Reviewer's report

Title: Return to work after a workplace-oriented intervention for patients on sick-leave for burnout - a prospective controlled study

Version: 2 Date: 2 March 2010

Reviewer: Erik L. Werner

Reviewer's report:

Generally this is an interesting paper, well written on a sound study of great interest. My only concern of any importance is the recruitment of participants to the study. The overall number is low, the intended randomisation failed and there is little information on how the controls match the intervention employees. The authors have to a large extent considered and clarified these points but still it remains as a possible bias of the study. Nevertheless, the intervention is interesting and in line with the only previous trial on this specific group of patients, and suggests a great potential to a larger population.

More specifically I would suggest the authors describe into more detail the demographics of the participants of intervention and control groups.

The first sentence on page 8 is long and complicated and should be revised.

On page 13 the last sentence in the second paragraph "However, the rate of..." is confusing: was the only difference between the intervention and control groups the use of gradual RTW?

The doctors' role in issuing sickness certification is only slightly mentioned in the first paragraph. It would though have been interesting to know something about whether the doctors were involved in this project at any level.

Figure 2: the first 20 weeks, and then at 60 weeks, the lines for intervention and control groups seem almost equal, indicating that possibly at some point later than 80 weeks this could happen again. The authors should comment on this in the text.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'