‘Diagnostic criteria for Occupational Diseases’

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Why bother?

- Scope for Prevention – Sentinel case
- Effective management of patient Treatment, advice on compensation, return to work or job change
- Surveillance - track trends
- Resource allocation
Dealing with occupational diseases

Possible occupational disease

- Physician
- Occ health nurse
- Safety practitioner
- Employer
- Worker

Confirm

Notify

ACTION

- Who?
- What?
- How?
- When?
- Where?
The need for agreed criteria for occupational diseases

‘Consistency helps credibility’
Criteria for diagnosis

- EFFECT
- EXPOSURE
- TIME SEQUENCE
- DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS
European Commission project

• DG Employment & Social Affairs
• Multi-disciplinary, multi-national team of European experts to produce
• ‘Information notices on diagnosis of occupational diseases’ - 1994
• ‘Information notices on occupational diseases: a guide to diagnosis’

Update started 2005, completed 2009
European Commission Criteria

- Causal agent
  Occupational uses; sources of exposure

- Effects
  Symptoms & Signs
  Acute & Chronic
  Local & Systemic
  Relevant investigations
European Commission Criteria

- Minimum intensity of exposure
- Minimum duration of exposure
- Maximum latent period
- Induction period
The EU Expert panel

- Brompton Hospital, London
- Catholic University of Louvain
- Coronel Laboratory for Occup & Env Health
- Finnish Institute of Occupational Health
- Istituto di Medicina del Lavoro
- Nofer Institute, Poland
- University of Hamburg
- University of Kent
- University Rene’ Decartes Paris V
A. Options for process

- Evidence-based review
- Expert opinion
- Delphi exercise for consensus
- Expert consensus with access to supporting institutions
Levels of Evidence

- **Level A**
  - Randomized controlled trial (RCT)
  - Meta-analysis

- **Level B**
  - Cohort studies,
  - Case-control studies

- **Level C**
  - Consensus viewpoint
  - Expert opinion
Core group
Satellite Inst
Expert
Options for process

- Evidence-based review
- Expert opinion
- Delphi exercise for consensus
- Expert consensus - with access to supporting institutions
EU Expert Panel

- Experts + their organisations
- EC Secretariat & interpreters
- Observors – Government, Industry, Unions
- Rapporteur
A guide to diagnosis

http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=716&langId=en&intPageId=229
B. Agreeing list of diseases

- EU List
- ILO list
- Lists for individual countries
The EU Schedule

European Schedule of occupational diseases (1990)
Annex 1 – recognised list of occupational diseases
Annex 2 – list of diseases suspected to be of occupational origin
The member states shall themselves determine the criteria for recognizing each occupational disease in accordance with their current national laws or practices.
2010

ILO List of Occupational Diseases
(revised 2010)
ILO Occupational diseases

By agent & by target organ and condition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemical</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological</td>
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<td>9</td>
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</table>
## ILO Occupational diseases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musculo-skeletal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occ cancer</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental disorders</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other diseases</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other diseases

- ‘Miner’s nystagmus’
- Other diseases not mentioned etc.....
Is the convergence of a disparate set desirable?

Q. Converge set of criteria or Converge list of diseases?
Is there a scientific and political component?

A. YES

Criteria = Science > Politics
List = Politics > Science
Do different reporting and recording mechanisms play a role?

A. YES

B. Report conditions on a list

C. Report if you consider it more likely than not that the condition is caused or aggravated by work, regardless of other non-occupational factors.
Dealing with occupational diseases

Possible occupational disease

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- Occ health nurse
- Safety practitioner
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Conclusions

- Maintain an expert multidisciplinary group to review and revise diagnostic criteria in light of new evidence
- Membership on the basis of expertise and access to supporting institutions
- Needs support from EU secretariat (Web)
- Frequency of updates – in real time
- Lists cf. diagnostic criteria