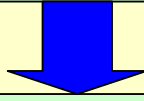


## Inclusions

The National Insurance Offices in the cities of Harstad and Tromsø included consecutively 993 newly sick-listed persons, certified sick beyond 14 days due to musculoskeletal or mental disorders, during October–November 1997 and February–March 1998.



## Expected length after 14 days of sick leave (N=993)

Pre-selected answers categories: < 4 weeks, 4-7 weeks, 8-11 weeks, 12-15 weeks, 16-25 weeks, 26-51 weeks and at least one year

### National Insurance assessments (N=993)

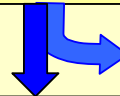
Two National Insurance officers and two National Insurance medical consultants individually assessed expected length of the 993 ongoing sick leaves.

Randomly chosen the assessments were based on:

- Only Sickness Certificate(s) 1 available at 14 days of sick leave (193 male and 304 females).
- Sickness Certificate(s) 1 available at 14 days of sick leave and the record of sickness benefits the last 3 years. (198 males and 298 females).

### Self-assessments (N=495)

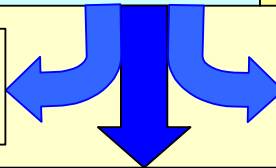
Randomly chosen 495 of the included sick-listed persons were invited to assess their expected length of sick leave as their sick leave passed 14 days.



No answer  
N=343

**Responders N=152** Half the answers were received within 7 days, and 80 % within 12 days from their sick leave passed 14 days

Missing extended medical certificate (Sickness Certificate 2) at 8 weeks N=137

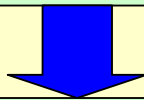


Returned to work within 8 weeks  
N=534

## Expected length after 8 weeks of sick leave (N=322)

Pre-selected answers categories: 8-11 weeks, 12-15 weeks, 16-25 weeks, 26-51 weeks and at least one year.

After 8 weeks of sick leave, the two National Insurance officers and two National Insurance medical consultants reassessed the expected lengths of the 322 sick leaves where an extended medical certificate (Sickness Certificate 2) was received.



## Observed length of the included sick leave periods (N=993)

The actual lengths of the sick leaves were collected from the National Sickness Register after one year.