

GOOD PRACTICE FRANCE

Strategic approach for sustaining people with chronic illnesses at work

Contact person (NCO)

Name and organisation

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General information about the MOGP

Name of organisation and short description

Delpeyrat, Saint Sever, France

Delpeyrat is part of the food-processing industry. This company was created in 1890 and is well-known for manufacturing and selling “foies gras” and typical delicatessen from the southwest of France. Delpeyrat proposes more than 200 references, which are sold through hypermarkets. It employs 2000 people working on 10 different sites, divided into 4 sectors: Foies gras, Catering, Delicatessen, Logistics/storage platforms. The site on which the project was developed is in Saint Sever and employs 850 workers.

Contact person

p.leclercq@delpeyrat.fr

Website

<http://www.delpeyrat.com>



Information on the good practice ‘Strategic approach for sustaining people with chronic illnesses at work’

Aims

Beyond implementing an approach towards workers with a chronic illness to sustain them at work, this initiative had 3 main objectives:

- contribute to improving working conditions for all workers, whether they have a chronic pathology or not;
- maintain professional skills within the company;
- reduce absenteeism.

Target group

Management and HR; occupational nurses/doctors; production and maintenance manager; H&S committee, healthcare professionals.

Description

The site of Saint Sever of the Delpeyrat Group - manufacturing and selling ‘foies gras’ - implemented a strategic and innovative approach aiming at sustaining people with chronic illnesses at work.

The main guidelines of the project were defined, a project manager was nominated, and a workgroup was constituted. Three individual cases of people working with a chronic disease were analyzed, as well as the general situation regarding the health status of all the employees on the site. This led to the implementation of an approach including every stakeholder, depending on his or her role. Specific communication means were developed in order to communicate largely on this project within the Delpeyrat Group. The company management then decided to broaden the scope of the workgroup activities to the general issue of health at the workplace, following the example of the good practice based on sustaining employees with a chronic illness at work.

Why is it a good practice?

This initiative really focuses on chronic illnesses and the way they have an impact on work. It uses the “based on work” approach, which is very specific and innovative: it aims at avoiding the implementation of working means based on wrong representations of the activity that could create difficulties for both the worker with a chronic disease and the company.

The project management required the involvement of both stakeholders inside and outside the company (Human Resources, production manager, maintenance manager, healthcare professionals,...), and led them work together. Although it was quite difficult at first to ask such different people, having such different skills, to share their points of view, they finally agreed on the fact that solutions had to be built together. Special attention was paid to manage a high level of coordination between all those various stakeholders.

Specific communication means (like interactive access points to a dedicated website) had to be structured, and it contributed to questioning the whole communication strategy of the Delpeyrat Group.



Results

Evaluation

- The three individual 'diagnoses' have been evaluated.
- Communication tools (website, written commitments, interactive access points...) were evaluated through costs monitoring.

Incentives for success

- Strong willingness of the company management to build a specific approach on sustaining employees suffering from a chronic pathology at work.
- Individual "diagnosis" to put forward hypotheses.
- Structural organization of the project (identification of a project manager, constitution of a workgroup).
- Structural organisation of a specific approach, based on both methodological material and the company culture.
- Elaboration of a dedicated communication strategy.
- Identification of 'referents' on the site of Saint Sever.
- Enlargement of the activities of the workgroup to a global approach regarding 'health at work' issues (e.g. psychosocial risk factors).

Barriers for success

Within the company:

- Wrong representations of both illness and/or activity.
- Invisibility of chronic pathologies at the workplace.
- Taboo aspect of the illness.
- Individual willingness of both management staff and workers suffering from a pathology.

Outside the company:

- Difficulties to mobilize occupational physicians on collective approaches and multidisciplinary groups.
- Difficulties to mobilize social partners on those issues.
- French legislation protects the people recognized as people with disabilities or people who had occupational accidents or occupational diseases, but there is nothing concerning ill people at work.

