

# Attitude towards Occupational Medicine Questionnaire

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# Introduction

Occupational medicine is not very well represented in most medical curricula

The specialty seems to operate far from the educational goals from medical students

One of the aims of the OM educational programs is to raise the interest of medical students for the specialty and to improve their attitude towards occupational medicine

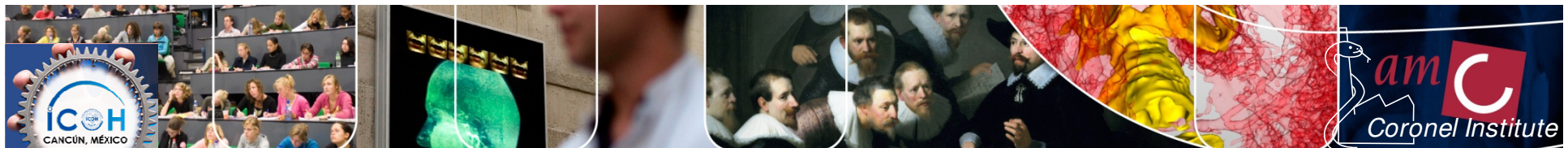


# Introduction

## Aims of our study

To develop a questionnaire to measure attitude towards occupational medicine

To measure changes in attitude due to education



# Methods

## Two steps

### First step:

- Second year medical students in Amsterdam, The Netherlands (n=141) (part of the Networm project)
- We drew up as many statements about possible attitudes both valued positively and negatively
- We used a five point Likert scale
- Questionnaires were analyzed with exploratory factor analysis to find common scales based on an Eigenvalue of more than 0.40 for individual questions and sufficient Cronbach alphas



# Results step 1

The initial 45 statements could be reduced to 18 and summarized in five different scales

- based on items with an Eigenvalue of more than 0.40
- with Cronbach alpha  $>0.50$





# Methods

Second step:

Third year medical students in Groningen, The Netherlands (n=208)

Questionnaire with 18 statements

Before and after education in OM

To further confirm and adapt the questionnaire

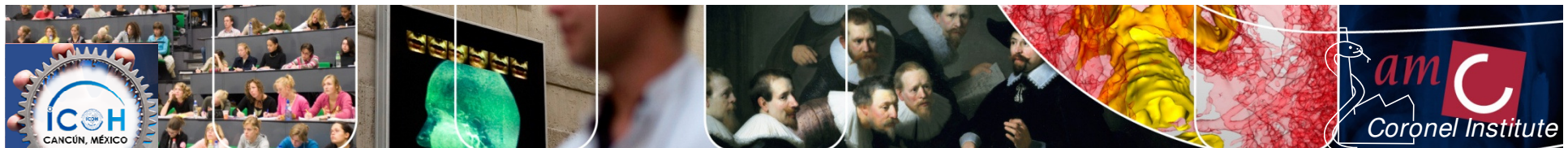
To measure possible changes in attitude



# Results step 2

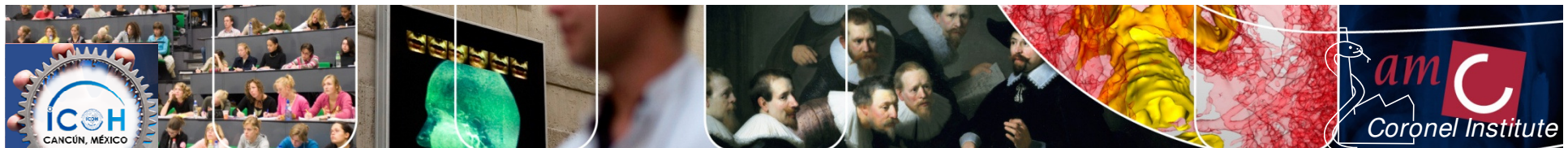
The 18 statements could be further summarized in three different scales

- with a more sufficient Cronbach alpha of  $> .65$
- that measured all three a small but significant positive change after education compared to before



# Results after step 2: three scales

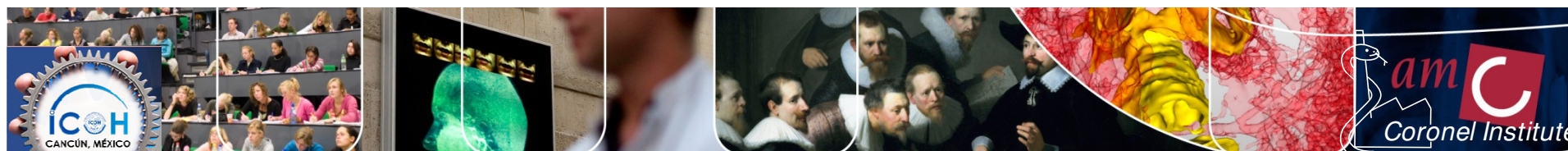
Scale title	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
1. A career in occupational medicine	6 items	0.78
2. Occupational medicine as an interesting medical speciality	11 items	0.66
3. Role and position of the occupational physician	1 item	NA





## Results step 2: positive changes

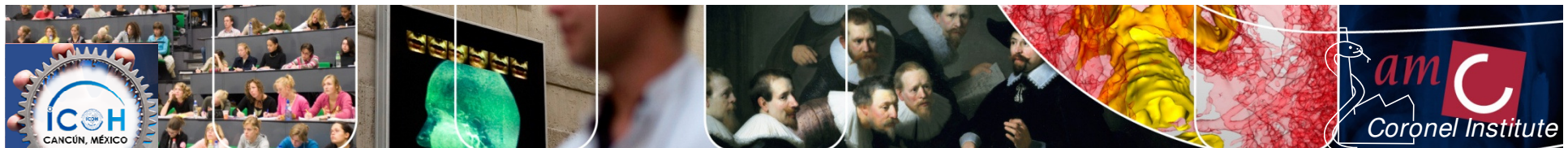
<b>Scale</b> n=208, 3th year medical students paired samples t-Test	<b>Before Mean Score (SD)</b>	<b>After Mean Score (SD)</b>	<b>Mean Difference (SD)</b>	<b>P- value</b>
1. A career in occupational medicine (6 items) (min 6, max 30)	13.4 (3.78)	14.1 (3.89)	0.68 (3.50)	.006
2. Occupational medicine as an interesting medical speciality (11 items) (min 11, max 55)	41.8 (3.81)	42.7 (4.06)	0.94 (4.15)	.001
3. Role and position of the occupational physician (1 item) (min 1, max 5)	2.7 (0.90)	3.1 (0.90)	0.37 (1.41)	< .001



# Conclusions

If it is one of the outcomes of educational programs to improve medical students' attitudes towards occupational medicine, this outcome should be measured to find the most effective components that help to achieve this

The questionnaire that we constructed is a validated tool to measure medical students' attitude towards occupational medicine

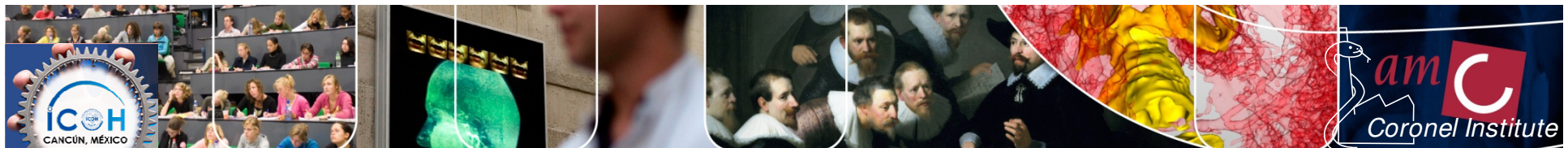


# Conclusions

This 18 questions did measure changes in attitude in a Dutch setting

The challenge is

- to improve education in occupational medicine with the help of these attitude – evaluations
- to further validate the questionnaire in other samples in different cultures and settings







Questions?

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# Attitude towards Occupational Medicine Questionnaire

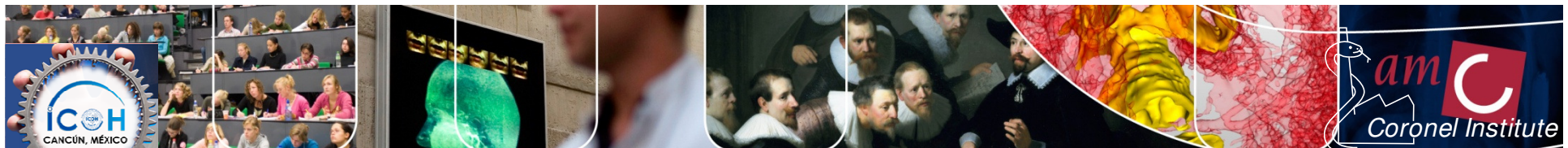
- A career in occupational medicine
- Occupational medicine as an interesting medical specialty
- Role and position of the occupational physician





# A career in occupational medicine

1. The job of the occupational physician is challenging
2. I am very much attracted to the preventive aspects of occupational health
3. Occupational disability is an interesting topic to study
4. One of my options is to become occupational physician
5. I find it interesting to study occupational diseases
6. Advising companies about healthy work is attractive to me.



# Occupational medicine as an interesting medical specialty

1. As a physician, you will always know what kind of job your patient holds
2. Return to work after illness forms an important part of rehabilitation
3. It is important to diagnose an illness as an occupational disease
4. From the clinical point of view, occupational diseases are not very interesting
5. There is still a lot to be discovered about occupational diseases
6. As an occupational physician you need trust between you and your patient



# Occupational medicine as an interesting medical specialty

7. If you have a certain illness, it is important to take this into consideration already when choosing a career
8. Every physician should report occupational diseases
9. With every patient, the doctor looks at the complaints but also at its consequences for functioning in daily life and at work
10. There is still a lot to be discovered about return to work after illness
11. The kind of work a patient is doing forms an important part of the medical history



# Role and position of the occupational physician

1. It is a problem that, as an occupational physician, one is not independent from the employer

