

## **PAMA RESEARCH Presentation Abstract – Worksheet**

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**Title of Presentation:** How useful is an online tool to monitor physical health in pre-professional dancers? Feasibility study of using the Student Life Monitor (SLM) by students, teachers and health professionals

**Authors:** Keizer SC, Van Rijn R, Stubbe JH

**Rationale:** The web-based system SLM (acronym for Student Life Monitor) was developed to assist dance students, teachers and health professionals in monitoring physical stress and recovery.

**Purpose:** The objective of this study was to assess the feasibility of using SLM in daily practice.

**Methods:** In a prospective cohort study a total of 131 students (35% first year, 32% second year, 33% third year) (mean age  $19.4 \pm 1.51$  years) of Bachelor Dance and Bachelor Dance Teacher were followed during an academic semester (August 2016 – February 2017). SLM consists of different methods to monitor health, including time-loss injuries, medical attention injuries, and the OSTRC Questionnaire on Health Problems. Every month, dance students were asked to report any physical health problem. Response rate and comparison between the number of health problems recorded in SLM and the number of health problems recorded by the physiotherapists were used for evaluation.

**Results:** 131 students were asked to fill in the monthly questionnaires. Only two students were not willing to participate. A total of 129 dance students completed the study. The response rate over the 6 month period was 77%. 69% (n=89) of the students reported an injury. Based on the OSTRC questionnaire, 213 injuries were reported. Of these, 85 were substantial. In total, 101 medical attention injuries were reported by the physiotherapists.

**Conclusions:** This study suggests that SLM may be a useful tool to monitor physical health in dance students. The high response rate showed that students are enthusiastic about the use of the online application in daily practice. Furthermore, standard recording of health problems by using medical records only capture a small percentage of the injury problems affecting dancers, because few problems led to medical treatment. SLM captured a more complete picture of the burden of injuries in this cohort.