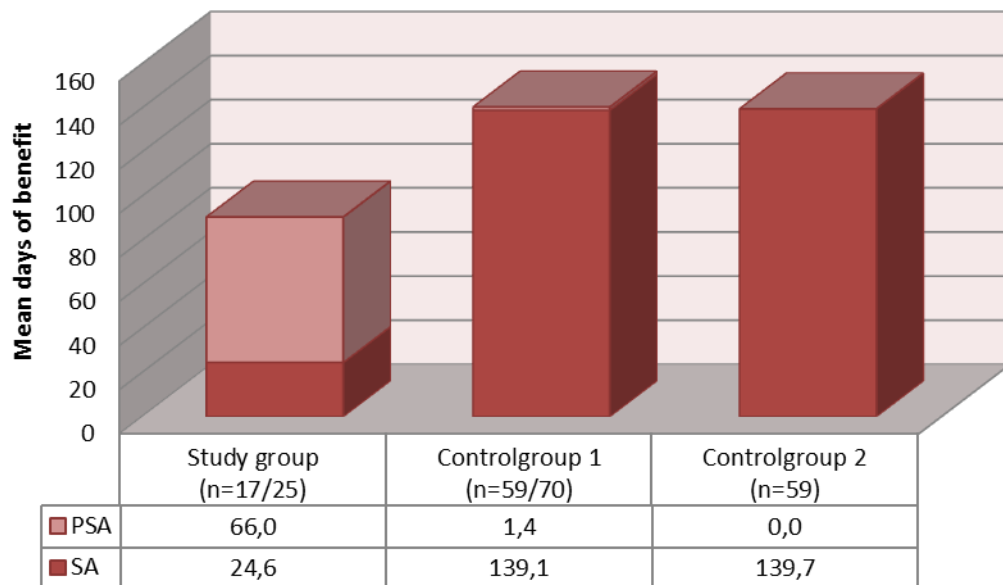
➤ Methods

- Patients at the Sahlgrenska university hospital (SU) with primary breast cancer, employed or self-employed, were offered PSA as alternative to SA during 10 months
- Followed for 6 months, total employment support allowance (ESA) measured, interviews

Results and conclusion

PSA is a flexible benefit which ought to be used more often

Mean days (net value) with sickness benefit during six months of adjuvant treatment



Total ESA was significantly reduced ($p < 0,001$) compared with the same (controlgroup 1) and the previous 10-month period (controlgroup 2)

- Patients were satisfied, and would choose again:
"it feels good to be able to concentrate on getting well and to be able to work when feeling strong enough"
- Social insurance officers (SIO:s) found management simpler, but wished for a simplified claim form (as did patients)
- Nurses suggested earlier information about this option
- Digital certification forms were asked for by doctors and SIO:s