

The immediate superiors experiences with job replacement as an intervention for return to work for employees on long term sick leave.

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Aim: An intervention aiming to ensure return to work for employees on long term sick leave to a little degree studied, is job replacement. The aim of this study is to describe immediate superiors' of employees on sick leaves' opinions about conditions facilitating or inhibiting job replacement as an intervention for return to work.

Method: The data was gathered by a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews. Included in the study were immediate superior in 6 companies from both public (N=2) and private (N=4) sector, being superior of 19 employees on long-term sick leave, were inclusion were defined by the employee on sick leave.

Inclusion criteria for the employee on sick leave:

- Be on sick leave for 8 weeks or 40 days altogether the last 6 months
- Be on full, graded or partial sickness benefit or vocational rehabilitation
- Be employed in 50% or more of full time employment
- Be on sick leave due to a diagnosis in the musculoskeletal system

The data were analysed by meaning categorisation to identify replacement and by meaning condensing to identify conditions that influenced job replacement by the superiors' opinion.

Results: How replacement have been used and what conditions that facilitate or inhibit job replacement by the immediate superiors of the employees on sick leave are shown in table 1.

Conclusion: The results show that job replacement is an often used and even more often considered intervention for return to work after long term sick leave. Job replacement may be an important intervention. However the use of job replacement and experiences described in this study also reflect lack of consistent practice within and between organisations in the use of job replacement as well as the immediate superiors individual attitudes and skills in finding adjustment possibilities.