The Employment of People with Chronic Diseases

Outcomes of the work of the Thematic Network on the EU Health Policy Platform

27th November 2017, EU Health Policy Platform meeting, Brussels

ECDA Chairman: Prof. Raymond Vanholder
Overview of drafting & endorsement process

- **Q1 2017**
  - Meeting of organisations interested in thematic networks with EU HPP team – end January

- **Q2 2017**
  - Planning, literature review/ intelligence gathering
  - Drafting and review process
  - Period for input/comments – August to end October
  - Contact database of 63 organisations from health, social & employment sectors to inform and invite to join the work
  - Contact with organisations identified to gauge interest in collaboration & engagement in drafting – May/June
  - Draft version - early July

- **Q3 2017**
  - Progress meeting thematic network leaders with EU HPP – end June
  - Revised version – August

- **Q4 2017**
  - Creation of thematic network identity – February/March 2017
  - Contact with organisations identified to gauge interest in collaboration & engagement in drafting – May/June
  - EU Health Policy Platform Live Webinar (Presentation & discussion on pre-final paper) – October
  - Final presentation EU Health Policy Platform meeting – 27th November
  - Final version (Call to Action & framing paper) – November

- **2017**
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Endorsers of and contributors to the Call to Action

United to reverse the rise in chronic disease

[Logos of various organizations]
Chronic diseases have a substantial health impact

- **86% of all deaths** in Europe are due to CDs

*European population 15+ affected by CDs*  
*Working-age population affected by CDs*
The impact of chronic disease on the labour market is huge

“Chronic diseases have important labour market impacts for people living with these conditions: reduced employment, earlier retirement, and lower income”

(Health at a Glance in the EU 2016 report, Chapter 1: The labour market impacts of ill-health)
People with chronic diseases have lower employment rates

- For CVDs, cancer and diabetes, the employment rate is less than 30%.
Chronic disease leads to reduced work prospects & income

Figure Panel A. Probability of retiring prematurely among people aged 50-59 in 2013, according to chronic diseases in 2011, 13 European countries.
The economic impact: employment vs sick leave

1.7% of GDP is spent on disability and paid sick leave each year on average in EU countries, > public expenditures on unemployment benefits.
Productivity, growth, business outcomes & chronic diseases

Productivity losses (billion €/year)

- Chronic diseases overall
- Cardiovascular disease alone

ECDA (European Chronic Disease Alliance)
Priority Areas for Action

1. Invest in prevention of chronic diseases: socio-economic and lifestyle-related factors

2. Integrate primary and specialist care to strengthen chronic disease rehabilitation, recovery and employment

3. Develop adequate policy frameworks and incentives to support the employment, return-to-work or retention-at-work of people with chronic diseases

4. Educate employers on the issue of chronic diseases and working conditions, and promote chronic disease awareness at the workplace
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1. Invest in prevention and earlier detection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-communicable diseases account for up to 80% of health care costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yet only around 3% of health budgets are spent on prevention</td>
</tr>
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</table>

| State of Health in the EU, Companion Report 2017 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CVD</th>
<th>Hypertension</th>
<th>Diabetes</th>
<th>Cancer</th>
<th>Kidney disease</th>
<th>Liver disease</th>
<th>Resp disease</th>
<th>Mental health</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unhealthy diet</td>
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<td>Tobacco use</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<td>Obesity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical inactivity</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol misuse</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental factors</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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1. Invest in prevention and earlier detection
Recommendations

**Member States**

- Health promotion & disease prevention: increased spending; **national strategies**
- Effective policy/regulatory action on the major risk factors of chronic diseases
- Health in all policies approach
- Dedicated **information sessions/trainings at the workplace on prevention**

**European Commission**

- **EU Action Plan on CDs**, taking health in all policies approach
- EU-wide awareness campaign on CDs and risk factors e.g. **European Chronic Disease Awareness Day**
- Further risk factor-specific awareness initiatives
Priority Areas for Action

1. **Invest in prevention of chronic diseases:** socio-economic and lifestyle-related factors

2. **Integrate primary and specialist care to strengthen chronic disease rehabilitation, recovery and employment**

3. **Develop adequate policy frameworks and incentives to support the employment, return-to-work or retention-at-work of people with chronic diseases**

4. **Educate employers on the issue of chronic diseases and working conditions, and promote chronic disease awareness at the workplace**
2. Integrate primary and specialist care

• Long-term cost-saving
• Potential of IT solutions to address problems of communication/information transfer between healthcare settings and with employment settings
• Importance of active engagement of patients/patient organisations
Recommendations

**Member States**

- **Rehabilitation programmes** as an essential part of a patient’s treatment plan
- **Integrated health services** incorporating social, psychological support, stay-in/return-to-work services
- **Awareness-raising campaigns** on work-related rehabilitation programmes
- Appropriate **training of healthcare professionals**

**European Commission**

- Foster **IT solutions** to address problems of communication & information transfer
- **Research on integrated care** for CDs
- **Exchange and implementation of best practices across Member States**
- **Communication activities** on stay-in/return-to-work programmes
1. Invest in prevention of chronic diseases: socio-economic and lifestyle-related factors

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3. Develop adequate policy frameworks and incentives to support the employment, return-to-work or retention-at-work of people with chronic diseases

4. Educate employers on the issue of chronic diseases and working conditions, and promote chronic disease awareness at the workplace
3. Develop policy frameworks and incentives to support (re) employment and retention at work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status*</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stable attachment</td>
<td>77 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed (weak start, improvement)</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leavers (drop-outs with time)</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never attached</td>
<td>7 %</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*: participants in a Finish re-employment program

Recommendations

**Member States**

- Focus policies on the capacity to work
- **National workplace health strategies** incl. rehabilitation, retention, return-to-work
- **Financial support to workers** to make gradual return-to-work possible
- **Financial support to companies** for realising workplace arrangements
- Effective application and monitoring of **anti-discrimination legislation**

**European Commission**

- Component in **European Investment Funds** (e.g. EFSI) to support companies investing in **innovative business models**
- **Country-Specific Recs** to put stronger emphasis on responding to worker health challenges
- **EU Employment & Chronic Disease Award** for companies
- **Commission study** on available policies and measures (based on Pathways Project results)
Priority Areas for Action

1. Invest in prevention of chronic diseases: socio-economic and lifestyle-related factors

2. Integrate primary and specialist care to strengthen chronic disease rehabilitation, recovery and employment

3. Develop adequate policy frameworks and incentives to support the employment, return-to-work or retention-at-work of people with chronic diseases

4. Educate employers on the issue of chronic diseases and working conditions, and promote chronic disease awareness at the workplace
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**Perceived social value by managers per condition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>% Vs. no problem (100%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronic disease (asthma, arthrosis)</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motoric handicap</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic disease (cancer)</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquired brain lesion</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric problem</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Develop adequate policy frameworks and incentives to support the (re) employment, retention at work

**Recommendations**

**Member States**

- Modules on health promotion, disease prevention and CD management at the workplace in curricula in business schools/ higher education
- **Trainings for business managers** on how to accommodate employees with CDs
- Voluntary **sessions at the workplace on risk factors**
- **National awareness campaigns** to promote health in workplaces and reduce discrimination

**European Commission**

- **Toolkits for employers** to help them support employees with CDs
- EU-led **online interactive stakeholder platform to share best practices**

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[Image]
Next steps & dissemination plan

1. Interaction with EU working groups
2. Presentation at final conference of the EU PATHWAYS project, March 2018
3. Website, press and social media communication & mailing

- Publication in the press (main EU news outlets)
- DG SANTE eNewsletter
- Partners’ websites, via EU Health Policy Platform
- Social media (Twitter)
- eMailing to networks (incl. MEPs, business/social stakeholders, national health organisations)

- Communication to the Board of the CHRODIS Plus Joint Action
- Dissemination to other Joint Action partners with potential interest in the work (e.g. new JA on Cancer iPAAC)
Conclusion

Invest in Prevention & Rehabilitation, and stimulate Retention & Re-integration in the workplace

Putting in place these actions will:

• For individuals:
  Allow workers with chronic illnesses to continue to fulfil their professional activities and make a valuable contribution to the workforce

• For Europe:
  1. Contribute to achieve sustainable employment (Europe 2020 Strategy & UN Goals)
  2. Contribute to better lives and more inclusive economies for Europeans
  3. Reduce inequalities in Member States and create a more harmonised Europe
Thank you

For further information, please contact the ECDA Secretariat:

- info@alliancechronicdiseases.org
- www.alliancechronicdiseases.org
- @EU_CDA11
Infographic with key messages

**CHRONIC DISEASE & WORK**

**WHAT IS THE SITUATION?**

- The prevalence of chronic diseases and disabling conditions has been increasing in all age groups and all countries, leading to increased work disability.
- 86% of all deaths in the world are due to chronic diseases.

**Chronic diseases**

- The employment rate of people with chronic conditions, aged 15-64 and 15-74, is lower than that of people without any chronic conditions.
- The economic impact of work disability due to chronic diseases is significant.

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE LABOUR OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC DISEASES**

- **1.** Invest in the prevention and earlier detection of chronic diseases to reduce morbidity and mortality.
- **2.** Promote supportive workplace practices and policies to support the employment and return-to-work of people with chronic diseases.
- **3.** Ensure that workplaces are inclusive and accessible for people with chronic diseases.
- **4.** Promote health and well-being initiatives in the workplace.

**EXISTING POLICY FRAMEWORKS PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EU AND MEMBER STATES TO ACT:**

- UN Sustainable Development Goals (including Goal 3 on Health and Well-Being)
- EU Treaty: EU role and responsibility in health (Article 168 TFEU) & objectives of full employment and social progress in Europe (Article 3 TFEU)
- Europe 2020 strategy with priorities on investments, growth and job creation
- European Pillar of Social Rights
- EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020

**ECDA**

- European Chronic Disease Alliance

**ECDA Website**

- www.allechronichdisorders.org
- ecdatraumaec.eu

**Available on the EU Health Policy Platform**