

## GOOD PRACTICE THE NETHERLANDS

### Qualified patient-coaches to coach patients in return-to-work

#### Contact person (NCO)

**Name and organisation**

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#### General information about the MOGP

**Name of organisation and short description**

Centrum Chronisch Ziek en Werk (CZ&W), Eindhoven  
Centre for chronic diseases and work, re-integration services and job coaching.

**Contact person**

info@cczw.nl

**Website**

www.centrumchronischziekenwerk.nl/

#### Information on the good practice 'Qualified patient-coaches to coach patients in return-to-work'

**Aims**

Counseling by experienced patient-coaches, hired by three qualified reintegration agencies.  
Qualified patient-coaches (who have experienced the disease themselves) to coach patients in return-to-work and reintegration.



## Target group

- Persons with chronic illnesses (Cancer, Epilepsy, Multiple sclerosis, Fibromyalgia, Rheumatoid arthritis)
- Employees (through individual negotiations the coaching / guidance is paid for by the employer)
- Unemployed with a disability benefit from UWV (coaching / guidance is paid by UWV through the Individual Re-integration Budget – the individual chooses his own reintegration agency, with a fixed budget)
- Unemployed with a social security benefit from the municipality (coaching / guidance is paid by the municipality).

## Description

### Unique features of the initiative

#### 1. Led by patient organisations using patient-coaches

In the Netherlands return-to-work and reintegration services are operating in a private market. Within this setting, in 2009 five patient organisations joined hands to organize within CZ&W job coaching on a commercial basis by qualified patient-coaches who have experience with the particular disease themselves.

#### 2. Quality certification

The patient-coaches are professionally trained by CZ&W to combine coaching / guidance competences with their own experiences with the illness. These patient-coaches are subsequently hired by three dedicated reintegration service agencies. CZ&W has chosen these three agencies by a public tender based on four criteria:

- Officially certified;
- Experienced professional reintegration coaches;
- Vast network potential with employers and the labour market;
- Experience with coaching of people with a chronic illness.

Deliberately, CZ&W also did choose a large nationwide agency (USGRestart), an agency associated with a sheltered employment firm (Sallcon) and a dedicated small sized agency (Beekmans & van de Ven).

#### 3. Broad experience

Through the initiative the experience of 5 patient organisations is combined. These five organisations represent patients with rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, fibromyalgia and cancer. Nationwide coverage is guaranteed through the contracts with three service agencies and 15 fully trained and qualified patient-coaches. CZ&W also runs a helpdesk by telephone.

## Why is it a good practice?

1. Led by patient organisations using patient-coaches;
2. Quality certification;
3. Broad experience.

(See description above for more information.)



# Results

## Evaluation

Results 2011:

Intake and application 190		Coaching contract ended 132			
Cancer	16	Contract in regular job	32	No coaching contract, UWV or employer did not agree	33
Epilepsy	16	Contract in sheltered employment	3	No placement at all	14
MS	15	Voluntary work	11	Condition deteriorated	13
Fibromyalgia	43	Trainee, temporary job	2	Fully disabled	22
RA	100	Self-employed	2		

In view of the precarious position on the labour market and the multi-problem issues of most of the applicants, the success rate is favourable. Of the 132 coaching contracts that ended in 2011, 37 (28%) did find a job or got self-employed, while 13 (10%) were participating in voluntary work or in a traineeship. Unfortunately, 33 (25%) were unable to negotiate a reintegration contract with UWV or the employer. That also the health condition may be precarious, is shown by the fact that this condition deteriorated in 35 cases (27%).

### Incentives for success

Unique features:

- Creating new employment perspectives in the service economy of persons with a chronic illness being self-employed.
- Mainstreaming the know-how of experienced patient-coaches.
- More economic and transparent services.
- Supporting network for patient-coaches (information database, certification, business support etc.).

### Barriers for success

Due to massive cuts in public reintegration budgets, the reintegration market is downsizing rapidly. As a consequence, the hiring of the CZ&W patient-coaches by the contracted three reintegration agencies is also declining rapidly. Therefore CZ&W developed a new strategy. Instead of a dependency of being hired by the agencies, CZ&W will support patient-coaches to engage directly in contracts with employers and UWV/communities on a self-employed basis. When necessary, these coaches could then employ selected services of reintegration agencies (e.g. in the case of an application or computer training course). This business concept is more economic and puts the patient-coaches in the forefront. The already well developed training course and individual certification process of CZ&W will guarantee the professional quality.

