

DISCOVERY: BASELINE OCCUPATIONAL RISK DIAGNOSIS AS A STARTING POINT FOR WORKPLACE INTERVENTIONS IN HOSPITAL CARE

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Health care workers in today's general hospitals have to deal with high levels of job demands, which could have negative effects on their health, well-being, and job performance. The purpose of the DISCOVERY project is to improve a healthy working life and job performance in health care, by developing and implementing tailored work-oriented interventions that are aimed at improving the balance between job demands at one hand, and job resources and recovery opportunities at the other.

The DISCOVERY project is a three wave longitudinal, quasi-experimental field study carried out in a general hospital. A participatory action approach for diagnosis, development, implementation, and evaluation of workplace interventions was used, the so-called DISCOVERY method. The method consisted of three successive steps: (1) a psychosocial risk diagnosis, merely based on a web-based survey using the Demand Induced Strain Compensation (DISC) Model as a theoretical framework; (2) participatory action research (PAR) approach in which both employees and management were responsible for the initialization and development of interventions; and (3) a tailored, work-oriented intervention program, including a process evaluation.

Results of the psychosocial risk diagnosis were presented in a so-called unit-specific DISC risk profile, which portrays a balance between job demands, job resources, and recovery after work. The DISC risk profiles were the starting point to generate ideas for workplace interventions.

Typical risk factors in this study are high cognitive and physical demands in combination with a relatively low amount of cognitive and physical resources and recovery opportunities. In line with previous findings, our preliminary results show that these factors are related to employee health, well-being and performance. Intervention implementation is still ongoing. The follow-up results will provide insight into the effects of the interventions. Preliminary analyses revealed the first positive results.

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