



Project Summary

Ankylosing Spondylitis and Work: a biomechanics approach to inform self-management programme

Dr Cazzola awarded £30000.00

Ankylosing spondylitis (AS) affects various areas of life, and, in particular, work. The incidence of work absenteeism and job loss can be very high in AS patients, with more than 50% suffering work instability. This is mainly due to the mismatch between AS patients' functional abilities and the demands of their job.

Currently AS is assessed and monitored by using patient-reported outcomes, which can be biased by other factors, such as pain and other diseases. Therefore, there are no well-accepted objective outcome measures for AS, and no assessment tools to measure AS disability in the workspace.

This project will create a novel measure of disease in ankylosing spondylitis, which is capable of profiling the physical load experienced by early-stage AS patients during office-based tasks with great accuracy. The key goal of this research is to objectively assess spinal load and muscle fatigability during office-based tasks in order to inform the creation of future self-management programmes.

This approach will use wearable sensors technology and cutting-edge computer simulations to enable us to evaluate the effectiveness of patient-reported outcomes as an assessment tool, and therefore make a step change in future clinical practice.