



## **Medical evaluation of common mental disorders in healthcare and disability benefits insurance**

**to provide disability benefits and socio-professional rehabilitation for people in work incapacity**

**- a functional capacity approach**



## Who we are

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## Issue & context

The first cause of work incapacity in Belgium is mental health disorders.

Among these, most concern common mental disorders (depression, anxiety, burn-out, post-traumatic stress disorder,...).



## Problem description



Common mental disorders are difficult to assess because of:

- Subjectivity of symptoms
- Frailty of people concerned
- Lack of well-structured knowledge with limited access to EBM (Cf. Kunz 2019)





## Medical evaluation in Belgium

- Evaluation of work incapacity by the sickness funds, especially by medical advisors and their teams
- Long term incapacity ( >1 year) → evaluation by medical advisor and their teams + **supervision of those decisions by NIHDI**
- Monitoring & financing is the responsibility of NIHDI



## Goal

Launch a research project supporting the continuous improvement of the quality of medical evaluation:

- To improve objectivity in the handling of the insured people
- To improve interview techniques
- To facilitate access to knowledge for the practitioners



## Research question

What are the most relevant tools to equip medical teams in charge of the evaluation of work incapacity due to common mental disorders?



## What are we looking for?

- To assess **functional impacts** of CMD
- EBP approach
- Transdiagnostic approach
- Different types of tools accepted : checklist, self-report questionnaires, semi-structured interview guides,...





## The ideal tool

- **Sound psychometric properties :**
  - Validity
  - Reliability
  - Specific statistical standards
- To be used during an interview
- Indications about return to work
- Longitudinal perspective
- Acceptability by the insured people
- Allows international exchanges



## A sketch of the field

- **Clinical assessment tools :**

- Based on nosographic categories
- Different sub-dimensions

- **Instruments for measuring limitations in work activity due to health conditions**

- **Evaluation of functioning :**

- Evaluation of global functioning
- Evaluation of social functioning
- Evaluation of work ability



## Timeline

- **3 steps :**

- List of functional impacts to be assessed
- Selection of a (set of) tool(s) :
  - Inventory of existing tools in the following languages (de, nl, fr, en)
  - In-depth analysis of the most promising ones
- Training of the medical team

- **Duration: 2 years**



## Broader benefits

- Increasing access to Evidence Based Practice.
- Support for information collection on lost & residual capacities, taking into account the return to work
- Stimulation of exchanges





## Interested in this research?

- Leave me your email adress!



**Thank you for your attention**



## Contact

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