6th International Conference on

EPIDEMIOLOGY & PUBLIC HEALTH

October 23-25, 2017 | Paris, France

OVERCOMING BARRIERS: MONITORING LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES OF ENTERING OCCUPATIONAL REHABILITATION

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Statement of the Problem: The goal of occupation rehabilitation is to preserve existing employment relationship and to promote long-term integration into working life and thereby ensure social and economic participation of people with disabilities. Against this background, this paper compares labor market outcomes of people that were accepted to participate in occupational rehabilitation to people that were rejected. The analysis is concentrated on a group of adult applicants in return-to-work occupational rehabilitation scheme in 2008. We follow labor market outcomes of accepted and rejected applicants up to the end of 2014 and thus we can estimate short and long-term effects of entering occupational rehabilitation.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Direct comparison of labor market outcomes of accepted and rejected applicants is biased because these groups differ systematically. Participation in occupational rehabilitation is typically offered to persons that are both in need of a programme (due to occupational disability) and can benefit from it. Moreover, as documented in previous sections, groups of rejected and accepted applicants differ in terms of socioeconomic characteristics and labor market history. To address the selection issue, we follow a seminal study of Rosenbaum and Rubin (1983) who proposed to compare (match) observations based on the predicted probability (propensity score) to participate in a programme (in our case acceptance to participate in occupational rehabilitation). Comparison based on a propensity score is unbiased under the assumption that all relevant covariates that explain acceptance to participate in occupational rehabilitation and outcomes are simultaneously observed.

Conclusion & Significance: Our main finding is that three years after the application, the group of accepted applicants relative to the group of rejected applicants had the higher share in regular employment and a lower share of recipients of unemployment and basic income support benefits. Results of the analysis are used to strengthen monitoring of the effects of occupational rehabilitation and to identify groups that are more likely to benefit from take-up of occupational rehabilitation. Sensitivity analysis suggests that the results are robust, but to obtain more precise estimates of the effects of occupational rehabilitation improvements in data collection are warranted.

Biography

Anton Nivorozhkin has his expertise in the evaluation of social programmes in developed and transition economies. As a Ph.D. candidate at Goteborg University (Sweden), he extensively studied labor market and social protection programmes in Russia and Sweden. Later, as a researcher at the Institute for Employment Research in Germany, he analyzed policies that increase labor market attachment of social welfare benefit recipients. He has also worked as a labor market economist at the OECD and as a consultant for the World Bank and contributed to the reports on employment and social protection policies in Russia, Lithuania and Kazakhstan.

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Notes:

Epidemiology (Sunnyvale), an open access journal
ISSN: 2161-1165

Epidemiology 2017
October 23-25, 2017

Volume 7, Issue 5 (Suppl)

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