

Table S1. Description of studies

Study	Study characteristics				Patient characteristics				Dropout Characteristics					
	Study design	Group (N)	Intervention	Population	Sex (%)	Age in years (SD)	Education in years (SD)	Ethnicity (%)	Pain duration in months (SD)	Mean pain intensity (NRS)/VAS-SD	Dropout term/definition	Dropout rate (%)	Reasons dropout	
Bendix et al., 1998 (Denmark, Copenhagen) (27)	Prospective cohort study	TG:621	FRP, 8 h a day, 135 h total	CLB	67 ♀	40	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	
Billler et al., 2000 (USA, Boston) (28)	Prospective cohort study	TG: 300	CPMP, 10 sessions	CP	70 ♀	44 (11)	80% some college education	93% White	63 (36)	-	51	-	-	
Carosella et al., 1994 (USA, Rochester) (29)	Retrospective cohort study	DG: 153	FRP, 4 weeks, 5 days.	CLB	65 ♀	42.7	14.7	-	65.8	5.6	-	-	Repeated unexecused programme absence	
		CG: 147			75 ♀	46.2	14.9	-	61.4	6.6	-	-	-	-
		TG:168			37.5 ♀	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DG:84	58.3 ♀	35.4 (8.7)	50% HSG	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	Poor participation in programme or lack of motivation		
CG:84	41.7 ♀	38.6 (9.6)	58.5% HSG	-	-	-	-	-	6.2	-	-	Transportation problems Reported lack of vocational focus Return to work not a goal High level of familial, financial outside stressors prohibiting a focus on work rehabilitation, no reasons given Patient did not fit with the other patients in the group.		
Coughlan et al., 2009 (UK, London) (30)	Retrospective cohort study	TG:239 DG:24 CG:215	CPMP, 4 weeks, 5 days a week, 8.5 hours inpatient program	5 CP	63 ♀	49 (13)	-	-	121 (115)	71.3 (19.4) 77.0 (18.5) 71.9 (19.5)	10	-	a. Greater perceived physical impairment b. Other sorts of pain c. Interpersonal difficulties with the patient group	
Howard et al., 2009 (USA, Dallas) (24)	Prospective cohort study	TG:3052 DG:685	FRP, 4 weeks, 5 days.	CDOMD	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	-	
Kvaal et al., 1999 (USA, Chicago) (31)	Retrospective cohort study	DG:14	CPMP, all day 20 days or half day 30 days	CP	46.4 ♀	45.2 (10.5)	11.6 (3.3)	47.3 Other than Caucasian	21.6 (24.3)	8.0 (7.5)	-	-	Non completion: Failing to complete the full prescribed treatment regimen	
		CG:75			46.3 ♀	45.1 (9.6)	11.6 (3.1)	47.3 Other than Caucasian	16.6 (19)	7.4 (12.3)	-	-	-	
		TG:62			41 ♀	39.87 (9.59)	12 (3.5)	-	28.3 (36.9)	-	-	-	10	-
Richmond & Carmody 1999 (USA, San Francisco) (33)	Randomized clinical trial-Secondary retrospective analysis	DG:14 CG:48	CLBP 12 weeks. Weekly: 95 min. psychoeducation, 50 min. Bio feedback, 2x p week 45 min PT	CLBP	26.1 ♀	56.5	15.1	-	19.4 years	-	23	-	Treatment dropout: Not completing the entire 12 week program	
Sloots et al., 2009 (The Netherlands, Amsterdam) (32)	Retrospective cohort study	TG:529 DG:99	CPMP	CP	57.5 ♀	20-64 years 89.8%	-	65% Dutch	-	-	18.7	-	Dropout: A finished rehabilitation program because of medical reasons Medical Non-medical External Not applicable	

CDOMD: chronic disease occupational musculoskeletal disease; CG: completer group; CP: chronic pain; CLB: chronic low back pain; CLBP: chronic low back pain programme; CPMP: chronic pain management programme; DG: dropout group; FRP: functional restoration programme; HSG: high school graduate; NRS: numeric rating scale for pain; SD: standard deviation; TG: total group; VAS: visual analogue scale for pain.