

Rehabilitation and return to work experiences in Finland

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some figures for Finland

- 5 200 000 inhabitants
- 2 500 000 employees
- sick leave ca 9 days per anno / employee (308 888 persons)

- physicians ca 20 000
- specialists in occupational health ca 800
- trainees in occupational health ca 750
- trainers in occupational health ca 350
- OH training units ca 250

- occupational rehab 30,8 Mio € over social security = 15 200 persons in 2013

we are somewhere here



return to work — different possibilities

- after sick leave
- partial sick leave
- rehab, "work experiment"
- remote work
- customized work, less work load
- occupational rehab for different work

part-time sick leave (PTSL)

- the need to increase work participation of working age people is a matter of concern in many Western countries
- in Finland, legislation on partial sickness benefit was introduced in 2007 and confirmed 01.01.2010. The new benefit allowed for the first time to combine part-time sick leave (PTSL) with part-time work.
- partial sick leave is always medically certified and it is voluntary for the individual
- the employer is entitled to decline the use of the benefit in case the work arrangements needed at the work place are not feasible

PTSL

- in Finland 43% of companies and organisations had used the part-time sick leave in 2010 (Masto-hanke, STM)
- the employees feel positive concerning their recovery
- part-time sick leave improves the chance of returning to regular working hours only if there are good return to work practices which are worker-centred

Masto-hanke. Minister of Social Affairs. 2011.

part-time sick leave in Sweden Norway, Denmark and Finland in 2013

| | Sweden | Norway | Denmark | Finland |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| PTSL in % /N | ca 40% | ca 20% | ca 15-20% | ca 3% / 10 798 |
| sex (w = women) | 60-70% w | 60-70% w | 60-70% w | 60-70% w |
| diagnosis | MD, MSD | | like full SL | MD, MSD |
| occupations | social, health, public administration, education | social, health, trade, hotel, gastronomy | administration, office, education | social, health, office, industry |

Viikari-Juntura E et al. 2012 ⁽¹⁾

Kausto J et al. 2014⁽²⁾

- latest Finnish studies show that an early part-time sick leave may provide a faster and more sustainable return to regular duties than full-time sick leave among patients with musculoskeletal disorders (MSD)⁽¹⁾
- the beneficial effect of partial sick leave was seen in mental disorders (MD) as well⁽²⁾


Viikari-Juntura E et al. Return to work after early part-time sick leave due to musculoskeletal disorders: a randomized controlled trial. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment and Health* 2012,38:134-143⁽¹⁾

Kausto J et al. Effectiveness of new legislation on partial sickness benefit on work participation: a quasi-experiment in Finland. *BMJ Open* 2014,4(12):e006685⁽²⁾

case

- stem cell transplantation
- salesman in storage of car selling company
- clinician suggested 6 months sick leave
- after patient's initiative OHS organized remote work at home and the work was customized
- pension insurance company approved 3 months + 3 months as "work experiment" slowly increasing working time
- returning after 6 months to normal work

different log books in OH

| duration | Finland 6 yrs | Germany 5 yrs |
|---|------------------|---|
| theoretical education | 100 hours | 360 hours |
| general practice | 9-12 months |  |
| clinical experience | 24-27 months | 24 months intern medicine or GP 0-12 months |
| leadership education | 30 credit points | |
| evaluation | every 6 months | |
| rehabilitation | 6 months | ? |
| occupational health; practical education in OH | 24 months | 24-36 months |
| occupational medicine; universitary education | 6 months | |
| examination | written | oral |