

## **Inclusions**

The National Insurance Offices in the cities of Harstad and Tromsø included 999 consecutive sick-listed persons exceeding 2 weeks of absence due to musculoskeletal or mental disorder during October–November 1997 and February–March 1998.

## **Sickness Certificate 1**

Two National Insurance officers and two National Insurance medical consultants assessed individually the following question: Do you think that modifications to working conditions could reduce the ongoing period of sick leave?

The following cases were randomly extracted:

- a) 501 cases assessed using only Sickness Certificate 1.
- b) 498 cases assessed using Sickness Certificate 1 and the history of sickness benefits.

## **Self-assessments**

496 of the sick-listed persons were invited to give their assessments on whether modifications to working conditions might reduce their ongoing sick leave. Responses were received from 159 persons.

## **Sickness Certificate 2**

The same four assessors reassessed the 343 cases where a Sickness Certificate 2 became available with access to history of sickness benefits, Sickness Certificate 1, and Sickness Certificate 2.

## **Reproducibility study by medical consultants**

Reproducibility study of 20 cases randomly extracted from cases with self-assessments and a Sickness Certificate 2:

- a) Assessments based on Sickness Certificate 1, performed by ten consultants.
- b) Assessments based on Sickness Certificates 1 and 2, performed by seven consultants.
- c) Assessments based on Sickness Certificates 1 and 2 and the self-assessments, performed by nine consultants.