

Acknowledgements

Paulo Coelho said that the secret of life is “to fall down seven times and to stand up eight.” This also captures – at least in my case – the secret to finishing a PhD. I was very fortunate that, after falling, there were many warm colleagues, family and friends around to help me stand back up and regain my bearings. For the supportive environment that you all helped create, a heartfelt thank you.

Also, I'd like to extend special thanks to:

my *co-promotor*, Martine de Bruijne, and my *promotors*, Willem van Mechelen, Maurits van Tulder and Allard van der Beek, for the trust and room they gave me to complete my dissertation, and for their constructive feedback and our discussions, which gave me food for thought and led to new insights. Martine, thank you for your caring, openness and commitment to see this project through to the end. Willem, thank you for your open door policy. It gave me much reassurance to know that I could drop by whenever needed and that, despite your busy schedule, you would be able to make room for me. Maurits, thank you for your good advice and your uncanny ability to summarize my loose, jumbled thoughts into one coherent sentence. I'm happy that I have the opportunity to work with you again. Allard, thank you for ensuring that I didn't lose sight of the company's perspective and the realities of practice.

the experts in the Delphi study, and all the workers, supervisors, companies, occupational health professionals and general practitioners in the respective randomized controlled trials, for their willingness to participate.

the Reading Committee members, prof.dr.ir. Lex Burdorf, dr. Willem van Rhenen, prof. dr. Tjabe Smit, dr. Simo Taimela, dr. Emile Tompa and prof.dr.ir. Rieke de Vet, for their time and willingness to review my dissertation and serve on the opposition. Simo and Emile, thank you for travelling respectively from Finland and Canada for this occasion.

my co-authors for their input during various research phases, their clinical and statistical insights, and their constructive feedback on various manuscript drafts. To fellow PhD students, Hynek Hlobil, Ingrid Bakker and Suzanne Stomp, thank you for your camaraderie and for answering my many questions about the in's and out's of your respective randomized controlled trials.

Ingrid Riphagen and Stefan IJmker for their help with conducting the literature searches for the systematic reviews.

Marije, Karin, Annika, Marnelle and Annefloor for their help with the cost questionnaires and data entry in the Mom-at-work study; Brahim, Fadime, Mieke, Inge, Sonja, Trees, Jacqueline, and Michel, for answering my countless “how, where and what” questions; Patrick and Len, for coming to the rescue whenever I had computer problems; and Cees, for his help with Blaise and managing the sick leave data in the Mom-at-work study.

my roommates: Judith, Nicole, Inge, Merel and Ilse (HTA J-wing & Metropolitan);

Martijn, Han, Ivan and Wendela (B-557, SG flex-desk); and Wouter, Adri, Nick, Jantien, Frank, Karen, Hilde and Abeer (A-505), for the collegial atmosphere and fielding my questions, discussing ideas, fun conversations and coffee breaks. Judith, how fun that we get to be FALW colleagues for a while. Thanks for your helpful feedback on my Dutch summary! Nicole, thanks for sharing your knowledge with me and your encouragement. I'm looking forward to the next time our paths cross. Inge, thanks for the fond memories of running our little office plant rehabilitation and germination centre together. Martijn, thank you for guiding me through multiple imputation, and for all fun and encouraging talks along the way. Han, thank you telling me about the Work Disability Prevention research training program and for our collaborations.

my EMGO+ colleagues, past & present, for the stimulating work environment, helpful tips and the fun moments during various retreats and outings; and my HTA, Clinimetrics and LASA colleagues for the camaraderie when we were all in the Metropolitan together. Raymond, Rieke, Caroline & Dirk, thank you for your accessibility and sharing your expertise with me. Lilian, Rianne, Jan and Sidney, my 'neighbours', thanks for fielding my questions and the different breaks throughout the day. Wieneke, many thanks for the Delphi-related discussions, impromptu chats and other talks, and social activities. Geeske, thanks for all the handy tips and advice with making the *boekje*. Ludeke, Sandra & Maurice, I really enjoyed being part of the Dutch contingency with you during the WDP program. Thanks for the fun moments both here and there.

Fieke Koopman, Anita Beelen and Frans Nollet, Department of Rehabilitation, Academic Medical Center, Amsterdam, for the stimulating collaboration on the post-polio intervention trial. I'd also like to extend my thanks to others in the FACTS-2-NMD consortium. To all my former colleagues at the AMC, thank you for the warm and collegial work environment.

the mentors, fellow students and staff of the CIHR Strategic Training Program in Work Disability Prevention Research at the University of Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada for an inspirational three years. Patrick Loisel, thank you for your vision and leadership. Jaime Guzman, thank you for hosting my worksite visit at OHSAH in Vancouver, which added a valuable to dimension to my training. Also, I'd like to extend my thanks to everyone at OHSAH for the stimulating learning experience. To my fellow classmates in the 3rd year cohort from 2005-2007 – Louise Brabant, Fiona Clay, Margaret Friesen, Bettina Hauge, Karen Nieuwenhuijsen and Fergal O'Hagen – thank you for your support, encouragement and many fun moments.

Ilse and Veerle, my *paranimfen*. Who would have guessed that I would meet two kindred spirits while working on my PhD. Both of you were there for me during some of the most difficult moments. Thank you for your support, encouragement and friendship. It's very special that you're both able to stand beside me during my defence.

dear friends here and abroad for their encouragement and providing the much needed distraction from the daily grind of doing a PhD. I grateful that these precious friendships exist despite the distance and time between encounters. Selina, you are my oldest friend.

It means so much to me that you were able to design the cover. Thank you! Selina, Sharon & Jonas, Juliet, Cindy & Phil, Helen, Sam, Darryl, Liz, Anna, Judy & Edgar – you make Vancouver, Vancouver. Carol and Allison, thank you for helping me rediscover the joys of camping and reconnect with the natural beauty of BC. Matt & Debbie and Wilf & Yoko, you are 3 time zones closer now. Hopefully we'll be able to meet up again soon. Nancy, Leslie, Lisa, Arlete and Teresa, from Warm Springs to new endeavours elsewhere, I'm very grateful that we've stayed in touch. Leslie, how many people are willing to edit a term paper on chronic renal failure for a friend? Thanks you for what you taught me about writing. Peter & Manu and Katsuyo & Raymond, thank you for all the fun evenings, outings and traditions. Rod & Martine, Ian & Hannie, Chad & Mirte, and Mart & Ermie, thank you for the wonderful dinners, your interest and support. Ülrike, Gino, Asta and Joost & Katja, your friendships are proof that there are many benefits of practicing yoga.

my *Okasan* (Mom) and *Otosan* (Dad), Motoko and Takuo, my role models for life-long learning and vitality. Thank you for encouraging me to find my own path and supporting me in my choices; my wonderful sisters, Chieri and Maki and my cool brother-in-law, Paul. Chieri & Paul, thank you for the safe and nourishing havens you provide on the coast and by the lake. Maki, thank you for the great escapes to the big city of London and all the rejuvenating spa days; my gracious in-laws, Bea and Frans, and brother-in-law, Frank, thank you for welcoming me so warmly from day one, and your support and encouragement throughout; the rest of my kind Dutch family, thank you for your interest and encouraging words.

Sander, the love of my life. What a ride this was, and what a fun discovery to find out about your innate skills as a proof reader! Thank you for your love, understanding, support and belief in me, without which none of this would have been possible. And most of all, thank you for being you.

And now? I think it's time we all heed the wise words of Kermit the Frog and "jump in the car and go have a picnic with a pig."

About the author

Kimi Uegaki was born in Vancouver, Canada in 1971. She completed her high school education at Templeton Secondary School in 1988, and received her Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy from the School of Rehabilitation Medicine at the University of British Columbia in 1993. In 1999, she obtained her Master of Health Science from the University of Indianapolis, USA. Between 1993 and 2000, Kimi worked as a physiotherapist in various health care settings in Canada and the United States. In 2000, Kimi moved to The Netherlands. From 2001 to 2003, she worked as a research assistant in the Faculty of Movement Sciences, VU University and the Department of Orthopedics, VU Medical Center. In 2004, Kimi started her PhD at the EMGO+ Institute for Health and Care Research on the topic of economic evaluation of interventions in occupational health. During her PhD, she followed course work in the Postgraduate Epidemiology Programme at the EMGO+ and completed the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) Strategic Training Program in Work Disability Prevention at the University of Sherbrooke, Canada. Kimi worked as a researcher and coordinator in the Department of Rehabilitation, AMC Medical Center in Amsterdam from 2008-2009. Currently, she is working as a researcher at the Institute of Health Sciences, Faculty of Earth & Life Sciences of the VU University in Amsterdam.

List of (co-)publications:

- Cost-effectiveness of a minimal intervention for stress-related sick leave in general practice: results of an economic evaluation alongside a pragmatic randomized control trial. K. Uegaki, I. Bakker, M.C. de Bruijne, A.J. van der Beek, H. van Marwijk, M. Heymans, W. Stalman, W. van Mechelen. *J Affect Disorders* 2009, doi:10.1016/j.jad.2009.04.012.
- Treatment for postpolio syndrome (Protocol). F.S. Koopman, K. Uegaki, N.E. Gilhus, A. Beelen, M. de Visser, F. Nollet. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2009, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD007818. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD007818.
- Consensus-based findings and recommendations for estimating the costs of health-related productivity loss from a company's perspective. K.Uegaki, M.C. de Bruijne, J.R. Anema, A.J. van der Beek, M.W. van Tulder, W. van Mechelen. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment and Health*. 2007;33(2):122-30.
- Improving return-to-work after childbirth: design of the Mom@Work study, a randomised controlled trial and cohort study. S.G.M. Stomp-van den Berg, M.N.M. van Poppel, I.J.M. Hendriksen, D.J. Bruinvels, K. Uegaki, M.C. de Bruijne and W. van Mechelen. *BMC Public Health*. 2007;7:43. DOI:10.1186/1471-2458-7-43
- Substantial sick leave costs savings due to a graded activity intervention for workers with non-specific sub-acute low back pain. H. Hlobil, K.Uegaki, J.B. Staal, M.C. de Bruijne, T. Smid, W. van Mechelen. *European Spine Journal*. 2007;16(7):919-24. DOI: 10.1007/s00586-006-0283-9.
- Gait coordination in pregnancy: transverse pelvic and thoracic rotations and their relative phase. W.H. Wu, O.G. Meijer, C.J.C. Lamoth, K. Uegaki, J.H. van Dieën, P.I.J.M. Wuisman, J.I.P. de Vries, P.J. Beek. *Clinical Biomechanics*. 2004;19:480-488.
- Pregnancy-related pelvic girdle pain (PPP): terminology, clinical presentation, and prevalence. W.H. Wu, O.G. Meijer, K. Uegaki, J.M.A. Mens, J.H. van Dieën, P.I.J.M. Wuisman, H.C. Östgaard. *European Spine Journal*. 2004;13:575-589.
- Gait in patients with pregnancy-related pain in the pelvis: an emphasis on the coordination of transverse pelvic and thoracic rotations. W.H. Wu, O.G. Meijer, P.C. Jutte, K. Uegaki, C.J.C. Lamoth, G.S. de Wolf, J.H. van Dieën, P.I.J.M. Wuisman, G. Kwakkel, J.I.P. de Vries, P.J. Beek. *Clinical Biomechanics*. 2002;17:678-686.
- Pathologie van de bewegingscoördinatie: een nieuw vak? [The pathology of motor coordination: a new field?]. C.J.C. Lamoth, O.G. Meijer, K. Uegaki, J.H. van Dieën, A. Daffertshofer, R. Zwart. *Tijdschrift voor oefentherapie-Mensendieck*. 2001, nummer 3, blz. 16-32.
- Pregnancy-related pain in the pelvis (PPP); II: pathology, diagnosis and treatment. W.H. Wu, O.G. Meijer, K. Uegaki, J.H. van Dieën, P.I.J.M. Wuisman. *Tijdschrift voor oefentherapie-Mensendieck*. 2002, nummer 2, blz. 21-38.