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## New Endowed Professorship for Interdisciplinary Rehabilitation

Thanks to the support of the **Stiftung für medizinische Weiterbehandlung, Rehabilitation und Prävention BRH** (*Foundation for Further Medical Treatment, Rehabilitation and Prevention BRH*), the University of Bern is now able to set up an endowed Professorship for **Interdisciplinary Rehabilitation** together with the Insel Gruppe. The latter is endowed with CHF 7.75 million and, along with its remit in teaching and research, is intended to promote innovation.

The health system is faced with the current demographic trend and an increase in the number of people with chronic diseases. Besides treating illnesses, it is therefore becoming increasingly important to promote and preserve health, and consequently rehabilitate it too. Rehabilitation in medicine is the restoration of the physical and psychological capacities of patients suffering from chronic illnesses, or after a trauma or surgery. The secondary objective is reintegration into social and working life. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified rehabilitation as a priority health strategy for the 21st century that should be available to the entire population at all stages of life. One major and multidisciplinary special area of rehabilitative measures is physical activity that promotes health. This results in strong synergies between rehabilitation and sports and exercise medicine.

### Platform for innovation

“The socially relevant academic field of rehabilitation is now being incorporated into research and teaching at the University of Bern and at Bern University Hospital,” says Christian Leumann, Rector of the University of Bern. The endowed professorship has an interdisciplinary and interprofessional focus, and is intended to strengthen cooperation between centers and institutes at the University of Bern, Bern University Hospital clinics, the Swiss Institute for Translational and Entrepreneurial Medicine (sitem-insel) and external partners such as Bern University of Applied Sciences. In addition, the endowed professorship academically links the Insel Gruppe’s medical field of rehabilitation and sports medicine to the University of Bern. “The professorship promotes the academization of the medical field at Bern University Hospital and serves as a platform for innovation with interdisciplinary research and networking at the medical site in Bern,” says Leumann. Among other things, the use of digital technologies is to be tested and implemented, for example for tele-rehabilitation.

### Development of rehabilitation services

The endowed professorship is being established with the support of the BRH and the UniBE Foundation as an extraordinary professorship, is planned for 15 years and endowed with CHF 7.75

million. It will be located in the Insel Gruppe's medical field of rehabilitation and sports medicine. This is not made up of University clinics, but is a special area consisting of various rehabilitative services offered by specialist medical fields, such as cardiology, oncology, orthopedics and pneumology. The area also includes rehabilitation services offered by the Bern's Heiligenschwendi rehabilitation center and an interdisciplinary rehabilitation department, which has been located on the Insel campus since January 2024. "The Insel Gruppe is the largest rehabilitation provider in the canton of Bern and in the Bern-Mittelland region," says Urs Peter Mosimann, Director of Medicine at the Insel Gruppe. "With the endowed professorship in the medical field of rehabilitation and sports medicine, we can address a broad spectrum of chronic illnesses and a large number of patients."

### **Highly specialized area**

The BRH Foundation supports and promotes measures for the further medical treatment, rehabilitation and prevention of disabled, sick and convalescent people. "We would like to develop current clinical research and university teaching on interdisciplinary rehabilitation into a highly specialized area," says Markus Meyer, Chairman of the BRH Foundation Board. "The endowed professorship raises the profile and appeal of interdisciplinary rehabilitation at local, national and international level, and provides a valuable boost for clinical services and quality of care in Bern."

"Research, teaching and training in the field of rehabilitation and sports medicine appeal to specialists from medicine, sports science, physiotherapy, psychology and nursing equally," says Claudio Bassetti, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bern. "With the endowed professorship, results from studies could be put into practice more quickly, and clinical and academic young researchers could be promoted," Bassetti continues. Among other things, this would offer an opportunity to increase the proportion of female researchers who are currently still under-represented.

The endowed professorship is to be advertised nationally and internationally. The appointment is scheduled for spring 2025.

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### **UniBE Foundation**

The UniBE Foundation strengthens and supports the University of Bern with the development of pioneering global solutions for the complex challenges of our time with the current and future generations of researchers. The funding initiatives of the foundation align with the strategy of the University and focus on excellence, innovation and future potential. The foundation was established in 2021 and is chaired by Heinz Karrer, a Swiss business leader.

[Further information](#)