

Promoting Healthy Work for Employees with Chronic Illness – Public Health and Work (PHWork)

Analysis of Models of Good Practice

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Authors Anja Dijkman, TNO
Kristin ten Have, TNO
Rob Gründemann, TNO
Cees Wevers, TNO

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1 Introduction

The ENWHP project and campaign Promoting Healthy Work for Employees with Chronic Illness (PH Work) should contribute towards the implementation of effective workplace health practices within corporate policies of enterprises in Europe. More specific the project should stimulate activities and policies in companies for:

- retaining and encouraging return to work (RTW) of chronically ill employees.
- preventing employees of moving into disability or early retirement.

To contribute to an improvement of social and economic outcomes, like better quality of life and functioning, reduced costs because of lower absence rate, etc.

PH Work campaign will look into current good practices, as to motivate and stimulate employers and employees on the promotion of healthy work for all.

Running time of ENWHP PH Work project is from April 2011 till February 2013.

Good practices PH Work:

The aim of collecting good practices in all collaborating countries in the PH Work project is to develop and disseminate good practice guidelines for WHP strategies with regard to the retention/return to work of chronically ill employees.

Good practices (N=22) have been collected and analyzed in 10 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Romania, Scotland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Analysis of all good practices should give (qualitative) input for Germany to write the EU campaign brochure with guidelines how healthy work for employees with chronic diseases can be promoted..

In this report we successively give fist in chapter 2 an overview of all the Models of Good Practice which have been collected. Further, in order to analyze the 22 EU Good practices we have been looking into:

- General factors of success.
- Need for specific conditions.

Finally we give short descriptions of all good practices. Full descriptions of the cases, you can find in the separate appendix.

2 Overview of the collected Models of Good Practice

Country	Case	Company / Organisation name	Sector	Company size	Main activity in this case	Target group
Austria	Social Coaching	Oögk	Health insurance	1,000 employees	Prevention Return to work	employees
Austria	Fit2Work	Fit2Work is a cooperation project of institutions (a.o. Ministry of Social Affairs)	Social affairs/employment service/social insurance	700	Retention of workability; Return to work after long-time sickness absence; support in finding alternative solutions	People unemployed or absent from work because of sickness; workers
Belgium	Disability management in Belgian companies	Prevent	Institute for occupational safety and health	36	Implement disability management policy in several companies and develop guidelines for DM.	Companies in healthcare, building & chemical industry
Belgium	Vocational rehabilitation	Campus Herk-de-Stad	Rehabilitation centre, part of a large hospital	2.900	Integration of vocational rehabilitation into the standard rehabilitation program from the start	Staff and patients of rehabilitation centre
Denmark	CSR and WHP	Grundfos	Manufacture of pumps	4,300 employees in Denmark; 16,000 worldwide	Retention of work for employees; Integration to work for jobless people	Employees and persons referred from surrounding municipalities

Denmark	The way back	Huset Venture	Social-economic enterprise	90	Employing people with reduced ability to work Support people by providing courses for people to return to work	Employees; Unemployed people with reduced ability to work
Denmark	The large Return-to-work project	The national Research Centre for the Working Environment	Governmental research institute	155	Decrease the long-term sick leave and enable return to work	Citizens receiving sickness benefit
France	Strategic approach for sustaining people with chronic illnesses at work	Delpyrat	Production of poultry meat products	2,000	Implement an approach towards workers with a chronic illness and to sustain them at work	management and HR; occupational nurses/doctors; production and maintenance manager; H&S committee, healthcare professionals
France	Implementation of a website dedicated to work and chronic illness	Aract Aquitaine	Association for improvement of working conditions	12	Provide information on six chronic diseases; Provide a working tool for all stakeholders retaining work for people with chronic illness	Companies (management and HR) Healthcare professionals, patients organizations and employees
Germany	Disability Management	Ford Werke	Car industry	24,000 employees; 164,000 worldwide	Employability of all employees by a diversity approach	All employees

Germany	Two model projects: Regional initiative and Integrative Counseling Network – Return-to-work	German Pension Fund	Pension insurance	15,000 employees	Create an low-threshold consulting service for employers and employees	Employers, especially in small and medium enterprises.
Germany	‘BeReKo’ – the company rehab concept	Salzgitter AG	Steel and technology company	25,000	Prevention, rapid recovery and rehabilitation	employees with musculoskeletal and mental disorders
The Netherlands	Practice what you preach	Drukkerij Wedding	Printing company	45	Inclusive diversity policy and an active health policy. Resulted in improved relationship with clients	All
The Netherlands	Human rights policy as the basics for an inclusive policy for people with disabilities	Monsanto Vegetable Seeds Division	Agricultural	140 at the plant in Enkhuizen (Netherlands); 21,000 employees worldwide	HR policy and recruitment focusses on skills. If one is capable for the job; disabilities do not matter. Workplace health promotion is closely linked to employability promotion. Coaching facilities are offered for supervisors/ management on how to deal with disabled employees.	All Special support for supervisors and management

The Netherlands	Qualified patient-coaches (who have experienced the disease themselves) to coach patients in return-to – work and reintegration	Centrum Chronisch ziekten en werk (Centre for chronic diseases and work)	Re-integration services and job coaching	15 fully trained and qualified coaches, trained by 5 patient organizations (Cancer, Epilepsy, MS, Fibromyalgia, RA)	The 15 patient coaches are hired by reintegration and return to job bureau USG Start, sheltered employment firm Sallcon and a small agency Beekmans & van de Ven. Results in 2011: 190 intake; from 132 coaching contract ended: 60 people in regular, voluntary jobs; 72 no placement, fully disabled, condition deteriorated, employer did not agree.	Persons the mentioned illnesses; unemployed with a disability benefit from UWV; unemployed with social security benefit from municipality
Romania	Social and professional integration of persons with disabilities (in particular HIV-pos)	Util Deco Authorized Shelter Unit - Close to you Foundation	Non-governmental organization	77	Authorized shelter unit to help young people with disabilities to become independent persons by offering continuous vocational training and practical skills development (IT, office supplies, stationery, hygiene products, personal protective equipment etc.)	young people with disabilities, especially HIV positive persons.

Scotland	Supporting Attendance at Work	Argyll Community Housing Association	Provision of affordable social housing across the areas of Argyll and Bute	207	Employer helps employees to remain at work through making adjustments to meet these needs, for example 1) establish early contact 2) conduct absent review meetings (once per month) 3) refer to employee counseling service	No, all staff is covered
Scotland	Occupational Health department interventions on attendance management and safety & Risk management issues	The call centre of John Lewis Partnership	Retail sector	600 employees at the call center; 76,500 employees in the UK	Interventions on life style issues: fitness; weight loss; blood pressure; alcohol drugs and the importance of breakfast. Standard screening for everyone. For employees with chronic conditions: self-management facilities.	Open to all
Scotland	'Good employment practices'	Thomas Tunnock Ltd. Biscuit Manufacturer, Uddingston, Glasgow Scotland. (Since 1890 employing local workforce)	Food manufacturing	550	Rolling program on Health promotion events with special attention for attendance and work and chronic illness, when possible change of duties	Open to all

Slovakia	Centre of additional works and activities	Iron Work, Podbrezova	Steel company	3.000	To help the older employees with lowered working activities which due to chronicle health problems cannot work at their original posts. Activities are for example centered to the cultivation of green areas round the enterprise, as well to make full some missing professions.	Older employees, and employees with chronic diseases
Slovenia	Program for disabled and employees with chronic illness	DARS d.d	Manage and maintain Slovenian Freeways.	1.252	Training the direct heads in managing employees with health problems. Arranging visits by HR specialists once per month (early detection); individual approach; In house training system, f.e. workshops for personal health maintenance	Employees whose ability to work has changed (disabled and employees wirth chronic disease)
Slovenia	“Health for Success’ (Zdravje za Uspeh)	NARAVNI Park Terme (Moravske Toplice Terme 3000 spa)	Spa and wellness centre	374	The typical chronic diseases resulting from negative effects of work on health, old age, or other reasons have been identified for each group. Health promotions and awareness programs are organized to offer help in the first stage of the chronic illness	All employees, and monitoring specific groups of employees cleaning staff, kitchen staff, wait staff, health services providers etc.)

3 General factors of success

Factors which stimulate the success of an activity or implementation we have found in several cases are:

- An integral approach: a close cooperation, coordination and communication with internal and external stakeholders.
- Embedding RTW strategies in the overall strategy of the company. Job retention and return-to-work activities often demand individual solutions, but they have to be embedded in a broad approach. Workplace Health Promotion or Corporate Social Responsibility strategies are suited for this purpose.
- Keep in contact regularly with employees on sick leave.
- Focus on capacities/resources instead of on medical diagnoses of limitations/deficiencies of the employee. Think in solutions not in problems.
- Start an activity or policy from a positive principle. Campaign and information should consist of a ‘can do’ approach, and avoid a ‘Can’t do approach’.
- Create and organize an activating role for the people involved, as: encouraging competences, make an appeal to personal responsibilities.
- Be aware of taboos and prejudices and make sure attention is paid breaking through existing taboos from colleagues and employer.
- look for a WIN-WIN approach, for example work together with other initiatives and policies in society.
- General health interventions and campaigns have often a positive impact on wellbeing and health of employees. Stimulating people to participate has a positive effect on companies corporate culture (‘people value’).
- If possible, flexibility in working hours.

4 Need for specific conditions

In almost all cases special attention is paid (and described as a boundary condition) to conditions on organizational and communication level, as:

- Information can be easily found and is available within the organization.
- Transparency and open communication.
- Activities and policies are closely connect to the needs of persons involved (target group).
- The target group is involved in developing and setting up activities and policies.
- When sick leave appears, intervene as soon as possible.
- On the level of the individual cases there is a need for a mentor or a case manager.

5 Short descriptions of all good practices

Austria

- OÖGKK employs a high number of people suffering from chronic illness. Three main activities are offered in the Social Coaching approach: return-to-work talks, evaluation and adaptation of the workplace. Management, work council and occupational health practitioner are involved in this process. Aim of the social coaching is prevention, reintegration after sickness absence and encouraging the return to work of chronically ill employees. The chairman of the work council suffers from a chronic illness and therefore he is seen as an expert on this topic. The measures are not only limited for people with physical disabilities but were also created for people with mental problems or employees who had stayed absent for a longer period of time due to long-time sickness. The analysis of the opinion survey, inquiring subjective health condition and satisfaction with the workplace, shows the people suffering from chronic illness feel accepted and integrated at the OÖGKK.
- Fit2Work is a cooperation project of several important Austrian institutions. Reason for the programme was the rising number of people retired due to chronic illnesses. Fit2Work coaches people, whose work-ability is at risk because of illness or people, who have not been able to work for a long time and need help in returning to work or finding another workplace. People, participating in the program, have to be proactive and make their own decisions. The Fit2Work coaches serve as consultants only. The two steps in this approach are: 1. First contact and orientation; 2. Casemanagement (Coaching; Physical and mental examination and evaluation; Exploration of fields of activity; Profiling of a new “development-plan”).

Belgium

- Disability Management is internationally accepted as a method to facilitate the RTW process. The project of Prevent in Belgium aimed to guide companies in different sectors (healthcare, building & chemical industry) to implement a DM policy and from this experience, to develop guidelines for other companies. During a year, the project team guided the companies to help them implement a DM policy. Furthermore, a study was conducted to clarify the legal framework in which a reintegration process takes places (on the individual level) but also to get an overview of the administrative, financial and practical support for companies that want to take action in this domain. Based on these company projects and on research 4 manuals were developed (1 for each sector and 1

general) to help other companies to set up a DM policy. The manuals provide general information but also offer guidance as well as examples, indicate pitfalls and success factors for each of the sectors.

- Break up the separation of the medical process and return to work activities. Regard both activities as one process. An early intervention is important in the RTW process. The vocational rehabilitation should be integrated in the standard rehabilitation process. A rehabilitation centre in Belgium trained all paramedical staff to focus on work ability in an early stage during the rehabilitation process. This meant a change of mindset, because until recently, it was believed that ‘sick’ people didn’t need to be bothered with work related issues in an early stage of the rehabilitation process.

Denmark

- Grundfos, a large manufacturer of pumps, has a long tradition in social responsibility. The company has a systematic approach at retaining both own employees and persons referred from six surrounding municipalities. These partnerships were formed on a win-win-base. The core in the partnership agreements are a clear and distinct division of tasks between company and municipality and a set of procedures guiding the day-to-day cooperation. On the bases of practical experiences a set of tools and models have been developed. One is a four phase model from referral to integration in the workplace:
 - Referral: The person’s interests, competences and experience is mapped and these are matched with company needs and abilities.
 - Inclusion: Development of a plan for training and work short term and long term. Training of vocational and other needs. Testing and training in actual work situations.
 - Evaluation and adjustments.
 - Integration into the workplace in a job on ordinary or on special terms.

Outcomes of the good practice has been testified through a number of interviews with employees and stakeholders involved. On the bases of that a handbook on inclusion in companies has been written with the support of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The aim is to inspire other companies to take on their corporate social responsibility.

- Huset venture in Denmark, in the beginning a sheltered workshop, has developed into an enterprise, that is running on normal market terms. About 80% of the employees are in flex- and sheltered jobs. The company doesn’t focus on the disease or the deficiencies of the employees. The company’s culture

promotes solidarity, equality and acceptance. The company has become a place where all can use their skills en and explore their full potentials.

- The National Research Centre for the Working Environment started the action plan Return to Work. The aim of the project is to decrease the long-term sick leave and enable a quick and sustainable return to work for citizens receiving sickness benefit. The project is funded by the Danish Prevention Fund and the Danish Ministry of Employment and is a large scale research driven implementation project. A total of 22 municipalities, covering all regions in Denmark, have been selected to participate in the project. As participants in the intervention project they have to set up a RTW-coordinator, a RTW-team, and a formal cooperation with a clinical unit. The general approach of the program is:
 - Cross-disciplinary clarification of the individual sick-leave case
 - Coordination between the employer, the health care system and the job centres
 - CounselingThe effort is tailored specifically to meet the need of each participant.

France

- The site of Saint Sever of the Delpeyrat Group, manufacturing and selling ‘foies gras’, implemented a strategic and innovative approach aiming at sustaining at work people with chronic illnesses. The company management strongly showed its willingness to implement a different approach towards workers with a chronic illness, and to sustain them 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 their 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 at work employees with a chronic illness.
- In France the first website has been developed dedicated to chronic illnesses and their impact on work. The complete network of actors that should be involved in the rehabilitation process is represented. The content of het website has been built with the help of 30 workers suffering from a chronic disease. They also share their life experiences through videos online.

Germany

- Ford Werke (Germany) was honored several times for their outstanding diversity programme. The company has an individual ability-oriented approach, responsibility is transferred to operational managers, with the support of the Disability Management Team. Priority in all measures is given to the individuality of the Ford employees and their right to self-determination.
- The German Pension Fund built up a functioning, efficient and integrative counseling network for return-to-work, to improve the coordination between all stakeholders in the rehabilitation process in a selected model region. Target was to create an low-threshold consulting service for employers and employees, which was supplemented with concrete offers of help. Especially for small and medium businesses the network provided the possibility to initiate the return-to-work process and to complete it successfully.
- The German steel company, Salzgitter AG, set up a program for prevention, rapid recovery and rehabilitation for employees with musculoskeletal and mental disorders. Target of Salzgitter is that all employees should be able to work healthy, motivated and value-adding until retirement. The programme is a comprehensive system with different measures. All measures are evaluated.

The Netherlands

- Deliberately create and invest in a diverse workforce (including people with distance from the labor market, and people with disabilities), and stimulate team responsibility resulted in higher profit (WIN-WIN situation at Printing Company Wedding in The Netherlands). The higher profit is a result of 1) more commitment of employees and also 2) more commitment and appreciation of clients/society.
- Human rights are part of company policy (WIN-WIN situation at Monsanto Vegetable Seeds division/The Netherlands). All employees participate in an annual computer based training to create awareness on the importance of Human Rights. These activities result in a HR policy whereas people are selected on their skills. Disabilities, or a past with drug addiction or detention are not an issue. Coaching support is given by Opmaat, a Dutch service bureau.

Romania

- The ‘Close to you Foundation’ (financed by the Social Economy department) in Romania (WIN-WIN situation) stimulates and takes care of young people with disabilities (especially HIV positive persons) to become independent by working at the unit Util Deco, whereas the economic activities take place. These

activities match with what is required in the market (bookbinding, printing, archiving; IT; Handicraft; tailoring).

Scotland

- In the Scottish project ‘Supporting attendance at Work’ a special case manager works on building up trust between employee and employer, in order to help employees to remain at work through making adjustments to meet these needs. (An integral approach). Cooperation with joint trade unions who represent employees is implemented.
- In a Scottish call center health promotion had a general positive impact on wellbeing and reduced (sick) absence rates. (General health interventions)
- In a Scottish food company in general open communication between management and staff has led to good working relations. Prior to a chronically medical condition being identified, employees may request time off to attend medical appointments (flexibility and awareness)

Slovakia

- A big national enterprise ‘Iron Work’ in Slovakia created special work tasks for the elderly employees (often with chronically health problems) , so they can remain working (part of CSR policy)

Slovenia

- DARS company in Slovenia, responsible for Slovenian freeways, employed 47 disabled people (on a total of 300 employees). Also 50-60% of the employees suffer from chronic illness (according authorized medicine physicians). They established a program of dealing with employees whose ability to work has changed: the disabled and people with chronic illness. Close cooperation with several disciplines and external partners is organized and early detection is made possible through direct contact of the employee with the (HR) specialist at all work locations. Close contacts of the HR specialist with employee as well as his/her direct supervisor, makes it possible to intervene quick when needed. Special programs are running to maintain as healthy as possible for the job.