

Germany CDMP count reaches 350 professionals



GERMANY: Germany has reached an important milestone, with more than 350 disability management professionals achieving their CDMP designation (Certified Disability Management Professional).

“This signifies a brilliant future investment,” says Harald Kaiser, of the Institute for Quality Assurance in Prevention and Rehabilitation.

“We are on the right path to convince all responsible bodies of the sense of implementing a disability management system,” adds Kaiser. “With our help, Ford Germany has already implemented the system across Germany, and intends to roll it out throughout Europe as well. We are also just starting to partially adapt the system to Daimler Chrysler and some other big and medium sized companies.”

The fact that large and medium-sized companies now recognize the value in the CDMP designation means more credibility for professionals who opt to earn the distinction.

“The CDMP qualification produces the knowledge and functional competence in important areas of workplace disability management,” says Dr. Gisela Riedl, a rehabilitation and occupational physician at Fachklinik Enzensberg, a large German rehabilitation hospital.

“This allows a very practically oriented, case-directed and goal-oriented activity approach,” adds her colleague Joachim Maier. The two are responsible for rehab/case management support at Fachklinik Enzensberg.

Hand-in-hand with knowledge and functional competence comes credibility. “Until recently, it wasn't very easy to get credibility in the industry,” says Wolfgang Böhnert, a CDMP since 2004, and occupational health and safety manager for Steinbruchs-Berufsgenossenschaft, a large occupational insurer.

“At times, the German economic situation isn't very good,” adds Böhnert. “Costs of labour are very high and employers are sometimes not open minded, when you talk to them about disability management. So there's still a lot of work to do to convince them.

Often, convincing employers is a matter of showing what disability management does to their bottom line.

“Companies' acceptance of new management concepts is increasing,” continues Kaiser. “There is a rising number of disabled employees because of aging workforce, due to demographic changes and lack of money for early retirement programs. To keep workers healthy, companies must care more for their employees and find partners for assistance.”

That trend heralds a rising demand for disability managers. And with 350 CDMPs, Germany is well prepared to meet future demand. ■