

## **Closing the gap between the hospital and the workplace to enhance prevention and work participation among patients with musculoskeletal disorders - what works?**

### Keynote Sessions

Faculty:

Paul Kuijer

In recent years, there has been growing attention given to work participation as a reliable and valid outcome for clinical care that addresses the preferences of working-age patients. Studies indicate that non-operative and operative care-as-usual for workers with musculoskeletal disorders, such as low back pain and knee osteoarthritis, do not appear to improve timely and sustainable return to work. This seems especially true for those performing physically demanding work. This presents an opportunity to increase awareness of prevention and integrated work-directed care among medical specialists. In the Netherlands, the Federation of Medical Specialists has recognized the need to incorporate physical functioning, including work-related activities, in the core outcome set of patient reported outcome measures (PROMs). Medical specialists are discussing now how they can contribute to work participation, for example by developing evidence-based recovery recommendations regarding these activities. These developments provide an opportunity to bridge the gap between the hospital and the workplace regarding prevention at work and return to work decisions. However, to ensure that our knowledge regarding prevention and return to work is integrated into corresponding evidence-based clinical guidelines, we may need to raise the bar for the use of clinical case definitions and comparison of our interventions with care as usual. Additionally, we need to work more closely together, both in the evaluation of prevention and work-directed care and in the development of these clinical guidelines. In the Netherlands, we are striving to close the gap between the hospital and workplace for instance for workers with low back pain and knee osteoarthritis, and during the keynote examples will be given. In additions, we look forward to learn about inspiring examples from other countries around the globe during PREMUS 2023.

### **About Our Speaker:**

Paul Kuijer

Dr Paul Kuijer is a Principal Investigator at the Department of Public and Occupational Health of the Amsterdam University Medical Centers (UMC), Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He works as a human movement specialist on work-related musculoskeletal disorders at the Netherlands Center for Occupational Diseases and at the People and Work Outpatient Clinic, all part of the Amsterdam UMC. Paul's research goal is to enhance work participation among patients with musculoskeletal disorders by improving integrated patient-centered care. Besides doing research and patient care, Paul is the coordinator of the three months elective course 'Medicine and elite

sports: high demand professions! Ground-breaking multidisciplinary care to enhance participation for second-year medical students.