

EMPLOYMENT AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS. TOWARDS INCLUSION, INTEGRATION AND REINTEGRATION OF PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS IN THE WORKPLACE AND IMPROVEMENT OF WORKERS' HEALTH AND WELLBEING: THE CHRODIS PLUS WORKBOX

(Organised by Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Neurologico Carlo Besta, Italy; Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL); Instituto de Salud Carlos III, Spain; Semmelweis University Budapest, Hungary- 12 November 2019)

BACKGROUND

The increasing prevalence of chronic conditions in Europe's working age population underlines the need for a European strategy towards inclusion, integration and reintegration of employees in the workplace as well as towards the development of actions to support workers' health and wellbeing. The JA CHRODIS PLUS Policy Dialogue on aimed to identify the practical steps for EU policy to support employment for people with chronic diseases and to address the impact of chronic diseases in the employment sector.

OBJECTIVES

To bring together EU stakeholders around the benefits of the workplace inclusion, integration and reintegration of people with chronic conditions; To present the CHRODIS PLUS Workbox on Employment and Chronic Conditions which includes a Training Tool for managers on workplace inclusion and work ability and a Toolkit for fostering employees' wellbeing, health and work participation (which is freely available in different languages on the CHRODIS website).

CONCLUSIONS AND MAIN ACTION POINTS

In terms of concrete suggestions on how EU policy can support the implementation of these instruments, several points were raised and suggested for future activities.

- The first opportunity is through integrating workplace health in the 'state of health in the EU cycle'. (i.e. 'Health at a glance' report and country reports).
- The second suggestion is that many aspects explored by the Training for managers in particular can be taken up in the EU Semester process, proposing recommendations along these lines for reform to Members States in the areas of health and employment for example.
- A third avenue of action is through public awareness campaigns such as the anti-discrimination awareness campaign currently ran by the Disability unit within the European Commission which, as part of their campaign, is organising local events for national employers on reasonable accommodation.
- The fourth possible suggestion is the promotion of the Workbox for employment and chronic conditions through activities with social partners.
- The fifth suggestion is to try, each stakeholder through its means, to reach out to public external programs that offer support to small businesses.
- The sixth suggestion concerns the EU that needs to keep enforcing effective compliance with health and safety risks in workplaces. Employers must assess risks, particularly to vulnerable workers, including those with CDs. It is not always known that there is this specific focus on vulnerable workers.

- Last important role the EU can play is cooperation and joint policy to bring public health, OSHA and employment services together.