

CFS_CARE Study for Patients with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) Rehabilitation Course and First Results of a Special Rehabilitation Program

1. Context and Framework Conditions

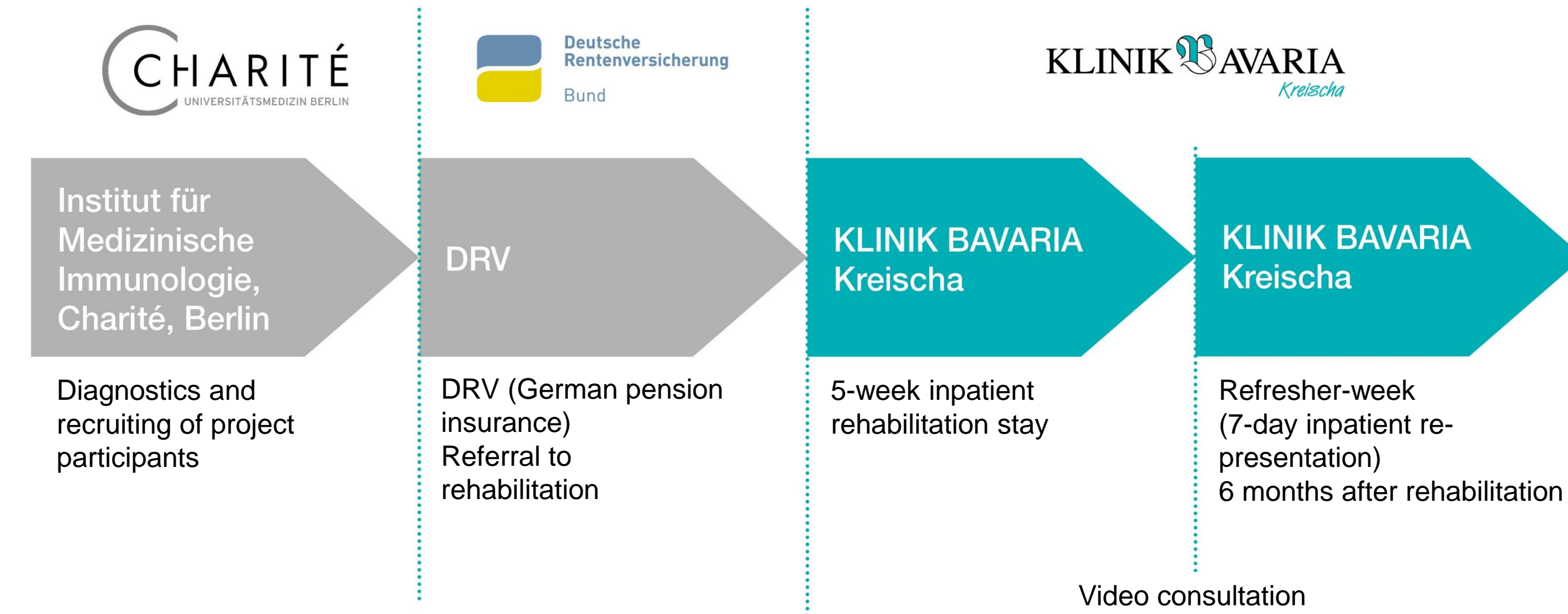
Context:

- 97 rehabilitants, 86 women and 11 men aged between 21 and 62
- 27 % educators and teachers, 27 % employees (office, administration, logistics), 25 % employees in healthcare professions, 16 % other occupations and 5 % students

General conditions:

- DRV-insured persons with a 5-week inpatient rehabilitation stay in the KLINIK BAVARIA Kreischa
- Specialized concept with small, closed groups, individual therapies in suitable rooms
- BELL Score 30-40
- Charité-confirmed ME/CFS diagnosis with exclusion of mental illness

Rehabilitation procedure for ME/CFS



2. Rehabilitation Challenges

Objectives with regard to rehabilitation patients:

- Learning activity management (Pacing)
- Reducing post-exertional malaise (PEM)
- Supporting disease management

Objectives with regard to the disease ME/CFS:

- Improvement in coping with everyday life and work

Objectives in the area of care:

- Socio-medical advice and support with regard to employment, social security, disability card, care level, home help, outpatient aftercare, therapeutic connection

3. Explanation of Challenges

For rehabilitation patients:

- Adjusting to structured daily routine and new environment

For medical service staff:

- Daily adjustments of therapy plan

For therapy:

- Daily adjustments of therapy to changing performance capabilities

For carers:

- Daily changing support needs

Selected literature:

Jason, L., Benton, M., Torres-Harding, S., & Muldowney, K. (2009). The impact of energy modulation on physical functioning and fatigue severity among patients with ME/CFS. *Patient Educ Couns*, 77(2), 237-241. doi:10.1016/j.pec.2009.02.015

Renz-Polster H, Scheibenbogen C. Post-COVID-Syndrom mit Fatigue und Belastungsintoleranz: Myalgische Enzephalomyelitis bzw. Chronisches Fatigue-Syndrom [Post-COVID syndrome with fatigue and exercise intolerance: myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome]. *Inn Med (Heidelb)*. 2022 Aug;63(8):830-839. German. doi: 10.1007/s00108-022-01369-x. Epub 2022 Jul 13. PMID: 35925074; PMCID: PMC9281337.

Scheibenbogen, C., Wittke, K., Hanitsch, L., Grabowski, P., & Behrends, U. (2019). Chronisches Fatigue-Syndrom/CFS. *Ärztblatt Sachsen*, 9, 26-30.

4. Ideas for Solutions

Therapeutic focus:

- Breathing and relaxation therapy
- Body and Mind Therapy
- Exercise programs in appropriate doses, indoor/outdoor
- Dietary treatment: power food, mood food, body brain food
- Seminars on resources and coping strategies
- Psychological support
- Cognitive training
- Socio-medical advice
- Individual pacing and self-management strategies

Professional focus:

- Ergonomic advice for everyday life and work
- Testing of self-care and everyday routines (ADL)
- Testing of aiding devices, etc.
- Assessment of everyday and work-related performance

Examples of further ideas for solutions :

- Stimulus shielding
- Special setting
- Interdisciplinary support
- Daily therapy design
- Making full use of available support options
- Mobility support – therapy comes to the patient



KLINIK BAVARIA Kreischa – own photos

6. Conclusion

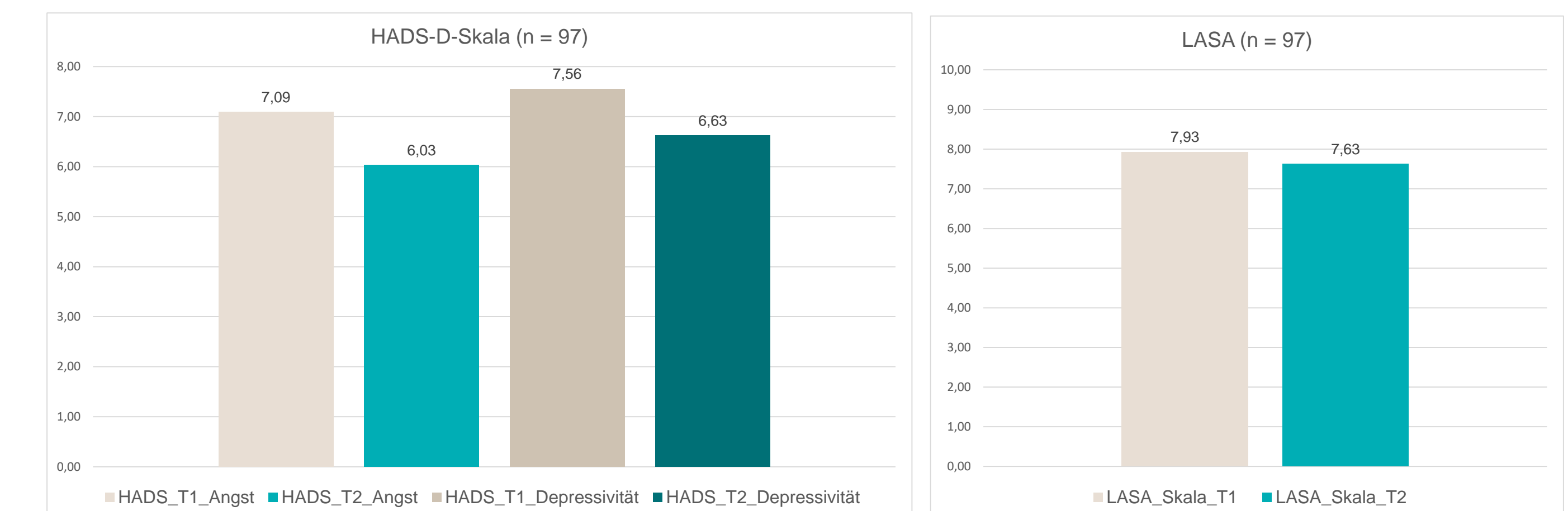
Specialized rehabilitation program reduces fatigue and supports coping with everyday life and work. This requires well-trained staff and frequent interdisciplinary team arrangements, flexible daily therapy design, small, closed groups and short distances in a low-stimulus setting.

7. Contact

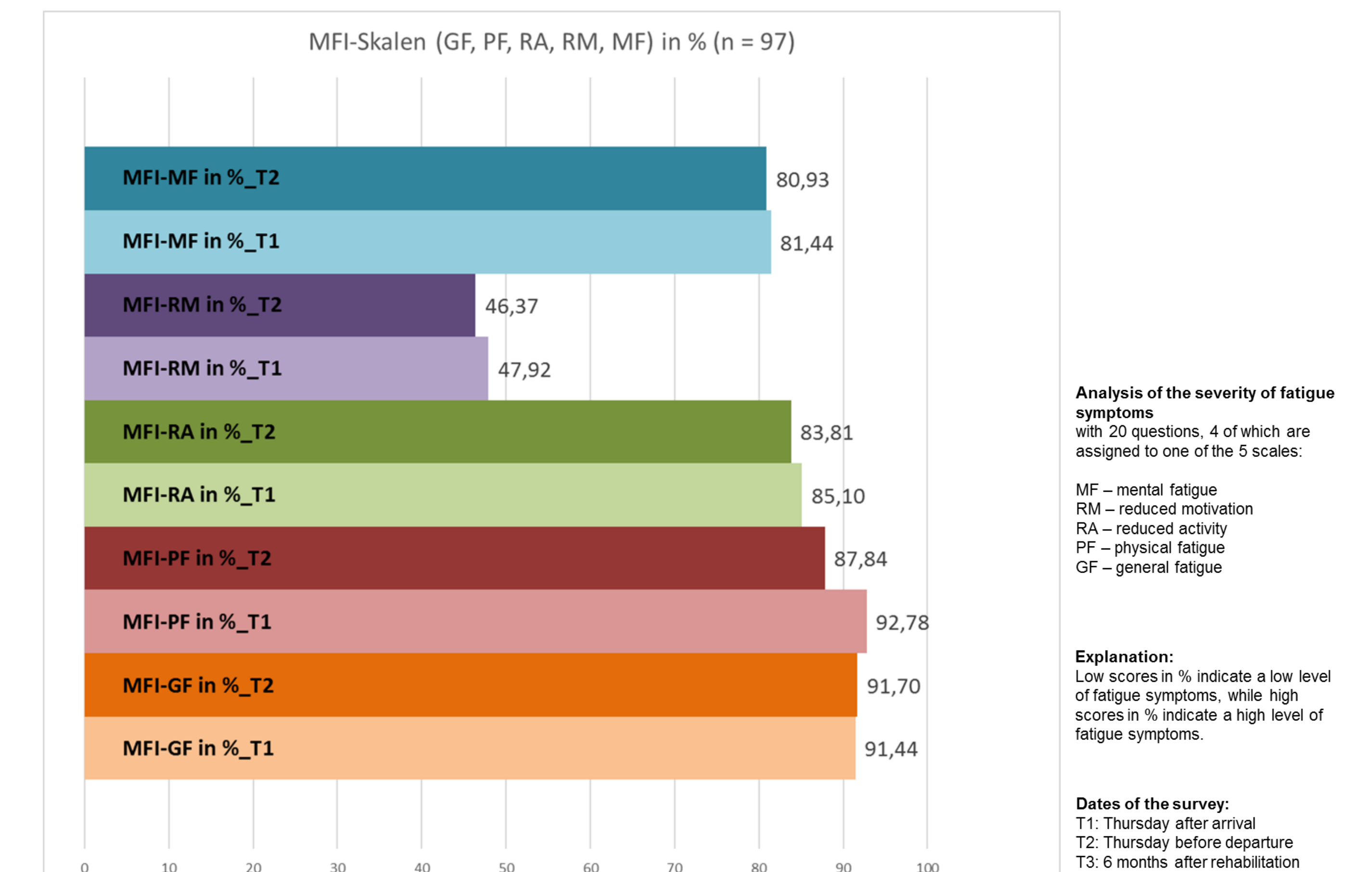
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5. Examples of First Results

1. HADS-D (Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale), LASA (Linear Analogue Self-Assessment)



2. MFI (Multidimensional Fatigue Inventory)



3. Walking Test and Hand Strength (Averages)

