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Conference Abstract

## Registration project - patient profile - a descriptive study of the patient profile in patients referred to physiotherapy in primary care

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## Abstract

**Aim:** The purpose of this study was to describe characteristics of patients referred to physiotherapy because of Musculoskeletal Disorders in primary care clinics in Denmark.

**Methods:** All patients referred to physiotherapy by general practitioner because of musculoskeletal disorders in the period January 2012 to May 2012 were invited to participate in the study. A total of 201 physical therapist in 30 clinics collected clinical and questionnaire. Patients completed a web based questionnaire prior to first consultation. The questionnaire included validated scales from The Standard Evaluation Questionnaire, the Örebro Musculoskeletal Pain Screening Questionnaire, EQ-5D-5 and the Mental Health Scale Five. The first consultation comprises a standardised clinical examination. Clinical data was collected using standardised assessment form and symptoms and diagnosis related to the musculoskeletal system was registered according to the Danish version of the International Classification of Primary Care 2nd Edition (ICPC-2 DK). All collection of data was administrated by an already existing clinical database (FysDB).

**Results:** A total of 4885 patients were invited to participate in the study Of these 3281 (67 %) accepted and complete questionnaire and clinical data was obtained in 2773 (57 %) of the patients. 66 % were women and 34 % men, average age was 48 years (SD 15), 53 % was employed and only 9 % reported being sick listed .The most frequently recorded ICPC diagnosis was L01 neck (21%) and L03 lumbar spine(26%).In 48% the pain duration exceeded three month

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and 45 % had troublesome pain in 2 regions or more. 40 % took pain medicine on a daily basis and 46 % reported sleep disturbances because of their musculoskeletal symptoms. The Average pain level was (0-10) was 6.6 (SD 2.2), the mean score for functional limitations due to pain (0-100) and fear avoidance (0-30) was 32.7. (SD 20.7), and 15.9 (SD 8.3), respectively. Medium or Low ability in coping with the pain was reported by 60% , poor mental health by 27% and low health related life quality by 25% .

**Conclusion:** This is the largest study of patients in primary physiotherapy practice in Denmark. Almost half of symptom complaints were related to low back and neck. A large proportion of the patients had long-term pain, pain in several regions at the same time, sleep problems, fear avoidance behaviour and perceived inability to handle the pain. Furthermore, patients' psychological well-being and quality of life are affected. These parameters must be considered to be important indicators of the development of more targeted interventions and future quality development of physiotherapy assessment and treatment in primary practice. The vast majorities of patients were in activity and work despite pain and experienced only mild to moderate disabilities in everyday life. Physiotherapists in primary practice, through advice / guidance and appropriate treatment strategies, therefore, have an important role in relation to support patients to remain active and at work in order to prevent permanent disability and concidity.

**Keywords:**

**patient profile, primary care, physiotherapy, diagnostic coding.**

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**Presentation** available at: <http://www.euprimarycare.nl/istanbul/conference-programme-efpc-2013-istanbul-results>