



Work.
Adapted for all.
Move Europe.



GOOD PRACTICE POLAND NIOM - Vocal organ dysfunctions

Contact person (NCO)

Name and organisation

Elzbieta Korzeniowska and Eliza Goszczyńska –
Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine

E-mail address and website

whpp@imp.lodz.pl; promocja@imp.lodz.pl
www.imp.lodz.pl

General information about the MOGP

Name of organisation and short description

The Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine (NIOM) in Poland is an independent multi-disciplinary research and development centre covering various areas of occupational and environmental health.

Contact person

Department of Audiology and Phoniatics Clinic of NIOM.

Website

<http://www.programyzdrowotne.pl>



Information on the good practice “Return to work of people with occupational vocal organ dysfunctions”

Aims

General objective of the practice is to enable teachers with occupational vocal disorders to return to work. Its achievement is possible via:

1. Improvement of quality and access to rehabilitation of chronic vocal disorders (current methods of occupational voice therapy);
2. Development of a complex programme of therapy of voice disorders for employees exploiting their voice at work, which engages speech therapists, psychologists and physiotherapists as well as concerning out-patient and in-patient.

Target group

The direct target group of the practice are teachers who, due to working a long time in this job, suffer from vocal organ disorders causing their professional inactivity. At the stage of the practice planning, vocal organ diseases of occupational origin were diagnosed among 600-800 teachers in Poland annually.

Additionally, the practice (mostly its educational part) is addressed to physicians and speech therapists whose professional knowledge and know-how is crucial to guarantee effective treatment of vocal organ disorders.

Furthermore, the educational part of the programme is addressed to the management of schools who are responsible for the proper organisation of school environment and thus the prevention of this occupational disease.

Description

The practice was planned in four general phases:

- 1) The first one was a scientific part aiming at summarizing knowledge on voice organ disorders (literature review) and recognising causes of such diseases among teachers (questionnaire-based study).
- 2) The second part of the practice focused on implementation: development of a rehabilitation programme, its pilot testing, summary of its outcomes and drawing conclusions concerning organisation of such activities in future.
- 3) The third part was an educational one: trainings / conferences aiming at the development of various professionals' qualifications in supporting teachers with the occupational disease to recover and return to work; preparation of educational materials.
- 4) The fourth part concerned dissemination.



Why is it a good practice?

First of all, the good practice focused on a chronic illness. Vocal organ diseases of occupational origin had been the most commonly diagnosed of all occupational diseases in Poland since 1996. In 2008 nearly one quarter (23%) of all diagnosed occupational diseases were vocal disorders.

The second reason is the innovative character of the good practice. For the first time in Poland such a comprehensive programme aimed at rehabilitation after an occupational disease, enabling return to work, was developed. What is more, for the first time specialist therapy regarding the treatment of vocal organ diseases was incorporated.

And last but not least, the evaluation of the programme provides insight into the process and outcome data.

Results

Evaluation

To assure high quality of the rehabilitation programme, it was verified against the criteria for a model health promotion programme, such as: 1) a well-planned and organised programme; 2) active participation of employees, freedom of attendance; 3) a combination of individual influences (activities directly addressed to the individual) and improvements in his/her occupational environment (both social and organisational ones).

The effectiveness of the therapy in the context of vocal organ condition improvement was verified by the use of specialist, well-chosen diagnostic methods. Voice self-assessment by the rehabilitation programme attendees' was also carried out. The evaluation confirms a high effectiveness of intensive voice rehabilitation both in in-patient and outpatient circumstances.

The quality of the education phase of the practice was assessed by its participants via adequate evaluation tools.

Incentives for success

The pilot rehabilitation programme was organised in a spa in Ciechocinek having a big variety of treatment facilities and services for people suffering from chronic vocal disorders.

What is more, the out-patient rehabilitation was supported by the Regional Occupational Medicine Centres.

Its implementation was possible due to the partial financial support of the European Union (under the European Social Fund: Human Capital Programme).

Barriers for success

-



work. adapted for all. move europe is co-funded by the European Commission under the Public Health Programme