



Healthy Work - Healthy Lifestyle - Healthy Business

Challenges to health

Chronic diseases are the leading cause of premature death and disability worldwide. Whereas in the past few decades they were predominantly symptoms of old age, many younger people are now affected and almost half of chronic disease deaths occur in people under 70 years of age. Only a small number of chronic diseases account for most of the disease burden in Europe. The majority is caused by cardiovascular diseases (23%), mental health problems (20%) and cancer (11%). Heart diseases, strokes and cancer are the main cause of death for both men and women in all the EU-Member states (WHO 2005).

will ultimately lead to savings in the related costs. Every Euro invested in health promotion programmes will on the long term save between 2,50 and 4,80 Euro in absenteeism costs and between 2,30 and 5,90 Euro in sickness costs. Company health interventions bring benefits to the employer by reductions in absence rates and production losses on the long term, but also to the social security systems through lower treatment costs, fewer admissions to hospital, shorter stays in hospital and lower work incapacity pension payments.

What can be done?

Effective interventions already exist for preventing and combating non-communicable conditions. This was

A few largely preventable risk factors account for most of the disease burden, high blood pressure, tobacco and alcohol, high cholesterol levels, overweight, poor diet, physical inactivity and stress.

The risk factors associated with chronic disease are summarized in the following table:

Chronic diseases and associated risk factors

Chronic disease:	Risk factors					Diet	Physical activity	Stress
	High pressure	Smoking	Alcohol	High blood cholesterol	Obesity			
Chronic heart disease, stroke	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Cancer		■	■		■	■		
Diabetes	■			■	■	■	■	
Respiratory disease	■				■			
Depression			■					

Source: Own illustration according to World Economic Forum / PricewaterhouseCoopers Health Research Institute Analysis, 2007 und World Health Report 2004, 2004

According to the trends more than 300 million people worldwide are predicted to die from chronic disease over the next 10 years. The WHO estimates that some 36 million of these deaths could be averted. A 10% reduction in mortality from heart disease and cancer, could bring annual savings of \$10.4 trillion.

Investment in workplace health promotion is therefore worthwhile - also for businesses. Reductions of between 12% - 36% in absenteeism caused by sickness

shown in the results of a recent initiative carried out by the European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (ENWHP). Under the title "Move Europe", the ENWHP identified and evaluated around 100 Models of Good Practice from 26 participating countries and 48 of these were selected to present their activities and to receive an award at the concluding conference in Perugia.



During the **Move Europe** project, the ENWHP carried out a 2-year campaign to promote a healthy lifestyle at work. The campaign began officially in April 2007 and national "Move Europe" websites were set up and went online in more than 20 countries. About 3000 enterprises participated - public administrations, schools, hospitals, small and larger companies, at both "beginner" and "advanced" level - and they actively supported the campaign as a "Move Europe Partner".

The project focused on four topics:

- Physical activity
- Healthy diet
- Smoking prevention
- Mental Health

A gradual status and selection approach helped to identify good practices:



Move Europe-Community: Companies joined the campaign by filling in an online questionnaire on the current status of their WHP activities and received recommendations for improvement in a self-assessment procedure.

Move Europe-Partner: Move Europe-Partners meeting specific quality criteria were invited to join the campaign and were made visible at national level.

Move Europe-Partner Excellence: Models of Good Practice were identified by an expert team on national level.

Perugia Conference: Move Europe-Partner Excellence were invited to the concluding conference in Perugia on 27th – 28th April 2009 to present their WHP activities.

„Healthy Employees in Healthy Organisations“ – has been the vision of the ENWHP ever since it was established in 1996. The ENWHP promotes good practice in workplace health promotion and advocates the adoption of such practice in all European workplaces. With the support of the European Commission, DG Health and Consumer Protection, the ENWHP has carried out a number of important European initiatives over the past decade which have established workplace health promotion (WHP) as a field of action for public health at European and national level:

- 8th Promoting Good Practice for Mental Health at the Workplace
- 7th Move Europe - A Campaign for the Improvement of Lifestyle-Related Workplace Health Promotion in Europe
- 6th Disseminating Good Workplace Health in Eastern European Countries
- 5th Healthy Work in an Ageing Europe
- 4th The Implementation of Infrastructures for Promoting Workplace Health
- 3rd Workplace Health Promotion in the Public Administration Sector
Special: WHP in Latin and Southern European Countries
- 2nd Workplace Health Promotion in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
- 1st Quality Criteria and Success Factors of Workplace Health Promotion

The MOVE EUROPE Project has been made possible by means of a financial contribution from the Program of Community action in the field of public health 2003-2008. The commission in no case can be called responsible for the information included in this document.