

European Chronic Disease Alliance leading network to address employment of people with chronic diseases

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The prevalence of chronic diseases has been growing in Europe over the past decades in line with an ageing population, often affecting people of working age. Over one third of the European population aged 15 years old or above have a chronic disease and two out of three people at retirement age will have at least two chronic conditions.

Beyond the direct costs of healthcare to treat chronic conditions which amount to €700 billion in the EU, workers with chronic diseases and employers incur indirect costs. Evidence shows that chronic disease have an impact on workforce participation, hours worked, job turnover and result in early retirement in many cases. The [“Health at a Glance: Europe 2016” report](#) [1] by the European Commission and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that the employment rate of people who have one or more chronic condition, and particularly people aged 50-59, is much lower than for those who do not suffer from any disease.

The European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA) is leading a thematic network recently set up by the European Commission Directorate General for Health on the employment of people with chronic diseases, with the aim to produce a **joint stakeholder statement and ultimately raise the attention of policy-makers by presenting concrete options to respond to the problem.**

The paper will address issues such as the burden of chronic diseases in Europe, the employment situation of people with chronic illnesses and their (re) integration in the labour market, the links between economics and the employment activation of people with chronic diseases, the role and impact of prevention and health promotion. **It will present some case study examples and good practices in European countries in managing chronic diseases and employment prospects; and will provide a set of policy recommendations to the European Commission and EU Member States on how to move forward.**

The work will be conducted in close partnership with 15 EU and national organisations from the health, social and employment sectors representing a broad spectrum of concerned stakeholders. **The final joint statement will be available for endorsement by interested organisations by November 2017, before being officially presented to the European Commission during a meeting in the end of November 2017, in presence of the European Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis.**

For more information, contact the ECDA Secretariat: info@chronicdiseasealliance.org [2]

Sources: Busse et al., 2010; Europeans of retirement age: chronic diseases and economic activity. RIVM. December 2012; Eurostat, 2010.

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