

Return

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AND RESEARCH

BACK TO WORK STRATEGIES FOR WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES

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GERMANY HAS SCHEDULED ITS FIRST CDMP CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS. – *To date, more than 200 people have registered to write the CDMP certification exam. The chair of the German Certification Council, Norbert Weis, CEO of one of the largest German WCBs, together with Friedrich Mehrhoff, PhD, director of rehabilitation for the German Federation of WCBs, came to Canada to meet with representatives of the Canadian Certification Council and Assessment Strategies Inc., the Canadian test agency in Ottawa. While in Vancouver, they attended the presentation of CDMP and CRTWC certificates to Deborah Payment and Lynn Stevens, both employees of the WCB of BC. L-R: Friedrich Mehrhoff, David Anderson, Lynn Stevens, Wolfgang Zimmermann, Deborah Payment, Norbert Weis and Ralph McGinn.*

Federal government shows confidence in audit tool

Canada

The Labour Program Branch, within Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), recently licensed the use of the NIDMAR audit tool – a move that fits well with the mandate of the labour program.

“We looked at a number of other existing tools before getting NIDMAR’s,” says Abdou Saouab, leader of the Federal Disability Management Strategy. “Most of the audit tools that we examined are employer-driven and use a cost benefit analysis, and therefore focus on how to reduce costs. They might show where you are wasting money, but they don’t tell you where to improve on good disability management – that is, how to invest smarter in human resources.”

What the Labour Program Branch wanted was a tool that is in concordance with the International Code of Practice, which was a Canadian initiative submitted by

the government of Canada to the International Labour Organization in 2000.

“The NIDMAR audit tool is based on best practices, and it goes into detail in a number of areas that are key factors for successful DM strategies,” says Saouab.

Another difference is the way the NIDMAR tool protects the integrity of the system. “Because the audit process is based on consensus reached by management and worker representatives, and because it requires a thorough review of evidence, the results cannot be tampered with,” explains Saouab. “Once you enter the data, the system computes scores and provides the results without allowing the introduction of new changes. That is, any additional information has to be presented in the recommendation section.”

The Labour Program Branch/HRSDC intends to use the audit tool in two ways. “In organizations where

Small province has big ambitions in disability management

IN A RELATIVELY SMALL JURISDICTION SUCH AS NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, THE RESOURCES AREN'T AVAILABLE FOR RE-INVENTING THE WHEEL. That's why the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission (the Commission) of Newfoundland and Labrador embraced NIDMAR's set of best practices for disability management and became licensed last July.

"There was a definite need in our province because many employers have some part of a Return to Work program, but there is not an overall best practice standard that we can point to," says Valerie Royle, the Commission's Executive Director of Worker Services. "For us it means having an accredited, accepted, best practice that employers in this province can aspire to, through a voluntary audit process."



Although the Commission recognized this need, designing a best practice, accredited return to work audit program on their own was just not possible. "We didn't have the time or resources to develop this ourselves," she says. "We would have needed five to 10 years to pull it all together. But NIDMAR has a proven product that our market needs."

The jurisdiction might be small, but the goal is not. "Our vision is to become the best workplace insurance provider in the country," says Royle. "We want to make workplaces safer, and send workers back to work as early and safely as possible."

And the ambitions don't end there. "I think that we can be a centre for excellence in the country, and an example for the world," adds Royle. "We really feel that it's doable in our current environment."

In a way, being small is an advantage, because the province has manageable numbers. "Seventy to 80 percent of our non-government workforce is employed by approximately 350 employers," explains Royle. "This means that, with the audit tool, a level of consistency can be brought to disability management and return to work strategies throughout the province more quickly than in other provinces where the workforce is dispersed among many more employers." ■

Anne Marie Hann, CEO of the WHSCC of Newfoundland and Labrador and Wolfgang Zimmermann

Welcome Ralph McGinn, P.Eng., chair of the Global Audit Commission



With the international licensing of the audit tool, we are extremely pleased that someone with a broad background both nationally and internationally in the area of prevention as well as disability management and labour management issues has accepted this important task, which will guide the application and governance of the CBDMA throughout the world.

— Brian Payne, co-chair of the IDMSC



New licensees in Canada

“I REALLY BELIEVE IN THE AUDIT, and I have a strong belief that it’s the best way to help a company come to grips with what they’re doing from an

objective standpoint,” says Dr. Garry Corbett, who, with his business partner Mike Carr, have recently been licensed under Dr. Garry Corbett Inc.

“We’re getting situations now where companies are coming to us and they’ve heard about disability management, but they don’t know where we’re going,” he adds. “So they ask us to come in, do an audit, and give them a roadmap.”

That roadmap is particularly useful for companies that find it difficult to separate their strengths from their weaknesses. “They’re too close to it,” explains Corbett. “But I can go in and do the audit, then tell them, ‘Here’s how your company compares to best practices.’ It helps them discover where they’re really good, and where they need to improve.”

Also national president of the Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Professionals, Dr. Corbett is passionate about the audit and about the steady increase of auditors. “The more auditors we get who are talking about it, the more we’ll build awareness.”

Credible and impartial

“Licensing gives us the credibility to go in and assess in an impartial manner,” says Rob Ingraham, DMS-Oncidium’s president. “Many unions appreciate the fact that we’re doing a consensus-based audit, because we are impartial and pose no threat to the union membership.”

Unions also appreciate that the audit measures factual findings against internationally recognized standards. “By going in and doing an audit first, you develop a real understanding of the unique disability management issues facing an organization,” says Ingraham.

Since DMS-Oncidium positions itself as a national provider that offers one-stop shopping in the field of disability management for government agencies, crown corporations, large employers, and large unions, impartiality and credibility are critical. “NIDMAR gives us the credibility we need, because they have developed

an internationally recognized audit process and are a nationally recognized licensing body in the field of disability management,” adds Ingraham.

Constantly evolving

At DMA Reability, managing partner Jan King sees the audit tool as proactive way to address disability management issues. “When you look at global assessment tools and disability management trends, this is a starting point for companies to recognize where they sit, what their current practices are, and to set their goals,” she says. “It encourages organizations to utilize internal expertise and resources and to augment with community based professionals.”

As well, controlling rising extended healthcare costs is one of the benefits of the audit tool. “As you look at health care costs and changing legislation impacting auto insurance and Ontario Health Insurance Plan funded services, we’re going to see more and more responsibility fall on the employers,” she explains. “And the audit tool is a proactive way to implement a structured plan that will impact these extended health care costs and global disability related costs within the work environment.”

Scratching the surface

Acclaim Ability Management Inc. takes a holistic approach to their work. “We help people match their abilities with their employment,” says Tony Fasulo, managing partner. “We focus on maximizing people’s abilities.”

Now with its recent licensing, the company can add the consensus-based audit to its tool belt. “It will allow us to go in and give the employer the blueprint for helping themselves to meet quality standards of disability management,” says Fasulo.

“There’s a lot of interest in Ontario,” he adds. “We have audits lined up now. In fact, we need to get some more of our people certified. We’re in a growth position – for us, it’s very positive. Employers are becoming more and more aware of the need to have disability management models. And even with all the awareness, we’re just scratching the surface.” ■

Certifications in Germany are just the beginning

WITH ABOUT 610 MILLION DISABLED PEOPLE WORLDWIDE, it's important that other countries are accepting the NIDMAR certification. Germany is one of the countries where the certification is gaining recognition.

The country's most recently certified disability management professionals are Christian Hetzel, Matthias Mozdzanowski and Harald Kaiser, all of IQPR.

"More than 500 workers at Ford-Cologne had to be reintegrated into productive work in 2002," says Harald Kaiser. "We had not heard of NIDMAR at that point."

The company set up a team approach, and used a number of tools, including a profiling system that enabled them to match worker abilities with work requirements. "More than 300 workers could be integrated, and that translated to €16 million in savings," says Kaiser.

"Investing in human potential furthers business success and social responsibility."

Such savings made a strong case for developing disability management and return to work programs throughout the company. That's when NIDMAR came to their attention. "The first disability manager in Germany, Heinz Breidenbach, earned the disability management certification last year," says Kaiser.

Together with Erich Knülle, plant physician and Michael Barwinski, ergonomic champion, IQPR worked on implementing an efficient disability management program. Other Ford plants in Germany and Europe, as



The German Audit Team L-R: Harald Kaiser, Matthias Mozdzanowski, Christian Hetzel (background), and Hans-Martin Schian

well as other companies, are benefiting from this work as they move towards establishing or improving their own DM programs.

"There is a lot of pressure to compete in an increasingly globalized market," adds Kaiser. "There can be a lack of time for topics such as health management or employee satisfaction. But when CEOs realize that the health of their workers is connected to saving money and increasing productivity in a competitive market, health management becomes a strategic business case."

As more employers recognize the need, Germany could move toward a country-wide standard. "The certification is a confirmation for a standardized high quality of education and disability management that may give us an advantage in the marketplace," says Kaiser. "We are the first DM experts (together with the Ford disability manager) in Germany, and the prospect of expanding throughout the country would give us a lot more opportunities." ■

Australia's Leadership in Licensing

"The thing that appeals to most about the CBDMA process is, not only the joint employer and union development of the tool, but, also its rigorous testing and international acceptance."

In Australia, Cameron McCullagh, who is CEO of Employers Mutual, says the audit tool will help Australian employers take disability management to the next level of achievement. "As the leading provider for workers

compensation insurance in New South Wales we believe it is imperative we continually look for ways of improving outcomes from workplace injuries," he said. "The thing that appeals most about the CBDMA process is, not only the joint employer and union development of the tool, but, also, its rigorous testing and international acceptance." ■



Cameron McCullagh, CEO, Employers Mutual, Sydney, Australia

Introducing the most recent recipients of the Certified Disability Management Professional™ (CDMP™) designation:

Jacqueline Bartkiewicz
Employee Health Advisor
Canadian Pacific Railway
Calgary, AB

Gregg Beach
Partner
Diversified Rehabilitation
Management
Kelowna, BC

Cameron Brine
Kinesiologist
Back in Motion Rehab Inc.
Surrey, BC

Rebecca Chow
Return to Work Coordinator
University of Victoria
Victoria, BC

James R. Coleman
Rehabilitation Advisor
Hydro One
Burlington, ON

John (Tony) Fasulo
Managing Partner
Acclaim Ability
Management Inc.
Toronto, ON

Ann Foran
Disability Team Leader
Maritime Life
Halifax, NS

Christian Hetzel
IQPR GmbH
Cologne, Germany

Harald Kaiser
IQPR GmbH
Cologne, Germany

Judy Klinzmann
Disability Case Manager
Standard Life
Calgary, AB

Louise Longhurst
Rehabilitation Advisor
Hydro One Networks Inc.
Utopia, ON

Ann McKnight Duralia
Employee Health Coordinator
County of Oxford,
Woodingford Lodge
Woodstock, ON

Matthias Mozdzanowski
IQPR GmbH
Cologne, Germany

Alison Plante
Human Resources Manager
Pinehurst Store Fixtures
Mississauga, ON

Todd Sauve
President
Case Management
Canada Inc.
Winnipeg, MB

Katherine Shalagan
Occupational Health Nurse
Hydro One Health Services
Toronto, ON

Brian Smith
Senior Rehabilitation
Counsellor
IWA – Forest Industry
LTD Plan
Prince George, BC

Maggie Stephen
Consultant
Diversified Rehabilitation
Management
Kelowna, BC

Lynn Stevens
Nurse Advisor
Workers'
Compensation Board
Kelowna, BC

Shelley Stoyles
Director, Disability
Management
Eastern Rehabilitation Inc.
Halifax, NS

Sandford Underhill
Disability Management
Consultant
Maritime Life
Halifax, NS

Susan Wabb
Compensation, Benefits &
Health Services Officer
Hydro One Networks
Toronto, ON

Angela Ward
Occupational
Health & Rehabilitation
Manager
City of Nanaimo
Nanaimo, BC

Chris Winkelaar
Claims Facilitator
Alberta School
Employee Benefit Plan
Edmonton, AB

Congratulations to the most recent recipients of the Certified Return to Work Coordinator™ (CRTWC™) designation:

Lisa Bennett
Rehabilitation Clerk
Hydro One
Burlington, ON

Lori Biggs
Occupational Health Nurse
Alberta Pacific
Forest Industries
Fort McMurray, AB

Danny Joyce
Early & Safe
Return to Work Coordinator
WHSCC of Newfoundland
and Labrador
St. John's, NL

Craig Morrissey
Rehabilitation Consultant
Great-West Life Assurance
Portugal Cove, NL

Debbie O'Flynn
Disability Management
Coordinator
Enmax Corporation
Calgary, AB

Deborah Payment
Return to Work Coordinator
CEU/Workers'
Compensation Board
Vancouver, BC

Nancy Sehn
Safety Administrator /
WCB Claims Coordinator
Enmax Corporation
Calgary, AB



L-R: CEO Anne Marie Hann, Danny Joyce and Valerie Royle, executive director Worker Services

Promoting early and safe return to work

STARTING ON THE ROAD TO CERTIFICATION WASN'T DANNY JOYCE'S OWN IDEA.

"My boss found that NIDMAR was offering courses, and thought that there might be information in there that would be beneficial to employers in this province," he says. "I thought that I would take one module, maybe two. Pretty soon, I had finished the 25 modules."

Before enrolling, Joyce, who had 11 years in the

industry under his belt, thought he knew it all. "When I did the NIDMAR course, I realized that there's a lot of knowledge in this field. There was still a lot of information that would help me in my role," he says.

That role is educating employers on early and safe return to work for Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission of Newfoundland and Labrador.

"The course gives you a very good perspective on how other people approach return to work issues. It helped build on the knowledge that I already had and build on the skills that I have to ensure that the employers in the province are getting good information from the Commission." ■

Certification key to trust

THE CERTIFICATION EXAM ISN'T REQUIRED FOR DEBORAH PAYMENT'S POSITION, but she decided that it would give her credibility. "The certification gives people reassurance that there's training and knowledge backing you up," she says.

Payment is the return to work coordinator for the joint Compensation Employees Union and Workers' Compensation Board of BC. "Having a joint program is absolutely critical in providing good service," she says. "It allows employees to trust the process. In order to accommodate, you sometimes have to work outside of the box. Sometimes, for example, we have to alter job duties, and

without that trust, you could be stopped in your tracks, or have a labour relations battle over it."

Although she wrote the exam recently, Payment took the course in 2000. "I was a little nervous, because most people took the course more recently than I did," she says. "But I've had the opportunity to test it out more than they have. I use what I learned every day in my work." As a result, she found that writing the exam so long after taking the course was not as difficult as she had expected. ■

Certification broadens horizons at work

A NEW ROLE AT WORK HAS MADE LYNN STEVENS' CERTIFICATION ALL THE MORE MEANINGFUL and useful. That new role involves meeting with employers to provide direction and assistance with setting up a disability management and return to work program.

"Certification was essential for me to be received and accepted as a credible source by employers," she says. "It has also broadened my horizons at work and provided me with new challenges."

As a nurse advisor for the Workers' Compensation Board, Lynn Stevens focuses on return to work planning. "This involves speaking with physicians, specialists, therapists, employers and workers to negotiate and plan a return to work," she explains.

"In my job with the WCB, I am constantly involved in return to work planning, but the disability management certification allows me to go beyond the immediate return to work and participate in long-term disability management."

Certification enables Stevens to discuss an employer's current methods, and help build a structure for a disability management program. "All the components for developing DM and RTW programs were covered so well in the modules of the course that I can draw on a wealth of information," she says. ■



L-R: Lynn Stevens, David Anderson CEO WCB of BC & Deborah Payment

Agreement nets opportunities for DM education

IN MAY 2004, THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF REHABILITATION PROFESSIONALS (CARP) AND NIDMAR signed a collaboration agreement which provides for increased opportunities and cooperation in education and ongoing development in the disability management field.

The agreement is designed to provide CARP members with increased and value-added education and disability management certification opportunities, given the world-wide emphasis of maximizing disability management and return-to-work outcomes for individuals who acquire a disabling condition and will want to remain with their pre-disability employer as long as possible.

This trend is also emphasized through the broad international recognition of the ILO's *Code of practice on managing disability in the workplace* which has been translated into 22 languages. It was also envisioned that the value-added CRTWC and CDMP designations which are now part of the ILO's global strategy on social security by the adoption of these standards through the German Workers Compensation Boards would be of

significant benefit to CARP members.

In certifying skills and competencies, this would enhance the ability to maximize

return to work opportunities for

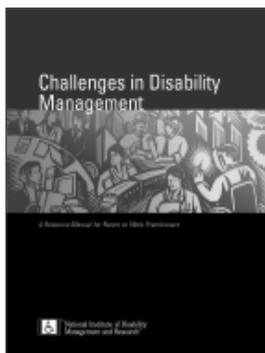
injured and disabled workers and, through the RRP/CRC credential, identify the ability to optimize vocational rehabilitation opportunities for those unable to return to their pre-disability employer.

"We hope that through this agreement, we will be able to work collaboratively in increasing employment potential and participation of individuals with disabilities because clearly, the falling hiring rate of people with disabilities which we have witnessed in Canada over the last eight years is unacceptable" says NIDMAR executive director Wolfgang Zimmermann. ■



L-R: Wolfgang Zimmermann and Judy Alexander, CARP

New resource guide covers DM challenges



THERE ARE TIMES WHEN CERTAIN INJURIES OR DISABILITY TYPES CAN (AND OFTEN DO) PRESENT SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES TO RETURN TO WORK PRACTITIONERS. The new resource guide is intended to offer suggestions that could help guide your decision making when planning return to work strategies for people with these specific challenges.

NIDMAR created this guide in response to disturbing statistics that show how few people with disabilities return to the workforce. For example, the World Bank's recent international report "Disability Employment Policy" (Mont, 2004), shows a declining hiring rate for persons with disabilities, both in Canada and internationally.

Despite years of economic expansion, the number of persons with disabilities employed hasn't increased, but has actually decreased. In fact, while every single

subsection of society was able to record increased personal wealth and employment rates, those for people with disabilities declined.

In Canada, the 2003 Employment Equity Report recorded the eighth consecutive year of decline in hiring and employment rates for persons with disabilities. Now consider that 55 percent of individuals with disabilities in Canada live on annual incomes of \$15,000 or less, and the case for effective disability management can easily be seen.

The resource guide is meant to offer helpful suggestions, but the return to work process depends on individual circumstances. The guide, therefore, cannot provide all the answers to every situation.

What the guide can do is serve as another tool NIDMAR has developed in order to maximize attachment to the pre-disability employer following onset of disability.

You'll find the resource guide on the website at www.nidmar.ca. ■



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT..., continued from page 1

there is no disability management or return to work program, we'll use the tool to establish DM benchmarks," says Saouab. "And in workplaces that have already established DM programs, the tool will help identify both good practices and gaps."

Using the same evaluation criteria is an important step to introducing consistency. "Right now, we have a few departments that have an official disability management program," says Saouab. "Others invest good will and efforts that are not systematically harnessed."

Awareness is already high within the federal government. People recognize that in addition to existing wellness and employee assistance programs, there is an increasing need for coordinated efforts and interdisciplinary expertise to achieve consistency and excellence in disability management. Collaboration is crucial in this process.

"Within the federal public service, we are spending about \$250 million annually on long-term disability premiums," says Saouab. "Then we have \$125 million for federal employees under the Government Employees Compensation Act. That's not even counting the people who are on regular sick leave!"

So there is room for improvement. The government of Canada is serious about cutting waste at all levels. "By introducing a government-wide DM strategy we're hoping to contribute to reducing the costs associated with disability while at the same time retaining

skilled and valuable human resources" adds Saouab. "If we want healthier workplaces, we have to work jointly to ensure there is prevention, as well as promotion of health and wellness and return to work programs that work hand-in-hand. They have to be tied together."

In addition to retaining persons with disabilities, it is also important to work towards improved levels of recruitment of persons with disabilities. "We're hoping that, once we use this tool in the public sector, we'll be able to offer it as an educational tool for our partners in the private sector," says Saouab.

By providing accommodation to returning-to-work employees, employers are likely to become more aware of the abilities and skills people with various functional limitations can bring to work. "We'd like to give employers tools for bringing people back to work, and we're hoping that in doing so they can make their workplaces safer, more equitable and accommodating of differences."

Whether in the public or private sector, returning people to work makes good business sense. "There is a solid business case for it" says Saouab. "It appeals to the bottom line. But it also makes sense to retain your experienced workers and return them to work based on their abilities and capacities." ■

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