IN RESPONSE:

We thank Dr. Almosnino for critically reading and discussing our systematic review.1 However, his arguments are based on the assumption that research concerning this topic should be based on 2 criteria: whether or not the patient is performing sincerely, and whether the effort is representative for the patient’s maximal capacity. Dr. Almosnino does not, however, explain the (theoretical) basis for this distinction. We specifically stated in our introduction that we did not distinguish between reasons for submaximal capacity, because our study focused on the identification of submaximal capacity, regardless of its origin. Identification of the reason for submaximal capacity is a different issue that requires a different study methodology, as Dr. Almosnino correctly points out. There are several factors that can influence the level of capacity,2 and these factors are difficult to objectify. Also, we worked with a definition of submaximal capacity because effort and capacity can be interpreted in different ways. We found strong evidence that submaximal capacity can be detected in patients with chronic low back pain with a lumbar motion monitor or visual observations accompanying a functional capacity evaluation lifting test. We did not find evidence for the detection of maximal capacity and for other instruments.

Suzan van der Meer, MSc
Department of Research Methodology, Measurement and Data Analysis, University Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands

Maurizio Trippolini, MSc
Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Center for Rehabilitation, University Medical Center Groningen, the Netherlands, and Department of Work Rehabilitation, Rehaklinik Bellikon, SUVA Care, Bellikon, Switzerland

Job van der Palen, PhD
Department of Research Methodology, Measurement and Data Analysis, University Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands, and Department of Epidemiology, Medisch Spectrum Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands

Jan Verhoeven, MSc
Condite, Disability Management, Enschede, the Netherlands

Michiel Reneman, PhD
Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Center for Rehabilitation, University Medical Center Groningen, the Netherlands

References