

Inter-physician collaboration to prevent long-term sickness absence

A Delphi study commissioned by the Belgian Government of Work

Katrien Mortemans, MD PhD

Mensura Occupational Health Service, Research & Development

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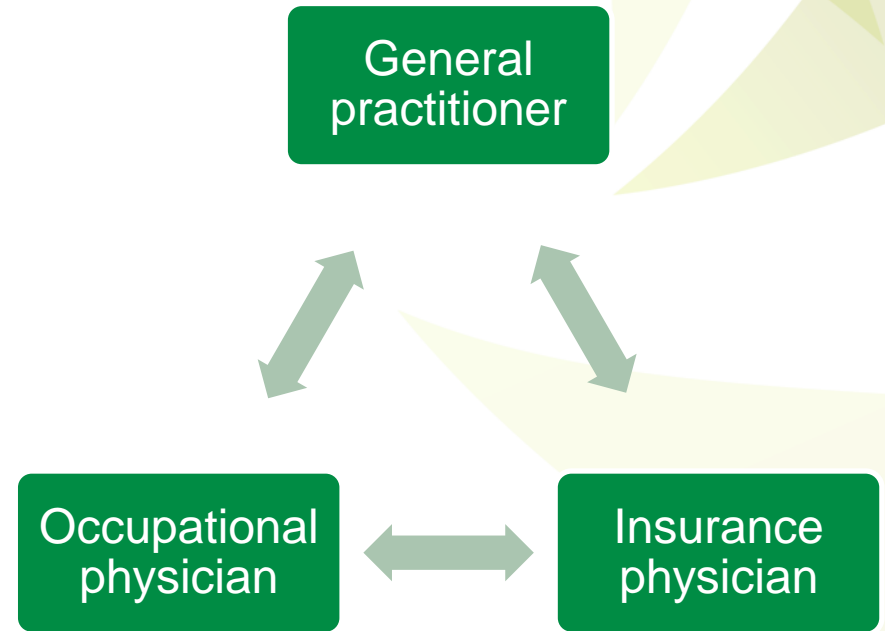




Faculty Disclosure

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

Introduction



Purpose of the study

2 studies commissioned by Government of Work on inter-physician collaboration to prevent (unnecessary) long-term work-related sick leave

1. 2011: 15 proposals
2. 2013: further study on 15 proposals
 - Validation of proposals
 - Possibilities to implement proposals

Download study report on:

<http://www.emploi.belgique.be/moduleDefault.aspx?id=34512>

<http://www.werk.belgie.be/moduleDefault.aspx?id=36204>

Methods

Delphi study

- Representatives of scientific and professional groups (n=61)
Physicians, government, employers and labour unions, patients
- Questionnaire (5 point Likert, 80% agrees = proposal accepted)

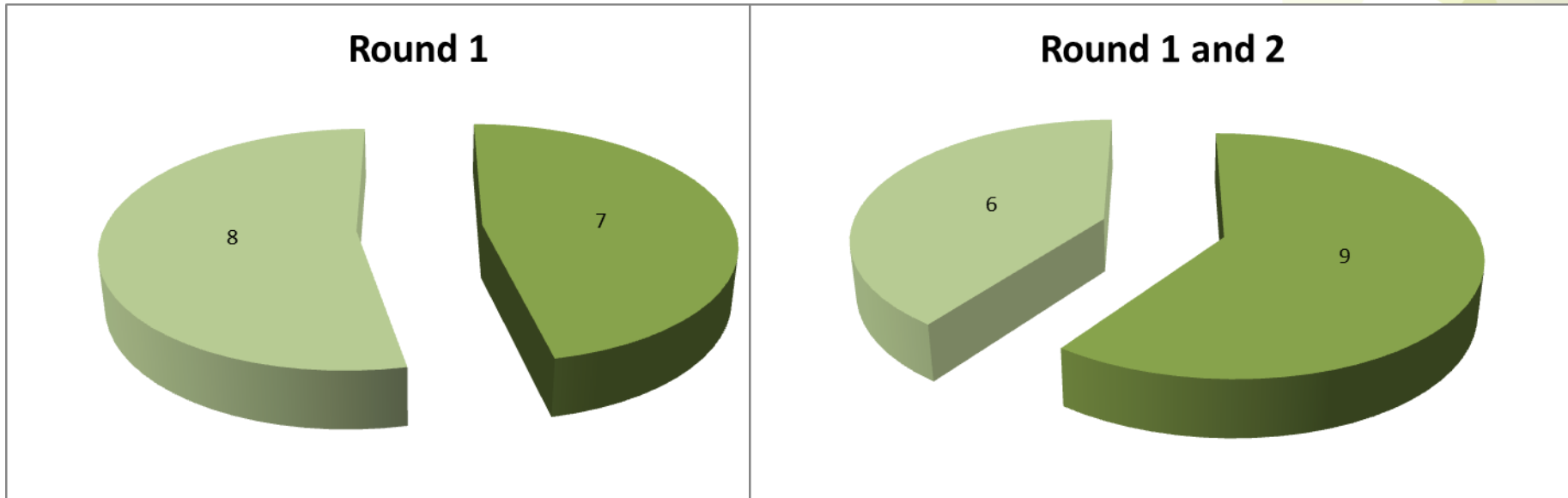


5 main groups of proposals, 15 questions or proposals

- 1) Structural contact 3 physician groups for patients with > 3 m sickness absence
- 2) Information exchange on decision to end sickness absence benefit / work circumstances
- 3) Contact data of 3 physician groups to enhance inter-physician communication
- 4) Education and post-university formations on inter-physician collaboration
- 5) Electronic data exchange between involved physicians for long-term sick-listed patients

Results

How many of the 15 proposals were accepted?



Participation rate: 77% (round 1) and 94% (round 2)

Overall: 9 of 15 proposals accepted after 2 Delphi rounds

Discussion

What did we advice to Federal Government of Work?

- **Promote and enlarge possibilities of the ‘pre-return to work visit with occupational physician’ for patients on sickness absence**
- **Include contact data of involved physicians on relevant websites**
- **Develop guideline for concerted return to work guidance**
- **Invest in common training for 3 physician groups**
- **Methods to provide safe electronic information exchange**

April 2014:
Legislation
change

December
2012 and
April 2014:
2 seminars

Take home messages

- **Belgium: increasing interest in resolving long-term sickness absence**
- **Federal Government commissioned 2 studies**
- **Focus on enhancing collaboration between**
 - General practitioner
 - Occupational physician
 - Insurance physician
- **Policy makers take advices seriously – legislation changes**
- **We're not there yet!**



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

QUESTIONS?

research@mensura.be

