

Institut für Sozial- und Präventivmedizin • ISPM

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Zusatzinformationen zum Seminar vom Donnerstag, 2. September 2010, 16:00 Uhr



Prof. Johannes Siegrist

Johannes Siegrist is Director of the Department of Medical Sociology, Faculty of Medicine at the Heinrich-Heine-University of Duesseldorf and Director of the Postgraduate Training Programme ‚Master of Science in Public Health‘ at this University. His main research interest concerns the analysis of effects of an adverse psychosocial work environment on stress-related disorders and their contribution towards explaining social inequalities in adult health. He developed the model of effort-reward imbalance at work that by now received widespread international application in epidemiological and experimental studies.

He is currently involved in a European longitudinal study on social determinants of healthy ageing (SHARE).

“Social reward and health – a sociological contribution to epidemiology”

Traditional ‘risk factor’ epidemiology often lacks a theoretical foundation of observed associations. In this lecture, a framework derived from sociological theory is applied to epidemiology: Breaking norms of reciprocity in contractual social exchange is hypothesized to elicit strong stress reactions that are triggered by the brain reward system, hereby increasing people’s illness susceptibility in the long run. This hypothesis is tested in a series of observational studies of occupational cohorts where failed social reciprocity, i.e. employees’

Mismatch between high efforts spent and low rewards received in turn, predicts elevated risks of cardiovascular events, depression and other stress-related disorders. Supported by evidence on psychobiological pathways these findings call for improved investments into fair work and employment conditions at different policy levels.