

Surveying Swiss general practitioners on problems, needs and solutions with sickness certification

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Faculty Disclosure

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No, nothing to disclose
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, please specify:

Background

International literature: general practitioners report difficulties with sickness certification (SE,NO,NL,GB)

- Certification: what to document; how to assess working capacity, optimal degree and duration of sick leave?
- Two roles: patient advocate and gatekeeper
- Patients: conflicting positions; consumerism; motives for sick leave request
- Formal training: knowledge and skills regarding sickness certification
- No contact with employers

→ **How do Swiss general practitioners experience sickness certification?**

→ **Are there differences between Swiss, Swedish and Norwegian practitioners?**

Methods and procedure

Swedish questionnaire and own questions (daily work with sickness certifications; conflicts & problems; education and training)

National online survey: Swiss general practitioners associated with one of the five institutes for general medicine

Invitation & 2 Reminders sent via institutes- Selective sample
Swiss general practitioners N=511 /1021 (50%)

Comparison with published data from Norway and Sweden
(Winde et al. *BMC Family Practice* 2012, **13**:10)

Results - sociodemographics

variable	Switzerland n = 511	Sweden ¹ n =4047	Norway¹ N = 222
Female	N = 125 25%	N = 2003 49.5%	N = 70 31.5%
Age	30- 50 y: 28% 50-65 y: 66% 65+ y: 6%	25-52 y: 55% 53-67 y: 43% 68+: 2%	25-52 y: 47% 53-67 y: 52% 68+ : 1%

¹ Winde et al. *BMC Family Practice* 2012, **13**:10

Sweden sample 2008

Norway sample 2010

Swiss sample 2013/2014

Sickness certification is frequent...

Variable	CH (N = 511)	SE (N = 4047)	NO (N = 222)
At least 1 certificate per week	97%	95%	100%
1-5 certificates per week	34%	51%	4 %
6-20 certificates per week	53%	41%	58%
20+ per week	10%	3%	38%

Self-certification time

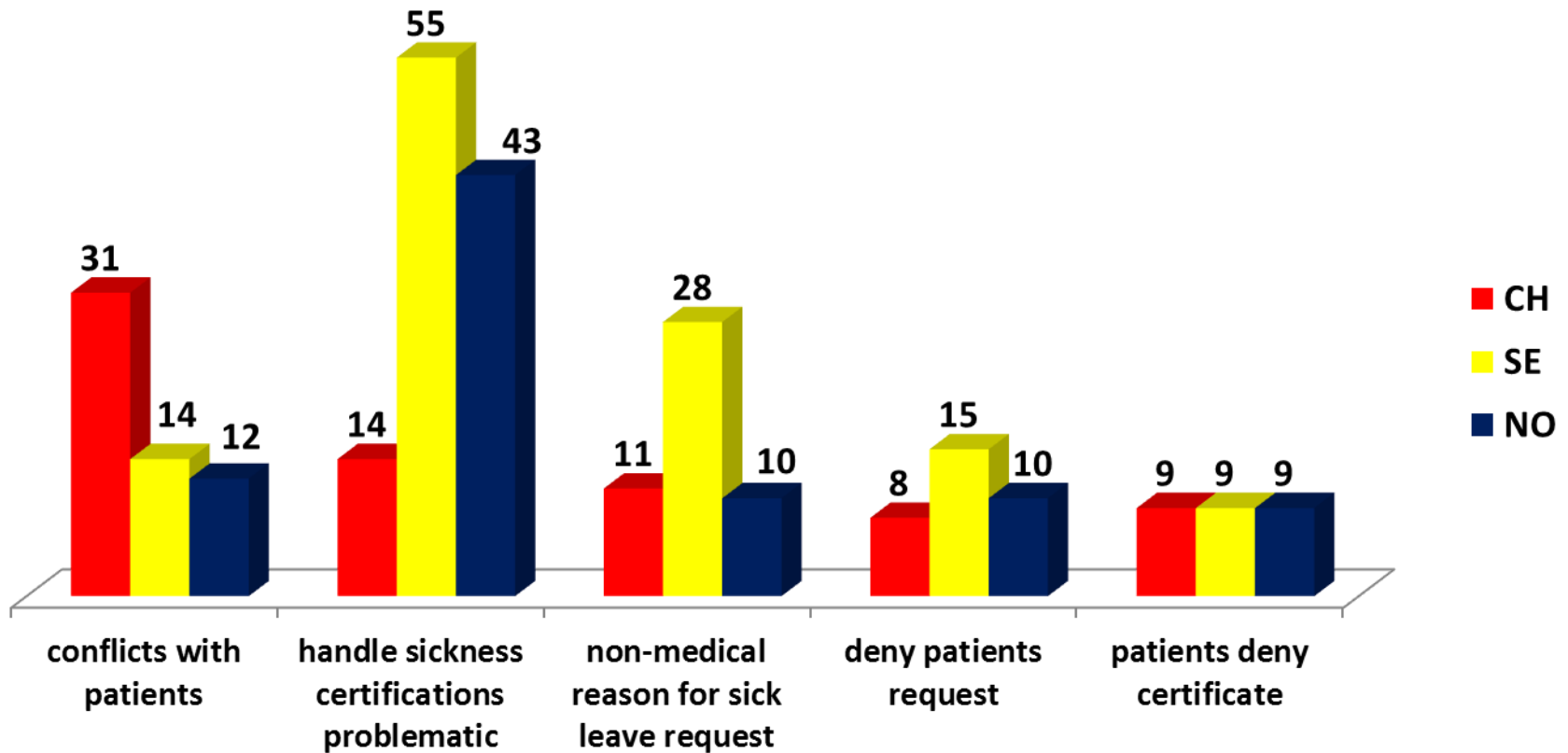
Switzerland: 2 days

Sweden: 7 days

Norway: 3 days / 8 days

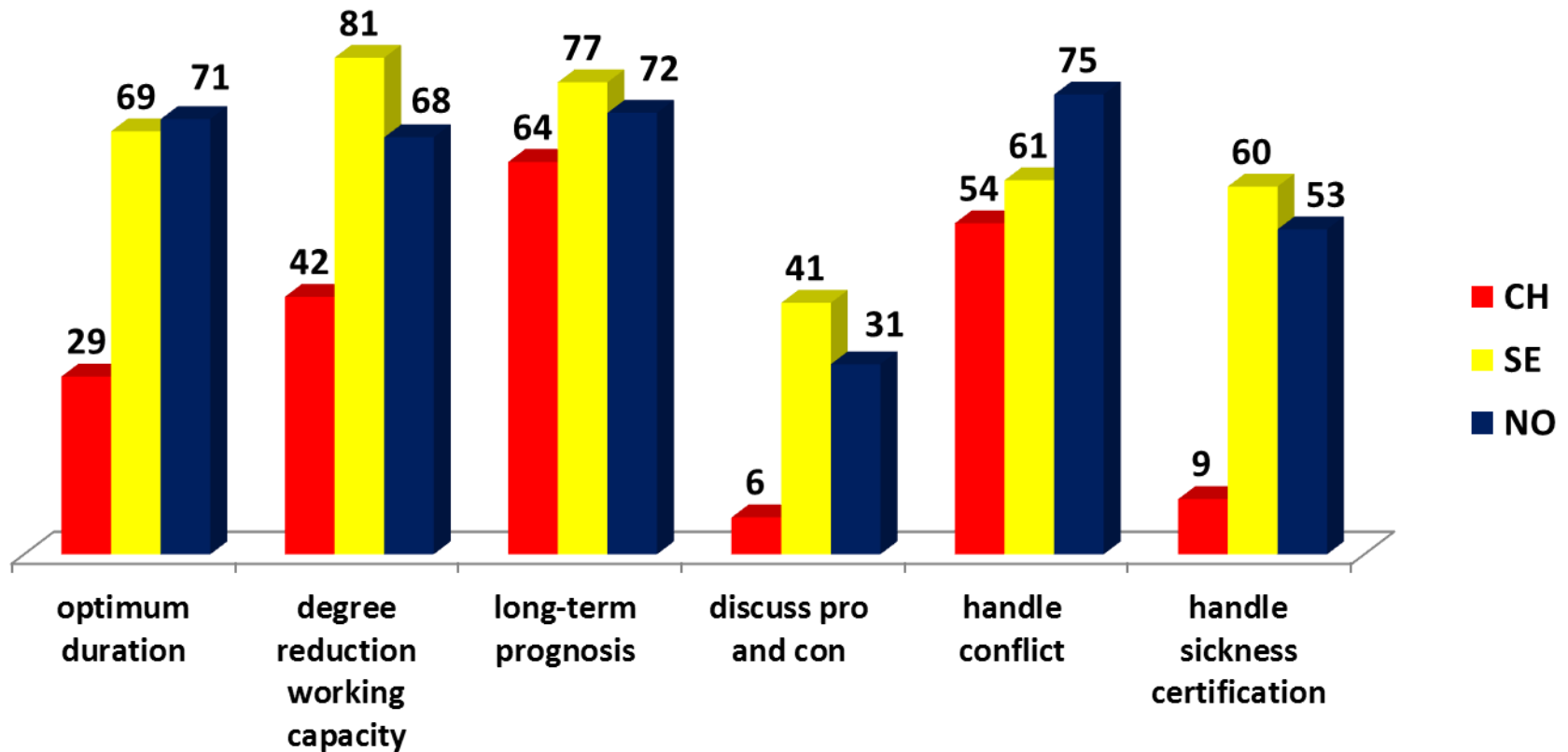
«How often do you experience....»

Proportion at least once a week in %



«How difficult do you find it to....»

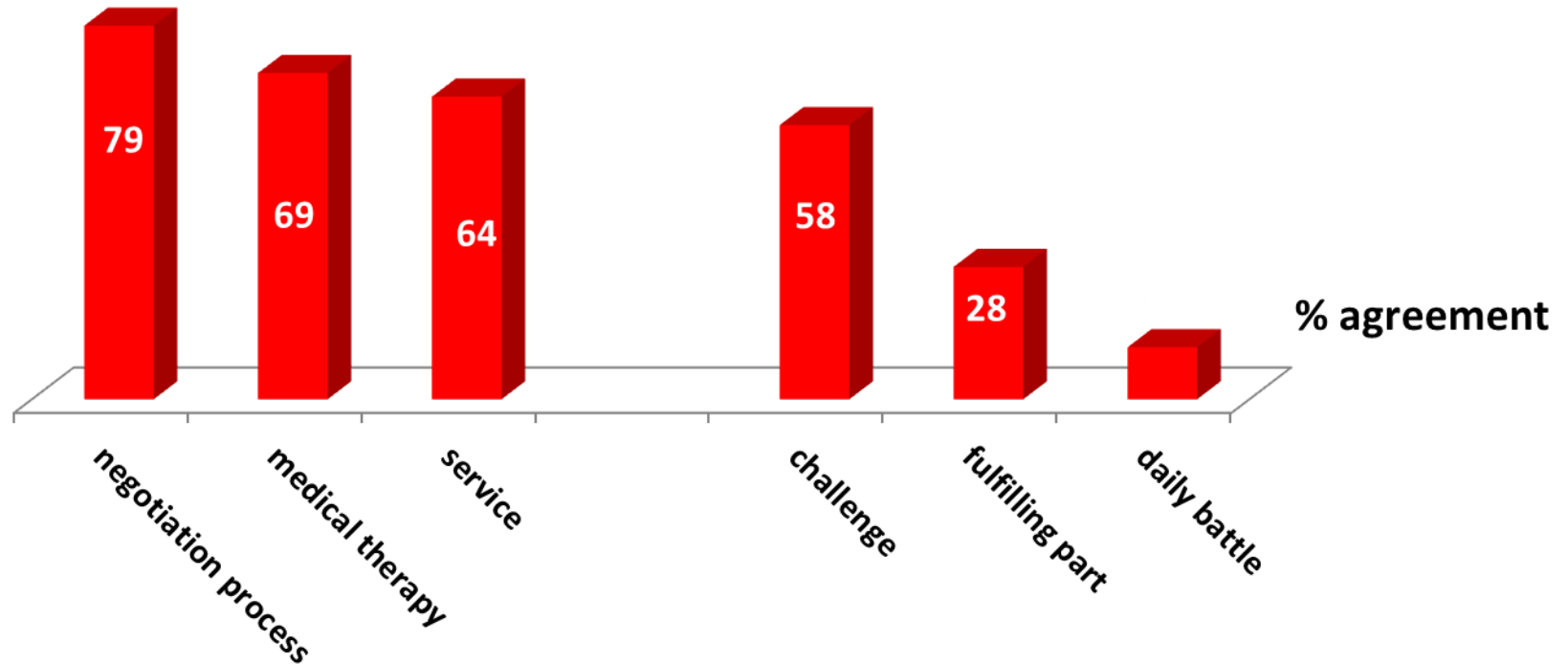
Proportions «fairly» and «very problematic» in %



«How would you define sickness certification?»

% values indicating agreement

Swiss general practitioners



«What would be helpful?»

% agreement «very appropriate»

Possibilities	CH (N = 511)
Formal training practice assistance	57%
Formal training hospital assistance	45%
Forum to discuss about certification problems	40%
2nd opinion other general practitioner	23%
Courses in conflict management	34%
Courses in insurance medicine	30%
Diagnosis-specific guidelines	12%

Conclusion

- Sickness certification is frequent
- Swiss general practitioners report less difficulties than Swedish and Norwegian practitioners
- Sickness certification is negotiation
- They would appreciate special training to improve knowledge (insurance medicine) and skills (conflict management) seen as useful

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

THANKS TO ALL PARTICIPANTS!

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