

Summary 2017:9

The quality of assessments  
for sickness benefit after  
90 days and 180 days

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Swedish Social Insurance Inspectorate

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# Summary

## The quality of assessments for sickness benefit after 90 days and 180 days

The Swedish Social Insurance Inspectorate (Inspektionen för social-försäkringen, ISF) is an independent supervisory agency for the Swedish social insurance system. The objectives of the agency are to strengthen compliance with legislation and other statutes, and to improve the efficiency of the social insurance system through system supervision and efficiency analysis and evaluation.

The ISF's work is mainly conducted on a project basis and is commissioned by the Government or initiated autonomously by the agency. This report has been initiated by the agency.

### *Background*

The Swedish Social Insurance Agency (SSIA) is responsible for payment of sickness benefit. In order to be able to do so, the agency's personal officers assess an individual's ability to work regardless of his or her illness. This is regulated in the Social Insurance Code and is more commonly known as the rehabilitation chain. In short, the rehabilitation chain stipulates that after 90 days of sick leave, a person is only entitled to sickness benefit if he or she cannot perform any work at his or her employer (on condition that such work can be offered by the employer). After 180 days of sick leave the general rule is that a person is only entitled to sickness benefit if he or she cannot perform any work on the labour market (given some exceptions but with no regard to education or availability of such work). The rehabilitation chain was implemented in 2008 in order to achieve a more effective sick leave process.

In order for the SSIA to be able to assess claimants according to the rehabilitation chain, the agency needs to conduct an investigation to clarify the circumstances that are relevant in each individual case. Good quality assessments are a prerequisite for ensuring that persons who are entitled to sickness benefit receive it.

### *Objectives*

The objective of this study is to examine how the SSIA makes the assessments to meet the legislative requirements for sickness benefit after 90 days and 180 days.

### *Methods*

200 case files were requested from the SSIA for review. 100 case files for the 90-day assessment and 100 case files for the 180-day assessment. Of these 184 case files were complete and could be reviewed.

### *Findings and conclusions*

The study shows that an assessment is made for both 90 and 180 days in a majority of cases. However, many of these assessments are of unsatisfactory quality. For the 90-day assessment two thirds are of unsatisfactory quality, the corresponding number for the 180-day assessments is one third.

There is a lack of basic information in many of the reviewed cases. Information from the employer is often missing or incomplete.

It is important that the SSIA focuses on the circumstances that need to be explored when the agency makes an investigation.

It is a challenge to make sure each case receives the processing needed to clarify the individual's needs, rather than performing an investigation and assessment that formally meets the requirements of the law, but does not provide sufficient information for the continued investigation and planning of the individual case.