

Disability Management in Companies

A Tool to Improve Productivity and to develop good Leadership

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why disability management?

1. US\$ 1.25 trillion global cost of injury is unsustainable
2. globalization of work: health, well-being and productivity of workers in all countries
3. implementation of disability management policies and programs in a large number of countries
4. disability management contributes to the reduction of absenteeism and health related costs in companies
5. disability management contributes to good leadership, organisational development, and productivity in companies

overview

_health and the workplace

_disability management as a concept

_disability management in companies

_conclusion

health and the workplace

_general trends

- demographic change
- skills shortage

_increase of work related health issues

- mental illness
- aging workforce

disability management as a concept

_origins and aims

- since the 1980s disability management has developed
- support for employees with serious health problems and accidents
- directed towards employees and employers/supervisors
 - to improve health and well-being
 - to identify and decrease work related health issues
- contribution to organisational learning
 - to improve communication, coordination and cooperation in the company
 - to develop competences and skills to deal better with critical incidents in the company, especially with health issues and conflicts

disability management as a concept

_disability management concept

- internal and external disability management
- not a consistent concept
- comprehensive disability management
 - analysis of data on sick leave and absenteeism of employees;
 - counselling and support of ill and injured employees;
 - co-ordination of activities and claims for reintegration; and
 - measures and activities of prevention in workplace health promotion.

disability management as a concept

_research on disability management in companies

- 2007-2008: Disability management in Swiss companies
- 2011-2013: Qualification for change. A regional study on competences and the orientation towards resources in companies.
- 2013-2015: Demographic change and private sector disability management in Australia, Canada, China and Switzerland. A comparative study.
- 2015-2017: Aging workforce and simple work.

disability management as a concept

_advanced professional training in disability management

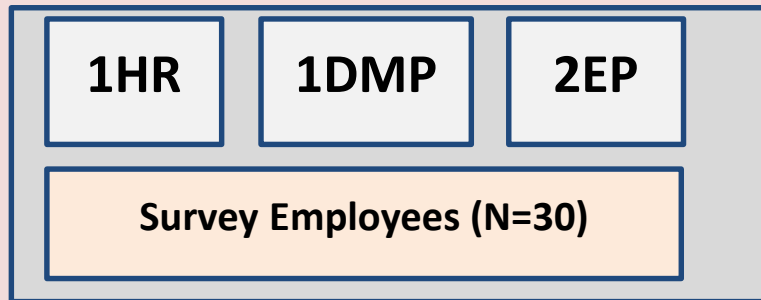
- Diploma of Advanced Studies in Disability Management „Case and System“
(workload: 900h)
- Certificate of Advanced Studies in Disability Management „Case Management“
(workload: 450h)
- Certificate of Advanced Studies in Disability Management „Systemic Perspectives“ (workload: 450h)
- Certificate of Advanced Studies in Disability Management „Target Groups and Methods“ (workload: 450h)

SNIS Projekt «Demographic Change and Disability Management in Private Companies»

Level 1: Company

case studies

case study: company (N=1)



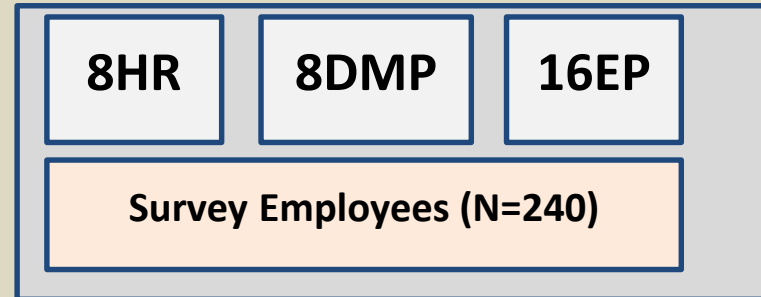
case study

- analysis of documents
- qualitative-analysis
- quantitative analysis

Level 2: Country

triangulation

country: companies (N=8)



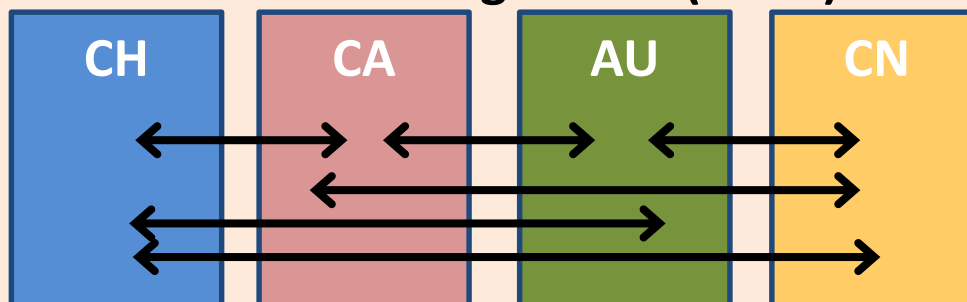
triangulation

- qualitative-analysis
- quantitative analysis

Level 3: Cross-national

comparison

cross-national: triangulation (N=32)



comparison

- qualitative: triangulation of findings
- quantitative: data-triangulation

disability management in companies

_implementation

- “I am convinced that healthy and motivated employees are able to perform better. If we can make a contribution to that, it will pay off” (HR-manager)

_practice

- “The competence centre is a core unity; it was associated with health promotion, prevention and case management, and resources were pooled. Today, it provides services, support, a type of business lead and normative guidelines for the whole company” (DMP)
- “Well, no. I was glad about that. I knew that she supports me and knows my case 100%. That was great. I really appreciated it” (employee)

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evaluation

- “We are evaluated so to speak by the friendly work space certification. This happens every few years” (HR-manager)
- “Yes there are several. It’s for sure an image factor. It’s also an external evaluation which I think is very good. It indicates where there is potential for development and where to look. Well I think it is important to do it. And I think it makes it more attractive to work for [Company H]. For people from outside” (HR-manager)

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_characteristics

- “Well I think the areas where we are good and I am satisfied with is on the one hand the reactive part, the case management, thus what we do with sick people [...] The whole topic of occupational safety works well. We have started in the preventive field, there are good initial approaches. However, we need to improve in early recognition of specific health issues and to foster the training of supervisors, and in a second step maybe of employees, to deal with such issues” (DMP)

disability management in companies

_implementation

- valuing or caring for workers and staff productivity (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- reducing costs associated with poor health, injury absence and staff turnover (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- social responsibility, company image and recruitment motivators (CA, CN, CH)
- external factors pushing companies to implement DM include national policies and insurance (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- driven by legislative responsibility (CA, AU)

_DM programmes include

- primary illness and injury prevention measures include health and wellness programs and employee assistance programs as well as injury and illness prevention strategies and equipment (CA, CN, CH, AU)

disability management in companies

_DM programmes include

- *primary* illness and injury prevention measures include
 - health and wellness programs, employee assistance programs, injury and illness prevention strategies and equipment (CA, CN, CH, AU)
 - promotion of physical fitness with access to training facilities, a range of health initiatives, as well as health promotion activities (CA, CN, CH)
 - companies offer flexible and transitional work arrangements, e.g. for older workers (CH, CA)

disability management in companies

_DM programmes include

- *secondary* prevention measures include
 - absence management strategies, risk assessment and accident investigations, insurance to cover work-related injury, illness and disability (CA, CN, CH, AU)
 - companies provide money and resources to accommodate injured or ill workers and pay for medical expenses (CA, AU)
- *tertiary* prevention of long-term disability
 - return to work support and retraining (CA, CN, CH, AU)
 - case management strategies (AU, CH)
 - support for medical interventions, including referral to external treatment provider (AU, CN)

disability management in companies

_DM programmes include

- evaluation
- time-measures, e.g. absenteeism and work-time lost due to injury (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- cost-measures and return to work outcomes (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- employee feedback or staff satisfaction surveys (CN, CH, AU)
- problems with how evaluations are used in companies (CH, AU)

_drivers of DM implementation in companies

- politics and legislation are key drivers (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- various types of insurance play an important role (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- legislated insurance requirements are strong driver of DM (AU)

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_effectiveness is a key issue in DM

- relevance of internal and external factors

_benefits of DM from an employer's perspective

- employee retention, employee recruitment, increased productivity and fast return to work are seen as important (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- differences amongst companies
 - more comprehensive DM: focus mostly on productivity
 - more limited DM approaches: employee retention and effective return to work process are the main aims

disability management in companies

benefits on DM from an employee's perspective

- appreciation of the benefits brought by DM programs (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- feeling valued and supported, receiving financial assistance, and improved psychological wellness (CA, CN, CH, AU)
- improved safety at work and comprehensive medical services (CA, CN)
- DM programs are valuable for health as they provide many resources that can be used to improve employee health (AU, CH)
- DM programs can have a positive (CN, AU, CA), negative (AU, CA, CH) or neutral (CH) influence on morale
- experience with DM programs changed the outlook on the company: feeling more closely connected to their employer and wanting to stay with the company as a result of the support provided in a DM process (CN, AU, CH)

conclusion

1. disability management has a positive impacted job satisfaction, morale, physical and mental health, and sick leave outcomes
2. disability management is underpinned and influenced by relevant legislation
3. companies are challenged with finding the required 'know how' for implementation for successful disability management programs
4. disability management is a highly valuable approach for companies to improve workplace health, to decrease sick leave, and to increase productivity