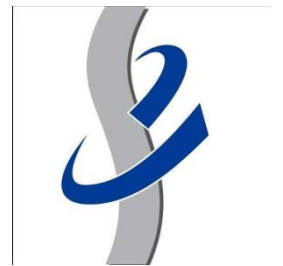


# Rehabilitation and return to work after cancer : policies, systems, programmes and instruments

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# Overview

- Introduction: cancer and return to work
- Project and its 6 tasks
- Literature review (task 1)
- Policies, systems, programmes and instruments (task 2)
- Conclusion



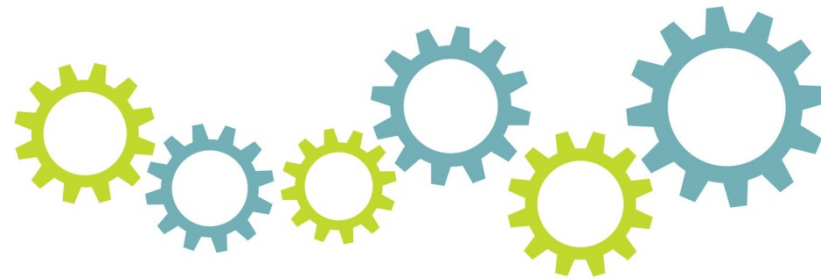
# Cancer survivors of working age

- In Europe:
  - Number of cancer survivors of working age is increasing
  - Better treatment and higher survival rates
  - Higher pension age
  - Ageing labour population
- In Europe each year 3.4 million new cases of cancer
- Of which **1.4 million people of working age *each year***

IARC, Eurocare, EUROSTAT 2016



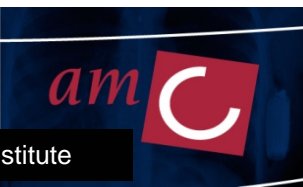
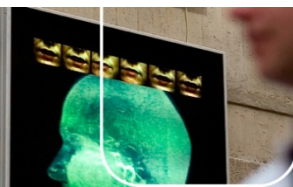
# Employment after a cancer diagnosis



Return to work can be difficult for many cancer survivors

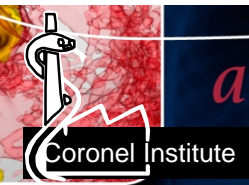
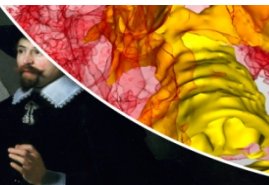
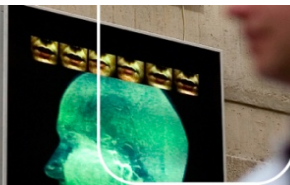
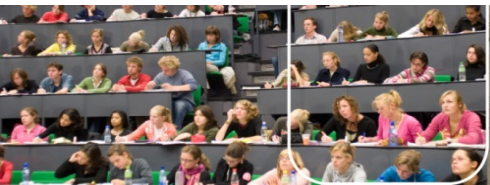
- Of all chronic medical conditions, cancer has by far the highest prevalence of work loss and reduction in work functioning<sup>1</sup>
- Average return to work rate: 64 % after 18 months<sup>2</sup>
- Cancer survivors: chance of unemployment is 37% higher<sup>3</sup>
- Cancer survivors have a 3 times higher chance of disability pension<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kessler JOEM 2001; <sup>2</sup> Mehnert 2013; <sup>3</sup> De Boer *et al.* Journal American Medical Association (JAMA) 2009;



# Return to work after a cancer diagnosis is important

- Worker:
  - Higher quality of life for cancer survivors
  - Income and Insurance
  - Structure and social contacts
- Employer
  - Keep experienced employees in companies
  - Reduce financial impact for companies and society



# Objectives

To provide insight into the problems encountered by workers affected by cancer and their employers

To provide recommendations for companies for workplace interventions to support work rehabilitation after a diagnosis of cancer

To provide insight into barriers and facilitators of implementing interventions to support work rehabilitation after a diagnosis of cancer

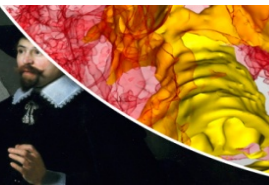
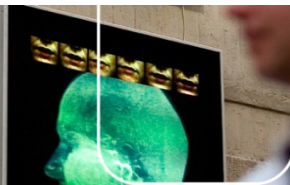
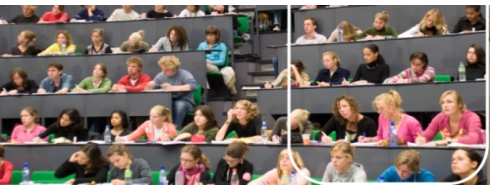


# Tasks in this project

1. Literature review on rehabilitation and return to work (RTW) after cancer
2. Policies, systems, programmes or instruments aimed at managing the RTW of workers with cancer
3. Company case studies
4. Focus groups
5. Final report
6. Working seminar



# Overview of project





# Literature review (task 1)

- Gather knowledge on:
  - 1) Health and safety implications for workers diagnosed with cancer
  - 2) Costs to employers and workers, e.g. for days lost, adaptation of equipment, compensation;
  - 3) RTW and occupational cancer;
  - 4) Issues relevant to SMEs;
  - 5) Good practice examples of RTW interventions.

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/tools-and-publications/publications/rehabilitation-and-return-work-after-cancer-literature-review>



# Results: health implications, and costs

- *Health and safety implications for workers affected by cancer*

- Effects of cancer and its treatment on health:

- Psychological and cognitive symptoms
- Physical symptoms : Fatigue

- Occupational implications:

- Diminished work productivity
- Work ability impairments and reduced functioning



- *Costs for workers, employers and society*

- Sick leave and no RTW:

- Financial loss for the worker, the employer, and society

- Total economic loss to the European Union due to lost work days as a result of cancer: €9.5 billion in 2009

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/tools-and-publications/publications/rehabilitation-and-return-work-after-cancer-literature-review>



# Results: occupational cancer and SMEs

- *Work-related and occupational cancer*
  - Return to work issues seem to be no different than with other cancers
    - Most occupational cancers have long latency
    - The exposure to carcinogens at work may be unknown
- *Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)*
  - RTW of cancer survivors seems more problematic for those in SMEs
  - Barriers:
    - Information and resources for RTW programmes are lacking
    - Fewer alternative jobs and tasks
  - Facilitators:
    - Family-like atmosphere: more supportive environment

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/tools-and-publications/publications/rehabilitation-and-return-work-after-cancer-literature-review>



# Task 2: instruments, practices, policies and interventions

- Scientific literature:  
Multidisciplinary interventions are effective in enhancing return to work for cancer survivors
- Search in scientific and grey literature, and by online questionnaires to experts
- 78 examples of instruments, practices, policies and interventions were found from:
  - 13 European countries
  - USA and Australia



# Aimed at workers

- Workplace accommodations, including
  - Workload
  - Tasks
  - Assistance.
- Information and training on cancer and return-to-work issues
- Psycho-educational interventions
- Rehabilitation services
- Job Coaching



# Aimed at employers

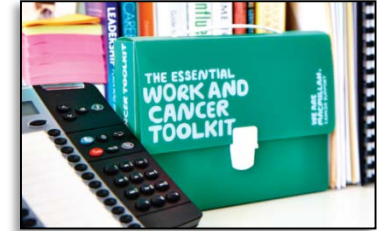
- Supporting employers in constructing return to work plans for employees with cancer.
- Ideas for workplace accommodations to facilitate return to work.
- Improving communication with the employee and co-workers.
- Providing factual information about diagnosis and treatment of cancer.
- Guidelines



# Programmes (1)

## 1) Working through cancer programme 'MacMillan' (UK)

- Online information, support, trainings, tools, videos
- Providing help to different stakeholders
  - People with cancer and their family/carers
  - Health and social care professionals
  - Employers



## 2) Municipality-based occupational rehabilitation programme (Denmark)

- Individual and tailored to the patient's needs
- Involving different stakeholders
  - The hospital (nurses)
  - The employer
  - A job consultant
  - The employee



# Programmes (2)

## 3) In-hospital-based rehabilitation intervention (the Netherlands)

- Early intervention
- Involving different stakeholders



## 4) Reintegration bureau 'Rentree' (Belgium)

- Involving different stakeholders
- Worker chooses the ones involved in his/her RTW process
- Tailored to the user



## 5) Reintegration bureau 'Re-turn' (the Netherlands)

- Including issues regarding work, home, family, relations and physical/mental effects of treatment and RTW.
- Involving different stakeholders





# Programmes (3)

## 6) Reintegration bureau 'oPuce' (the Netherlands)

- Providing help to unemployed cancer patients
- Results in new jobs for unemployed cancer survivors
- Working together with large companies



## 7) Booklet of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (Ireland)

- Aiming at:
  - Breaking the stigma of cancer and return to work
  - Encouraging good conversations employer and employee
  - Providing assistance to unions who are representing members diagnosed with breast cancer and returning to work



# Summary

- A diagnosis of cancer has a large impact on workers and employers
- Multidisciplinary interventions are effective in enhancing return to work in cancer survivors
- Working together with different stakeholders including the worker, the employer, health care professionals and occupational rehabilitation experts is important



# In cooperation with

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