

GOOD PRACTICE BELGIUM Weer-Werk

Contact person (NCO)

Name and organisation

Katrien Bruyninx - Prevent

E-mail address and website

katrien.bruyninx@prevent.be
www.prevent.be

General information about the MOGP

Name of organisation and short description

Campus Herk-de-stad, Jessaziekenhuis. Campus Herk-de-stad is part of the Jessaziekenhuis, a large hospital. The Campus focuses on rehabilitation.

Contact person

Marc Michielsens, marc.michielsens@jessazh.be

Website

www.jessazh.be

Information on the good practice 'Weer-Werk'

Aims

The aim of this project is to include vocational rehabilitation in the standard rehabilitation process at the hospital. One of the goals is to support the patient to build new future perspectives within the limitations of their current health situation: to help them focus on capacities instead of on medical diagnosis or limitations. The project is still running.

Long-term health problems and/or functional limitations often lead to exclusion from the labour market. Research shows that less than 50% of the employees, absent for three up to six months, return to their own workplace (SILC, 2006). If the period of absence continuous for more than one or two years the chances of returning decrease to respectively 20% and



10%. These results lead to the obvious conclusion that's early intervention is important in a return to work (RTW) process.

Target group

- staff of rehabilitation center
- patients of rehabilitation center

The target population in the rehabilitation center are people with severe and long-term (sometimes permanent) health problems and/or functional limitations.

Description

To adapt a step by step plan for vocational rehabilitation and integration into the standard rehabilitation protocol. That is: case management is implemented in the rehabilitation process so that the vocational rehabilitation is systematically conducted for every patient that enters the rehabilitation center. Train all staff (from maintenance personnel to management) to carry out the vision that work is an important part of rehabilitation: there's a need for a change in attitude / mindset regarding RTW. Until recent, a lot of people believed that 'sick' people didn't need to be bothered with work and work-related questions and activities. There were a lot of misunderstandings about the 'benefits' of compensation systems and the risks of losing these arrangements, when taking steps towards RTW. Paramedical staff is trained to focus on workability during the rehabilitation process, but also to guide their patients in the acceptance of their changed capacities and to translate them into new future possibilities.

To implement the use of a Disability case manager that guides patients but also to expand the external network (with employers, other caregivers, insurance etc.). Next to the individual guidance of the patients, the disability case managers' most important task is to promote and coordinate the collaboration of professionals - internal (medical and paramedical staff, social services) and external (employer, social security agents, insurance companies, occupational physician etc.)

Why is it a good practice?

The project aims to implement a step-by-step plan for vocational rehabilitation into the standard rehabilitation process. The target population in the rehabilitation center are people with severe and long-term (sometimes permanent) health problems and/or functional limitations. The intention is to identify systematically for each patient the work capacities and to train them if possible. This way, early intervention is assured.

Results

Evaluation

The project is conducted with financial support of the European Social Fund (ESF). The project proposal and business case were approved. The project is still ongoing.

Workplace health promotion offers a comprehensive approach combining individual and organisational interventions to promote the health of employees. This approach offers the possibility to situate job retention and RTW of chronically ill employees in a broad strategy starting with promoting health, preventing illness and RTW. Job retention and RTW often demand individual solutions for specific cases and situations, but they have to be embedded



in a broad comprehensive approach. Workplace health promotion methodologies and strategies are suited for this purpose.

Incentives for success

- Financial support by the European Social Fund (ESF).
- An external network of employers, occupational physicians, general practitioners etc. is contacted to collaborate on individual cases. Umbrella networks are searched for to set up structural cooperation.

Barriers for success

- The consequences of the economic crisis are not very positive with respect to the employability of workers with a chronic illness.

