

Depression care improved: A simple intervention for general practice

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German researchers from the Institutes for General Practice in Frankfurt / Main and Jena have achieved positive results from a sustainable intervention in the primary care practice (*Annals of Internal Medicine*, volume 151, number 6, Sep. 15, 2009).

The international relevance of the trial is also highlighted in the editorial. The cluster-randomized controlled intervention trial ([PRimary care Monitoring for depressive Patients Trial - PRoMPT-projekt.de](#)) evaluated the effects of practice-based health care assistants making structured monthly follow-up phone calls to patients with depression, with the aim of assessing depression symptoms and reporting back to the general practitioner.

"The practice team is then in a position to recognize and react to any deterioration immediately and last but not least prompt patients to self care," said the principal investigator Dr. Jochen Gensichen.

626 patients with depression from 74 general practices in Germany participated in the trial. In 2008, the research team, that includes Prof. Dr. Jochen Gensichen (University Hospital Jena) and Prof. Dr. Ferdinand Gerlach (University of Frankfurt / Main), were awarded the "German Research Award for Primary Health Care - Dr Lothar Beyer Award".

In Germany, around 4 million people aged between 18 and 65 suffer from [depression](#) and for most of them one of the 50,000 primary care

practices is their first and principal port of call.

Source: Goethe University Frankfurt

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