

# O5

## DIGITAL SUPPORT FOR EARLY RETURN TO WORK: FROM DESIGN TO IMPLEMENTATION

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### Background

In 2022, we introduced a novel digital approach to supporting early return to work (RTW) initiated through a Knowledge Transfer Partnership between the University of Huddersfield and the reinsurance company Swiss Re.<sup>1</sup> Further refinement through co-design following a work-health framework<sup>2</sup> and pilot implementation was the next step.

### Aims

To present initial findings from the co-design and piloting of a digital RTW guide for absent workers.

### Methods

Through repeated steering group and individual interview sessions conducted with over 150 RTW stakeholders, the relevant evidence was translated into the guide through iterative co-production.

Two pilot partners (employers/insurers) have been recruited through purposive sampling with access to 10-20 absent workers. Qualitative methods will be adopted in monitoring and collecting longitudinal data.

### Results

A schematic summary of the steering group and interview sessions identified important themes for design of the guide (Content, Support line, Community, Data, In-built check-ins, Engagement, Timeframe, Obstacles to RTW, Involving RTW stakeholders, and A RTW action plan), while also reflecting the intended function and interface (design/imagery, wordiness, language, clarification of specific processes and communication channels). These findings informed the development and design of a functioning prototype guide ready for piloting.

The proposed piloting will provide valuable preliminary implementation data on process and engagement to inform plans for a sustainable implementation at scale.<sup>3</sup>

### Conclusions

Findings from this project magnify the benefits of co-production with relevant stakeholders in designing and implementing early RTW interventions.

#### References:

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