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Sylvia Vermeulen was born on March 18th 1974 in Utrecht, the Netherlands. After completing secondary school at the Sint Bonifatius College in 1992, she studied Medicine at the Utrecht University. After graduating with honours she received her medical degree in 1998. She then specialised in social insurance medicine and in 2004 she was registered.

In 2006 Sylvia started working as a junior researcher at the Dutch Research Center for Social Insurance Medicine, a collaboration between the VU Medical Center, the Academic Medical Center, the University Medical Center Groningen and UWV. For her PhD project, she worked at the Department of Public and Occupational Health, EMGO Institute for Health and Care Research, VU University Medical Center, Amsterdam. Where she performed a randomised controlled trial to evaluate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a participatory return-to-work program for temporary agency workers and unemployed workers, sick listed due to musculoskeletal disorders. The results of this project are presented in this thesis.

In 2006 Sylvia was awarded with the *Talmapenning 2006* by the Dutch Association for Insurance Medicine (NIVG) for best relevant publication in the field of insurance medicine in 2006. In 2008 and in 2010 Sylvia received the *KCVG Exchange Trophy* for best research project of the year.

Currently, Sylvia is working an insurance physician and senior researcher at the Dutch Research Center for Social Insurance Medicine, Department of Public and Occupational Health, VU University Medical Center.

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