To the Editor:

Linton SJ, Nicholas M, MacDonald S. Development of a Short Form of the Örebro Musculoskeletal Pain Screening Questionnaire. Spine 36(22) 1891-95.

We read Linton *et al's* article proposing the *ÖMSPQ-10(-short)* and applaud the goal of pursuing a more usable short-form instrument. However, several methodological limitations arise. The retrospective analysis included only "back pain" patients. This weakens the intention to "strengthen generality" for musculoskeletal patient populations. We are unsure why "coping" was excluded on the grounds of "low predictive ability" yet distress was included, as Westman *et al*.[1] reported "coping" was more predictive than "distress". We noted the new cutoff of >14 days sick-leave. This appeared contrary to the original-*ÖMPSQ* intention of identifying long-term-absenteeism (>28 days) in musculoskeletal, not only LBP patients. It seemed unusual that no criterion tool, eg.10 random-items, was considered. On comparing random10-item sets in published data[2], the proposed *ÖMSPQ-10* achieved r=0.92, while random-criterions achieved r=0.93-0.94. This suggests other items may better represent each subscale, possibly by reconsidering 'sleep'(4) and 'recovery-pain'(7) which showed low factor-loading[1,2]. Potentially a 12-item scale representing all six original-constructs[2] may improve correlation and predictive capability[3]. The *ÖMSPQ-10's* focuses on LBP items predicting work and pain outcome. Perhaps a broader consideration of musculoskeletal items predicting problem and function outcomes may improve generality[2,3]. This paper is welcomed, but further research is needed to provide a short-form tool for musculoskeletal not just LBP application.

1. Westman A, Linton SJ, Ohrvik J, et al. Do psychosocial factors predict disability and health at a 3-year follow-up for patients with non-acute musculoskeletal pain? A validation of the Orebro Musculoskeletal Pain Screening Questionnaire. *Eur J Pain* 2008;12:641-9.
2. Gabel CP, Melloh M, Yelland M, et al. Predictive Ability of a Modified Örebro Musculoskeletal Pain Questionnaire in an Acute Low Back Pain Working Population. *Eur Spine J* 2011;20:449-57.
3. Gabel CP. A short form questionnaire (ÖMSQ-12) improves screening through factor structure, psychometric and practical characteristics without loss of predictive performance. . Australian Physiotherapy Association Biannual Conference. Sydney: J Physiother, 2009:S15.