Background and aim

- “the external influence of time spent with others with disabilities appeared to impact the internal agency of the participants and bring new level of comprehension to their own self-definition” (Goodwin & Staples, 2005)
- “Through engagement in the community of practice, and the mutual understanding they experienced, the participants were provided with resources to make sense of their situation.” (Standal & Jespersen, 2008)
- “participants discussed feeling empowered upon embracing disability as a part of their identity, facilitated by opportunities to identify their strengths and develop the confidence to advocate for themselves” (McPherson et al., 2018)

Aim of study: Identify the key social processes occurring during an intensive adapted physical activity intervention for young adults with physical disabilities.

Method and participant demographics

- Data were sourced through an ethnographic approach consisting of participatory observation and in-field interviews.
- Grounded theory methodology was used to explore the links between personal actions, social interactions and wider cultural formations.
- A total of 54 young adults (17-34 years) with different types of disabilities participated in the study.
  - 21 young adults were in need of personal assistance and were followed to the stay by either parents or professional assistants.
  - 23 young adults participated in their first stay, while 31 had one or more previous stays.
"Talking with some of the others have got me start thinking about reducing my work hours. I know my body needs it, or I will wear it down, but I haven't been ready to take the step...."
Young man, 3rd group

"This is like a free place. They don't have to explain why they are as they are, or why things happen. I mean, it is not that they don't discuss diagnoses, challenges and experiences, but it is not constantly in focus, and when they do - it is a different way of asking – they are genuinely interested – they are engaging in each other."
Mom to a young woman, 2nd group

"Being with peers with similar challenges - it gives you a feeling of togetherness, it's more fun. We are in the same place and share interests. So you become more open."
Young woman, 2nd group

"Here we are together – at home you are alone!"
Young man, 3rd group