



NIDMAR appoints official representative in Germany



Wolfgang Zimmermann, NIDMAR executive director (left), and Horst Günther, accepting the position of NIDMAR's official representative in Germany.

Horst Günther, former German federal associate minister of labour and social affairs, has been appointed as NIDMAR's official representative in Germany.

Mr. Günther was a member of parliament for 22 years in the Bundestag (the German national parliament) and served as associate minister of labour under former chancellor Helmut Kohl for seven years, between 1991 and 1998.

His association with NIDMAR dates back to early 1991, following which he led the German delegation for the World at Work component of Independence '92, an international congress and exposition on disability. Since then, his association and support for more effective business and labour collaboration and better outcomes for injured and disabled workers has continued unabated.

"Given the rapid expansion of the disability management initiative and subsequent increased application of educational programming, professional certifications and disability management program audits, it is vitally important that the highest quality and administrative standards be maintained," says Wolfgang Zimmermann, NIDMAR executive director. "We are absolutely certain that someone of Mr. Günther's stature will greatly contribute to this."

As NIDMAR's representative in Germany, Mr. Günther's principal role will be to provide advice to both NIDMAR and Dr. Joachim Breuer, CEO of the HVBG (the German federation of accident insurers) and co-chair of the International Disability Management Standards Council (IDMSC). This advice will ensure that quality and administrative requirements are met within the context of the adoption of the disability management protocol in Germany.

This is particularly important at this time, as a recent national legislative requirement in Germany for disability management has sparked significant interest in this area. The HVBG, as the principal license holder for the curriculum, has now entered into five sub-license agreements with organizations that include the German Trade Union Congress, employment development centres, a major private insurer, and a social security insurer.

NIDMAR looks forward to its continuing relationship with Mr. Günther – one that will continue to further the success of disability management in Germany and maintain the country's position as one of the foremost role models in disability management and return to work initiatives. ■