

IMPLEMENTATION AND UPTAKE OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON DEPRESSION IN THE WORKPLACE



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SETTING THE SCENE



- Depression primarily affects the working age population
- In an EDA survey of 7065 working people 1 in 10 had taken time off work for depression but only 1/3 said they would tell their employer they had depression
- Depression is a common condition that has a significant and often unrecognised impact on employers as well as employees
- The right kind of work aids recovery and is good for mental health
- With little understanding and much stigma policymakers must provide guidance to employers

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF EMPLOYERS



- The employee /employer relationship is unique and employers have a role to play in improving prevention and early intervention by:
- Improvements in the work environment
- Early recognition of depression and the implementation of a recovery plan
- Promoting good mental health
- Providing support when mental health is at risk

The responsibilities of employers around depression in the workplace must be clearly defined and communicated by policymakers

EDUCATION



- Changes cannot be made without a good understanding of what depression is, particularly how it manifests in the workplace
- There need to be objective measures of work environments and the impact of interventions
- Employers and policymakers must work with health professionals and patient groups to develop educational materials for use in the workplace and wider society
- European Depression Day 2014 will promote awareness of depression to the general public and MEPs on October 1st
- Mental Health also needs to be understood, promoted and protected

DEPRESSION – A HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERN



- As well as employment legislation, EU health and safety policy provides a vehicle for guidance
- Significant progress has been made in protecting workers from physical risks, now psychosocial ones needs to be addressed too
- Legislation needs to support better working conditions and the provision of practical support for employees with depression and other mental illnesses
- Relevant policies include the Working Time Directives, corporate restructuring, anti-discrimination law and posting of workers

SPECIFIC POLICY CHANGES



- Health policy must recognise the role healthcare professionals have in ensuring patients with depression are treated according to evidence-based guidelines which take into account the person's work situation
- Healthy and Safety policy should acknowledge psychosocial risks in the workplace and seek to reduce them by promoting simple risk assessments and offering practical advice
- Legislation that supports workplace employee education should be updated to include advice on depression and overall mental health

IMPLEMENTATION - GOVERNMENTS



- Encourage Member States to establish Mental Health Commissions to oversee mental health provisions in the workplace. Responsibilities could include:
 - Ensuring all stakeholder understand their role and the possibilities of intervention
 - Creating educational materials and toolkits
 - Fostering communication between groups responsible for health and employment policy
 - Further developing the value argument to support interventions
 - Managing a form of follow-up with employers to ensure improvements
- Member States should develop national Mental Health Action Plans to reduce psychosocial risks in the workplace
- Follow the Canadian example

IMPLEMENTATION - EMPLOYERS



- It is in the Employer's interest to reduce the burden of depression on the organisation. The following are key results from the implementation of BT's mental health strategy:
 - 30% reduction in sickness absence rates due to mental health problems
 - 68% of employees learned something new about ways to look after their mental health
 - 51% of employees had noticed improvements in their mental well-being
- The EDA survey found that 1 in 3 managers felt they had no formal support for dealing with depression and would welcome support and tools
- Creation of a model Workplace Recovery Pathway
- A new forum for employers to share best practice and offer practical advice – Target Depression

IMPLEMENTATION - EMPLOYEES



- Education
 - Raise awareness and reduce stigma
 - Teach employees to recognise the signs of depression in themselves and others
 - Give employees clear guidance on what they should do when affected by depression
- Prevention
 - Encourage employees to protect their own mental health
 - Help employees to recognise risks to their mental well-being
- Getting back to work
 - Encourage employees to stay in touch and get back to work quickly

WORKING TOGETHER



All stakeholders hold a piece of the puzzle and by working together we can reduce the burden of depression