Successful rehabilitation through an integrated approach

Conference presented by
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The integrated approach
A utopia?

Traditional approach: siloed work
The integrated approach
A utopia?

Traditional approach: siloed work

- Accident / illness prevention
- Early detection
- Disability management / rehabilitation
- Relapse prevention / postvention
The integrated approach

Prevention
- primary
- secondary
- tertiary

Intervention
- disability management
- early intervention
- rehabilitation

Postvention
- sustained health and wellbeing
- prevention of relapses
The integrated approach

Easy? No
Possible? Yes
A luxury? No, a necessity!

Requires a willingness to change AND synergy between all parties!
Empower employers / policyholders

Whose responsibility is it?

• According to the International Forum on Disability Management (London, 2012), “the State must at least provide a legal framework”.

• Shared responsibility can create problems in regard to employee health and wellness, as well as occupational reintegration.

• Primary responsibility for a RTW is always the employer’s AND the insured’s. Are they ready to accept it?
Empower employers / policyholders

Simply a question of money?
Empower employers / policyholders

• Lack of motivation, resistance to change and ambivalence are natural for people and organizations.

• How to change behaviour? By doing something; by taking action in a conducive environment.

• The intervention style and timing are therefore as important as the intervention itself!
A non-prescriptive approach based on trust and on complete and convincing information stimulates intrinsic motivation!
Empower employers / policyholders

Indisputable advantages

• Facilitated HR management
• Better retention of qualified employees
• Continued productivity
• Reduced costs
• Substantial return on investment
• Increased communication and collaboration with partners
• Specialized professional support when required
• More creative and customized solutions
• Reduction in the number of appeals and disputes
Assessment of potential and likelihood of success

Potential ≠ Chances of success

- RTW potential resides primarily on functional abilities and on the job requirements.
- The likelihood of success depends mostly on motivation!
Overcoming psychosocial barriers

The psychosocial dimension (Aylward)

- Telling anyone anything is like trying to change the way their brain works.
- How people perceive and feel about their health problems determines how they deal with them and the impact they have.
- There is extensive clinical evidence that beliefs aggravate and perpetuate illness and disability\(^1\);\(^2\).

\(^1\) Main and Spanswick, 2000.  \(^2\) Gatchell and Turk, 2002.
Overcoming psychosocial barriers

The psychosocial dimension (Aylward)

• The more subjective the condition, the more central the role of beliefs.\(^1\)

• Beliefs influence:
  • Perceptions and expectations
  • Emotions and adaptation strategies
  • Motivation
  • Uncertainty

\(^1\) Waddell and Aylward, 2005-2010.
Overcoming psychosocial barriers

Biopsychosocial (interactive) model:
a human-centred approach that considers an individual’s health and overall situation.

- **Biological**: physical / mental health status
- **Psychological**: acknowledgement that personal / psychological factors influence health, illness and functionality responses
- **Social**: importance of the social context on health and wellness; pressures and limitations on behaviour and functionality
- **Cultural**: collective attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that characterize a social group over time
Overcoming psychosocial barriers

Understanding the person holistically and using an intervention approach best adapted to their reality.

- Communication
- Trust
- Without prejudice
- Education
- Cognitive restructuring
- Involvement
Reduce the number of counsellors

**How?** By better training and supporting counsellors in order to expand their knowledge and skills.

- Specialized and ongoing training on the psychosocial factors and on the relevant issues
- Understanding that more of a good thing is not necessarily better!
- Teamwork / collaboration / case discussions
- Leaving one’s comfort zone and professional repositioning
- Rethinking psychosocial intervention!
The integrated approach
Guaranteed time savings

• The integrated approach often prevents a work stoppage.

• When a sick leave cannot be avoided, it is almost always shortened.
  • Appointments often held earlier
  • Treatment often provided more quickly
  • Chronicity avoided
  • Psychosocial factors more easily identified and managed
  • Contact with employer maintained
  • RTW better planned and monitored
  • Post-RTW follow-ups ensure long-term success
Accommodate without breaking the bank!

- The *Canadian Human Rights Act* obliges employers to respond to the accessibility needs of persons with a disability, provided that it does not cause the employer undue hardship.

- A Canadian Abilities Foundation study found that the average yearly cost of accommodation is less than $500\(^1\).

\(^1\) Prost and Redmond, 2005.
Accommodate without breaking the bank!

Many options available

• Changing work hours
• Modifying tasks
• Adapting workstation
• Support
• In-house or external training
• Purchasing equipment
• Etc.

Grants are sometimes available!
Collaborate with DM specialists

When the insurer is responsible for the initial disability period (STD)

• Proactive actions and interventions in disability management by a third party usually have a very positive direct or indirect impact on case management.

• It is important that disability management specialists adapt their interventions to suit the insurer’s approach, so as to avoid duplicating services and to guarantee the best possible coordination.
Collaborate with DM specialists

When the insurer is not responsible for the initial disability period (STD)

• Proactive actions and interventions in disability management by a third party can replace those offered by the group insurer and prevent most of the usual obstacles to a RTW following 3 months of disability.
Some Examples

• The sexual harasser
• The overweight nurse
The integrated workplace health and wellness approach:
20 years of innovation
THANK YOU
for your attention