Physical therapists in primary care identify potential participants

Principal investigator checks eligibility

Patient signs informed consent and completes baseline questionnaires. A research physical therapist examines and classifies the patient according to the classification system

Randomisation (n = 150)

Excluded if no consent given or not eligible

Excluded if not eligible as indicated after assessment

Usual physical therapy according to the Dutch low back pain guidelines (n=75)

Physical therapy according to the classification system (direction-specific exercises, manipulation or stabilisation) (n=75)

Follow-up measurements at 8, 26 and 52 weeks