

**Preliminary Program for the Section of Social Security and Health's 2:nd  
Pre-conference Meeting on Sickness Absence at the EUPHA-conference in Oslo,  
October 6th 2004:**

## **Theoretical approaches and models in sickness-absence studies**

### **Background information**

In November 2003, the first Pre-Conference Meeting on Sickness-Absence Research of the EUPHA section on Social Security and Health took place. Sickness absence researchers from all over Europe came together to discuss methodological aspects in research using sickness-absence data. The success of this first meeting brought us to organize a second pre-conference meeting at this year's EUPHA conference in Oslo. This meeting will take place on October 6<sup>th</sup> 2004. We aim to provide a forum for exchange of knowledge and experience. The central theme of the day is *Theoretical approaches and models in sickness absence studies*. Using a theoretical model may lead to a more systematic data-collection and analysis and this may improve our understanding of sickness absence. The program includes a general overview of sickness absence theories, specific examples, and structured exercises in smaller working groups to improve transfer of knowledge and facilitate exchange of information.

### **Participants**

All persons doing research on sickness absence are welcome to participate!

### **Objectives**

The main objectives of the 2004 pre-conference meeting are:

- Improving our knowledge of theories and operationalization of theories.
- Improving our understanding of the advantages of applying theories in research on sickness absence.
- Working with theories in structured exercises.
- Exchanging information about our datasets, sickness absence theories, research questions, and research objectives.
- Sharing other information between section members. This year's meeting may be a starting point for collaboration with researchers on sickness absence in Europe!

### **Preparatory activities**

To smoothen and speed up the structured exercise, to improve the learning effect of this exercise and to facilitate the exchange of ideas, you are expected to prepare a little bit at home. Could you please bring appr. 30 copies of a one-page paper with the following information:

- Your name, profession, affiliation and e-mail adress
- One or more of the following options:
  - A short description of the dataset you are currently using/want to use. (Type of study, type of data, method for data collection, variables, operationalization, time frame).
  - A short description of the sickness absence theory/theories/models you apply in your research. A theory refers to a systematic idea about how sickness absence can be explained (quantitative approach) or understood (qualitative approach).

Theory often stands behind the hypothesis that is being tested, although some studies aim to develop a theory.

### **Timetable**

The meeting lasts all day and will end with a joint dinner in the evening. We start at 9.00 a.m. prompt. The program will last until 5 p.m.

### **Pre-conference venue**

The meeting will be held in the auditorium, Institute for General Practice and Community Medicine, University of Oslo, located on the premises of Ullevål hospital. A map will be provided to participants in due course. It takes about 30 minutes from downtown Oslo by tramway to reach the venue.

### **Costs**

Participation in the meeting is free of charge. Coffee/tea breaks and lunch are included. Please note, however, that the dinner afterwards will be at your own costs (we are applying for money for this also, but haven't succeeded yet).

### **Registration and pre-conference meeting secretariat**

Please contact Ms. Ragnhild Beyrer ([ragnhild.beyrer@medisin.uio.no](mailto:ragnhild.beyrer@medisin.uio.no)) for registration and further inquiries.

### **Pre-conference meeting organisers /organizing committee**

- prof. Kristina Alexanderson ([kristina.alexanderson@cns.ki.se](mailto:kristina.alexanderson@cns.ki.se)) (president of the section)
- Soren Brage ([soren.brage@samfunnsmed.uio.no](mailto:soren.brage@samfunnsmed.uio.no)) (your host)
- Angeliq de Rijk ([a.derijk@beoz.unimaas.nl](mailto:a.derijk@beoz.unimaas.nl)) (this year's scientific program)

Time	Title	Name of moderator
8.30 a.m.	Coffee and welcome	
9.00-9.15 a.m.	Start of the scientific program and overview of the day	Kristina Alexanderson
9.15-10.00 a.m.	General overview of theoretical approaches and models of sickness absence	Angelique de Rijk (Neth.)
10.00-10.30 a.m.	Coffee break	
10.30 a.m.-11.00 p.m.	General overview of theoretical approaches and models of sickness absence (continued)	Angelique de Rijk
11.00 a.m.-11.10 a.m.	Introduction of the 4 examples of applications of theories in sickness absence research	Angelique de Rijk
11.10 a.m.-11.30 a.m.	Work factors, occupational class disparities and sick leave	Maria Melchior (France)
11.30 a.m.-11.50 a.m.	Work factors, factors outside work and other types of absence in relation to sickness absence	Margaretha Voss (Sweden)
11.50 a.m.-12.10 a.m.	How can theory inform a model to explain the risk of developing incapacity?	Mark Gabbay (U.K.)
12.10 a.m.-12.30 a.m.	A model for return-to-work motivation among the long-term sick-listed	Ulla Gerner (Sweden)
12.30-1.30 p.m.	Lunch	
1.30-1.45 p.m.	Instruction for structured exercises	
1.45-3.15 p.m.	Smaller groups work on three different exercises: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application of theory to your dataset</li> <li>2. Improving your understanding of different theories</li> <li>3. From research question to operationalization: the (dis)advantages of theories</li> </ol>	All attendants participate
3.15 - 3.45 p.m.	Tea break	
3.45 - 4.15 p.m.	Plenary exchange of ideas collected during the exercises	Angelique de Rijk and Kristina Alexandersson
4.15-5.15 p.m.	How to continue this? Decisions about the next meeting	Kristina Alexanderson
7.00 p.m. Dinner at Kafé Celsius, Rådhus gate 19		