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The utilisation of regulated standardised care packages by Danish chiropractors - A mixed methods study

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Aim

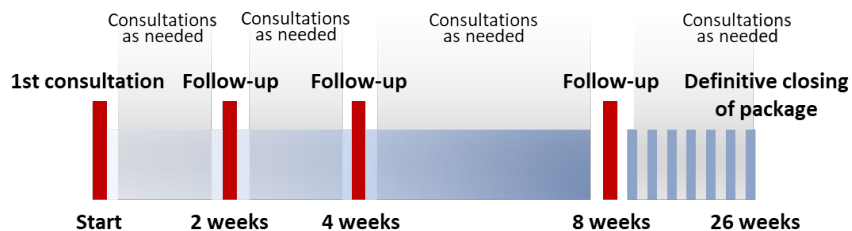
To describe and explore the utilisation of standardised chiropractic care packages and identify barriers for uptake.

What are chiropractic care packages?

- Increased partial reimbursement intended for three diagnoses: lumbar spinal stenosis, lumbar radiculopathy and cervical radiculopathy.
- The packages describes a management structure and logistics of the patients' care pathway.
- The treatment is adherent to national clinical guidelines

Time-fixed consultations include:

- Monitor progression of symptoms by reassessing case history and clinical examination
- Reconsidering the treatment plan (e.g. referral to imaging, secondary care or surgical evaluation)
- Medical record keeping
- Standardised written communication (electronic) with GP

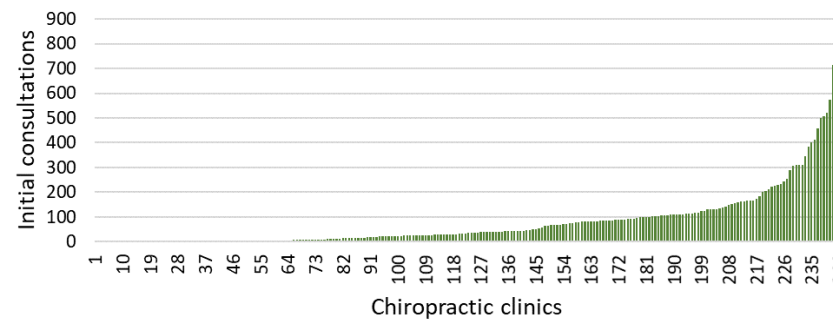


Red bars: time-fixed mandatory consultations

Blue areas: time frame of which consultations 'as needed' can be used

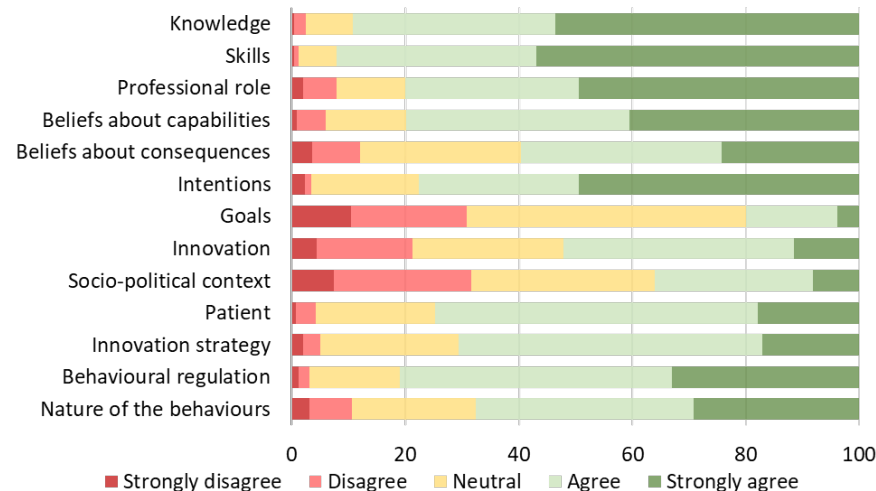
Use of chiropractic standardised care packages

The national registry provided data on billing codes from 244 chiropractic clinics between 2017 and 2020. There were large differences in the total usage per clinic of initial consultations of any care package.



How chiropractors regard the care packages

Potential determinants of variation were explored using a modified version of Determinants of Implementation Behaviour Questionnaire (DIBQ) covering 13 domains. A total of 269 chiropractors (44%) responded.



Clinician's perspective

Three domains were identified as 'problematic' as more than 20% of clinicians disagreed or strongly disagreed: 'Goals', 'Innovation' and 'Socio-political context'.

An open ended question was added to the questionnaire and the 45 replies were analysed as qualitative data. Themes (supported by key quotes) expanding insight to the 'problematic' domains were identified. They indicated that lack of usage was mainly related to:

• Practical organisation of standardised care

Quote: "The many established time-fixed dates take focus away from the treatment of patients and are more time-consuming in general"

• The chiropractor's role when managing patients

Quote: "The reality is that when I enrol a patient in a standardised care package, I have all the responsibilities. To be completely honest...I do not want that"

• The patient population of interest to the clinic

Quote: "I see a lot of babies at the clinic...but it is not because I cannot or will not use the care packages"

Conclusion

In general, Danish chiropractors displayed positive attitudes towards care packages although considerable variation in the use was observed. Low utilisation seemed mainly related to logistics, the chiropractor's role, collaboration with GPs, and the patient population of interest to the clinic.