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Biopsychosocial approach in supporting the work ability of employees with burnout in the workplace and occupational health care context

The biopsychosocial – i.e. holistic – approach is recommended for chronic health problems, but little is known about this approach when it comes to burnout. In this article, we describe workplace and occupational health service practices in supporting the work ability of employees with burnout, especially the factors complicating this support. The data consist of open-ended interviews and the essays of return-to-work coordinators employed at universities and central hospitals (n = 15) and of professionals in occupational health services (n = 25). The data, collected in 2014–2017, were qualitatively analysed. The results show varied approaches in supporting the work ability of employees with burnout. This support was complicated by individual-, work-, and burnout-related factors. The biopsychosocial approach is not always realised in supporting employees with burnout.