

# Survey of exercise therapy in medical rehabilitation (BewegtheReha)

## Background

The importance of physical activity and the orientation of exercise therapy in rehabilitation has changed for many chronic health conditions: 1. physical inactivity is an independent risk factor for the development and progression of non-communicable diseases (Lee et al, 2012.); 2. strong evidence exists for the positive effects of physical activity in the rehabilitation of chronic diseases (Pedersen & Saltin, 2006; Swedish National Institute of Public Health, 2010); 3. exercise therapy is the most applied therapy form within multidisciplinary rehabilitation programs for almost all chronic health conditions (Brüggemann & Sewöster 2010), 4. exercise therapy targets complex biopsychosocial goals (Pfeifer et al, 2010); 5. physical activity promotion is a central goal for exercise therapy (Dean et al, 2011; Pfeifer et al, 2010), because the prevalence of physical inactivity among people with chronic diseases is high (e.g. Arne et al, 2009; Courneya et al., 2008; Kersten et al, 2012; Zhao, et al., 2008) and an individual's adoption or maintenance of a physically active lifestyle after rehabilitation often fails (Newsom et al., 2012). Despite the scientifically discussed need to refine exercise therapy, there is a relatively little knowledge of how exercise therapy is actually understood.

## Project goal

The superior objective of this project is to take an inventory of exercise therapy in rehabilitation practice. The first goal is to describe concepts of exercise therapy and related processes at the level of individual rehabilitation facilities. When it comes to the design and implementation of high quality therapeutic care, the therapists' conceptual and didactical orientations of action are key variables. Thus, the second goal is to deepen the understanding in this regard. The perspective of rehabilitation facilities along with the therapists' perspectives shall create a comprehensive description of the status quo of exercise therapy practice and identify factors that stimulate or inhibit the further development and implementation of a biopsychosocial, evidence-based exercise therapy in a specific "everyday rehabilitation".

## Methods

„Mixed methods approach“

Phase 1: quantitative-qualitative questionnaire at the level of rehabilitation centres

Phase 2: focus groups with exercise therapists

## Relevance

The results of this project provide a basis for the systematic quality development of exercise therapy in medical rehabilitation in particular with regard to the development, dissemination and implementation of evidence-based therapeutic concepts. In addition, it is possible to derive recommendations for the quality development of the exercise therapy. The overall objective of the project is to increase the quality of exercise therapy in medical rehabilitation care.

## Project partner

Contractor: Prof. Dr. Klaus Pfeifer, Wolfgang Geidl, René Streber (FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg),

Prof. Dr. Gorden Sudeck, Judith Deprins (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen)

Sponsor: German statutory pension insurance (Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund)

Period: 11/2014-10/2016

Financial volume: 228.660€



## Contact

Prof. Dr. Klaus Pfeifer  
University Erlangen-Nürnberg  
Institute of Sport Science and Sport  
Gebbertstr. 123b  
91058 Erlangen (Germany)  
klaus.pfeifer@fau.de