

## Move Europe with us... and invest in sustainable employability!

The benefits of providing healthy work for people with chronic conditions, according to their abilities, are multiple: for the business, the person and society as a whole.

### Why support this campaign?

- Fewer sickness absences, so fewer lost workdays and related costs.
- Retain the experience and knowledge of a worker with a chronic illness or disability.
- Gain competitive advantage through a boost in productivity.
- Reduce healthcare costs and avoid the cost of hiring and training a replacement.
- Create a positive environment, where people enjoy working.
- Avoid the potential cost of litigation, resulting from statutory protection.

### What can workers gain?

Job retention or return to work can do wonders for the mental health of chronically ill workers, by having their contribution valued. A return to work may even aid full recovery. Workers also gain from earning their full income again, which in turn leads to a better quality of life.

### Benefits to society

Keeping people with chronic illness at work and getting them back to work can be seen as an investment in economic productivity and social cohesion!

## What to expect from this campaign?

Several **TOOLS** have been developed to help everyone involved in supporting workers with chronic illnesses to put in place a comprehensive health promotion strategy.

### 1) The European guide for good practice (guidelines)

'Promoting healthy work for employees with chronic illness: A guide to good practice' presents further information for employers, including a step-by-step action plan.

### 2) Models of good practice

The gathering and dissemination of models of good practice promotes awareness and provides real life examples for employers to learn from.

### 3) European and national campaigns

A Europe-wide campaign – also implemented at the national level – to convince companies to put the guidelines at the heart of their human resources management policies and practices.

### 4) Recommendation paper

The results of the campaign, and policy recommendations on job retention and return to work will be combined in a paper to be presented to the stakeholders.



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# Promoting healthy work for employees with chronic illness

The 9th ENWHP initiative

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## What is ENWHP?

The European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (ENWHP) was formally established in 1996. Since then, it has been at the leading edge of developments in European workplace health promotion. ENWHP has instigated a number of successful joint initiatives.

Today, members from 28 European countries share the ENWHP's common vision of:

### healthy employees in healthy organisations

The Network Secretariat is based at Prevent, the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health:



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Prevent also coordinates the ENWHP's 9th initiative:

### Work. Adapted for all. Move Europe

The campaign is co-funded by the EU Commission under the Public Health Programme (2008-2013).



Funded by  
the Health Programme  
of the European Union

## Job retention and return to work of chronically ill workers – Why is it important?

In Europe, we live in a context of demographic change and recent economic downturn, with a rapidly ageing workforce, which will lead to a labour shortage in the long run.

Meanwhile, nearly a quarter of the working population in 27 European countries say they suffer from a chronic illness, and a fifth report long-term health issues. Thus, these conditions affect a relatively large part of the European workforce.

Faced with labour shortages and a high percentage of workers suffering from health problems and chronic illnesses, there is a good case for investing in workplace health and sustainable employability.

The workplace directly influences people's health, because people spend a lot of their time at work. It is the perfect setting to promote a healthy lifestyle. Even more so, because the economic performance of many companies – and by extension, the overall economy – depends on a motivated and healthy workforce!

### Chronically ill workers often find it difficult

- to stay at work, or
- to return to work after a period of absence

People who drop out of work due to chronic illness often do not return to work, and move into disability or early retirement. If they do return, they often face discrimination such as a loss of income.

**Common examples of chronic illnesses:**  
diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, cancer, heart failure, musculoskeletal disorders, hepatitis, HIV, depression, alcohol and drug abuse etc.

## Work. Adapted for all. Move Europe

In 2011 ENWHP launched a new campaign:

### Promoting healthy work for employees with chronic illness

ENWHP will introduce effective workplace health practices and stimulate workplace initiatives through:

- creating a favourable culture
- providing guidance and a number of tools for employers to support workers with chronic illnesses.

#### Two phases

- 1) Data collection of existing sustainable work strategies, policies and best practices => informing the development of best practice guidelines.
- 2) A Europe-wide campaign to disseminate these guidelines.

#### The objective

is to promote healthy, suitable work for people with chronic illnesses and disabilities – either by helping them stay in a job or by supporting their return to work.

### A European campaign

Under the leadership of Prevent, the 'Work. Adapted for all. Move Europe' campaign aims to:

- increase public awareness and knowledge
- convince European stakeholders and enterprises that investing in programmes to support workers with chronic illness and disabilities is worthwhile
- appeal to employers to play an active role in job retention and return to work of chronically ill workers
- establish a cross-border exchange of knowledge among experts and stakeholders
- influence policymaking at the EU and/or national level.