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DM DIALOGUE EDITORIAL STATEMENT

Disability Management Dialogue is an initiative of the IAPDM Canadian Chapter, and as such, does not accept advertising, press releases or other information promoting individual IAPDM members, their companies, employers or products. Article submissions will be subject to editing for length and clarity, as well as spelling, grammar and language consistency. The Editorial Advisory Board reserves the right to refuse submissions. For further details regarding copyright transfer for the article submissions, please contact the Canadian Chapter by emailing nidmar@nidmar.ca. Submissions are accepted electronically and by mail. High quality photographs are welcome.

IAPDM communications go global

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Disability Management Dialogue* – or *DM Dialogue* for short. The International Association of Professionals in Disability Management is launching this new globally focused publication with the following goals:

- To serve as the pre-eminent publication for certified members (CDMPs and CRTWCs) engaged in the international field of consensus based disability management.
- To engage professional members in contributing to a meaningful, motivational and engaging international platform for sharing research, ideas, challenges, successes, case studies, profiles and more.
- To raise the prestige and profile of the CDMP and CRTWC designations in the 13 countries now licensed to deliver the curriculum and grant the professional designations.
- To further expand awareness of leading edge consensus based disability management and related best practices.

Disability Management Dialogue will be produced and published by the IAPDM's Canadian Chapter three times each year – in September, January and May – and will be distributed online to IAPDM members.

A once-a-year supplementary hard copy will be published each September to be used as a communications vehicle for international forums and events.

The first online/hard copy issue will be printed and available at the 4th International Forum on Disability Management (IFDM) being held September 22-24, 2008 in Berlin, Germany.

To reflect the newsletter's international mandate, an Editorial Advisory Board has been formed under the auspices of the IAPDM.

The views and opinions expressed within the DM Dialogue newsletter are not necessarily those held by the editors or the IAPDM membership. The material that is presented is meant to be thought provoking, promote dialogue, and be a forum for sharing information.

SUBMISSIONS WELCOME

This introductory issue offers a round-up of key progress made in the disability management (DM) field from around the globe.

For the January 2009 issue, we will be seeking submissions from members and will be on the look-out for a mix of leading edge opinion, research, experience and knowledge from both within and outside the disability management profession.

If you have a successful case study, research project, tracking module, personality profile, tips or news from any aspect of the disability management or related fields that you believe will be of benefit to your fellow members and industry colleagues, please pass them along to kathy@nidmar.ca.



The CDMP and CRTWC designations granted in Canada were developed by NIDMAR as part of a multi-national collaboration, which included the International Labour Organization (ILO). The designations are now finding acceptance around the world. The first country to become involved in granting the designations was Germany through the German Federation of Workers' Compensation Boards (DGUV) covering 50 million workers. Today disability management can be studied at a growing number of colleges and universities around the world. Experienced disability management practitioners in 13 countries now have the opportunity to take a licensing examination and become certified in their profession.

Dr. Joachim Breuer, managing director of the German Federation of Workers' Compensation Boards (DGUV) and IAPDM Chair said at the time of the launch, "The idea of disability management is an international one...We must bring disability management to the political international agenda. The IAPDM will provide a better platform for an experience exchange between international organizations."

Dr. Breuer's vision is to bring disability management to the same level as other international social concepts such as poverty and security. Disability Management Dialogue will continue to report on future progress made toward that goal.



GAINING GROUND – IAPDM EXPANDS

Just two short years ago a new association – the International Association of Professionals in Disability Management – emerged as the leading international organization to promote consensus based disability management around the world. Launched on March 22, 2006 in Berlin, the IAPDM has achieved much success since its inception, growing now to include 13 member countries including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Switzerland, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

The association's aim is to create a forum for disability management professionals to share experiences, network and advance mutual interests where the well-being and reintegration of injured or disabled workers are central.

LEADING EDGE — BC'S DISABILITY MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE ACHIEVES GROUNDSWELL OF EMPLOYER SUPPORT

In June, the National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR) was given a one-time \$1-million dollar grant from the Government of British Columbia to fund a new Disability Management Excellence initiative and has put the money to work providing grants for BC employers to improve the disability management and return to work programs in their workplaces in accordance with an international best practices standard.

The goal of the DMExcellence initiative is to have as many BC public and private sector employers as possible adopt an international best practice benchmark standard in disability management and return to work. The standard is set by the International Disability Management Standards Council (IDMSC), administrators of the Consensus Based Disability Management Audit (CBDMA) and the Workplace Disability Management Assessment (WDMA).

"I'd like to congratulate the British Columbia government on its leadership provincially, nationally and internationally in making this Disability Management Excellence initiative a reality," says Viateur Camiré, NIDMAR Employer Co-Chair and Vice-President Human Resources, AbitibiBowater, one of Canada's largest manufacturing companies. "Effective Disability Management programs are of major importance to Canadian employers as we not only deal with escalating



disability related costs but also with many contemporary labour market challenges such as increasing incidences of mental health issues, and an aging workforce requiring accommodations.”

Former WorkSafeBC President and CEO Ralph McGinn is Chair of the DMExcellence Advisory Committee that will process employer applications for grants of up to \$5,000 to conduct a CBDMA, up to \$2,500 for a shorter WDMA, and up to \$10,000 to implement and improve disability management practices in the workplace.

The DMExcellence initiative has earned high praise from the Business Council of BC, with President and CEO Virginia Greene noting “It will go a long way towards raising the participation of persons with disabilities into the British Columbia labour force.”

Unions are on board with the initiative’s consensus-based approach as well, including Canada’s largest private sector union, the 280,000-member strong United Steelworkers (USW) in Canada.

Ken Neumann, Labour Co-Chair of NIDMAR and Canadian National Director of the USW says, “In order to attain our financial, societal and personal goals, meaningful employment is as essential to people with disabilities as it is to most others in our society. Unfortunately, people with disabilities are all

Photo L to R: The DMExcellence Initiative funding is announced on June 9 in Vancouver, BC with (l to r) Member of the Legislative Assembly Ron Cantelon, NIDMAR Executive Director Wolfgang Zimmermann, and Minister of Employment and Income Assistance Claude Richmond.

too often marginalized in our society, especially when they have been out of the labour force too long. Only through effective joint Disability Management programs, ensuring that on-set of a disabling condition does not sever an existing employment relationship, can we have a significant impact on this sad reality.”

A broad cross-section of BC employers from forestry, health and airport authorities to the public sector, municipalities, school districts, insurance companies and universities to retailers and the legal, accounting and financial professions have already agreed to undergo the CBDMA and are challenging other organizations in their industry sectors to have a disability management needs assessment conducted in their workplaces as well.

For more information on the DMExcellence initiative, visit www.dmexcellence.ca

ON THE GLOBAL FRONT — THE IDMSC MOVES TOWARD QUALITY ASSURANCE

With the expanding number of jurisdictions participating in the IDMSC, the organization has moved towards practical quality assurance initiatives with the appointment of three official representatives.

Australasian rep appointed

The IDMSC appointed Alan Clayton as its official representative in Australasia. Clayton, an independent research consultant and professor specializing in accident compensation

Photo L to R: Alan Clayton and Wolfgang Zimmermann



and injury prevention, is well qualified to ensure that IDMSC standards and integrity are maintained in Australasia with the roll out of its disability management protocol, including education, certification and audit standards. In addition to holding honorary positions with three of Australia's top educational institutions, Mr. Clayton was instrumental in implementing the State of Victoria's workcare system.

For Clayton, his appointment was a reciprocated honour. "It's the only appointment I've ever accepted of this nature, and I've been asked to represent many agencies," he noted. "I've accepted it because I think this will be the international standard, if it isn't already, and I'm very much attracted to it because of its scientific rigour and because of the consensus based nature of the system."

"If we are going to achieve meaningful results, we need to involve both employers and employees, and that is embedded in the whole IDMSC approach."

Rep appointed for German speaking jurisdictions

Horst Günther, former German Federal Associate Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, has been appointed as the IDMSC's official representative for Germany, Austria, and the German speaking part of Switzerland. Mr. Günther was a member of Parliament for 22 years in the Bundestag (the German national parliament) and served as the Associate Minister of Labour under former Chancellor Helmut Kohl between 1991 and 1998. His association with this endeavour dates back to early 1991 following which, he led the German

delegation for the World at Work component of Independence '92, an international congress and exposition on disability. Since then, his association and support for more effective business and labour collaboration as well as better outcomes for injured and disabled workers has continued unabated.

Having someone of Mr. Günther's stature as well as national and international credibility is key in maintaining that all areas of educational programming, professional certification and disability management audits are maintained at the highest level of qualitative and administrative standards. This is particularly important since the adoption of both the educational programming and professional certification has found widespread acceptance in Germany.

Rep appointed for the United Kingdom and Ireland

With the transfer of the educational curriculum, professional certifications and program standards to leading organizations in both the UK and Ireland, Professor Dr. Donal McAnaney, former research director of the Rehab Group in Ireland and disability researcher in the European Union, has been appointed as the IDMSC's representative in order to ensure the maintenance of administrative standards in the implementation of the IDMSC's disability management protocol across these jurisdictions. Dr. McAnaney is also the former Irish representative to Rehab International, is a professor at the University College of Dublin, and is a leading member of the International Labour Organization's global information network (GLADNET).

Photo L to R: Wolfgang Zimmermann and Horst Günther

Photo L to R: Wolfgang Zimmermann and Donal McAnaney.



Dr. McAnaney has been involved with this endeavour over the last decade as he has been on the forefront in the European Union in advancing better outcomes for injured workers and employers through more effective return to work. In addition to his role as the IDMSC's representative for the above mentioned countries, he is also the IDMSC's Research Chair leading the continuous improvement process for the disability management protocol.

SETTING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IN AUSTRALIA

The Personal Injury Education Foundation (PIEF) was established in 2006 by a consortium of Australian and New Zealand accident compensation regulators, insurers and claims management organizations that shared the vision of creating leading educational programs, initiatives and events designed to enrich and enhance the range and depth of personal injury management skills, while ensuring career pathways for people working in the personal injury industry are recognized and further developed.

Shortly after the Foundation was established, its Board agreed to send a delegation to North America to establish research and collaborative links with a number of organizations with similar missions and aims. PIEF Manager Nathan Clarke was a member of the delegation that paid a visit to

NIDMAR's headquarters in Victoria, BC. "Although I had a rough idea of what NIDMAR was all about, I was incredibly impressed with their passion and the incredible achievements that they had made up to that point. The rest as they say is history."

Clarke sees long-term potential for the professional program to make an impact. "I think Australia still has a long way to go in the disability / injury management field as it is very early days and unfortunately we are a bit behind Canada in that respect. However, I believe that there is significant momentum building and everyone I speak to about the NIDMAR programs is incredibly supportive and willing to get behind our push to increase the profile of disability / injury management in Australia."

"I don't think the challenges are that much different from those faced in other western nations, however being a large country with a relatively small population with six states and two territories all with different OHS, workers' compensation and return to work legislation is one very big challenge indeed. But I am happy to say that over the last few years many jurisdictions have agreed to work together more cooperatively to improve consistency in approach to return to work, particularly the training of Return to Work Coordinators."

In 2008, PIEF had only a short time to promote the May 2008 examinations. Despite that, nine individuals successfully passed the CDMP examination in Australia. With more time to prepare, Clarke looks forward to the interest that next year's examinations are likely to generate. "I expect 2009 to be a bumper year!"

*Photo L to R: Professor R.R. Officer, Chair, PIEF
and Wolfgang Zimmermann*



PROTOCOL COMES TO NEW ZEALAND

Since 1974, New Zealanders have been enjoying the most unique and comprehensive insurance coverage in the world. After a Royal Commission looked into the impact of accidents on community members, the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) was established at that time as a crown corporation to run New Zealand's accident compensation program – one that provides 24-hour, 7-day-a-week, no-fault personal injury insurance coverage.

ACC's program includes injuries suffered in motor vehicle accidents, at work (even if people are self-employed), at home or while at leisure. It covers the young and the elderly and it even covers visitors to New Zealand. "This is totally a no-fault scheme that's forward-looking," said ACC's CEO, Dr. Jan White. "The fact that there isn't any debate or fight about whether it occurred at work or whether it was due to a motor vehicle accident means that it concentrates on the impact of injury not the causation.

ACC added new tools to better deliver its exceptional coverage. It adopted the full disability management protocol: the audit tool, professional certifications and the educational curriculum. The NIDMAR tools will help ACC achieve its mandate in a number of ways. First, while ACC is not a government department per se, it has a legislative framework and must respond to the Minister for ACC.

"The whole NIDMAR approach offers us several things," says Dr. White. "One, it is very consistent with the govern-

ment's goal of promoting collaboration between government agencies and stakeholders to achieve a greater consistency of approach across New Zealand. "While ACC has picked this up, it is really only as a proxy to try to pick it up for the whole of New Zealand."

"Right now, New Zealand's labour market is extraordinarily tight. We have a very low unemployment rate – the fifth lowest in the OECD at 3.8 percent. So we must improve our labour market participation, and we need to refocus our whole social support system to do this," explained Dr. White. "That's why all government departments are interested in this."

NIDMAR's training and certification tools will also help ACC fill another big gap – New Zealand currently has no professional qualifications for disability management professionals with a return to work focus. As for the audit tool, it will add the return to work element to ACC's existing audit tool, which is used by some large employers who manage their own work-related employee injuries.

FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES JOIN IDMSC

Four more countries were added to the roster of those licensed to deliver NIDMAR's curriculum and grant the internationally accepted professional designations CDMP and CRTWC.

NIDMAR signed a licensing agreement with *Prevent*, the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, covering Belgium, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and France.

Through education and training, *Prevent* helps businesses develop integrated prevention policies and guarantee health and safety standards at work. Based in Brussels, *Prevent* also has a social and policy-support function. It works on various international research projects; supports government at European, federal and regional levels; maintains contact with social partners and takes account of the collective aspect of welfare policy.

"Our organization considers prevention as part of the business strategy," explained Managing Director Marc De Greef. "However it is one thing to guarantee health and safety standards at work, yet quite another to deal with the longer

Photo L to R: Wolfgang Zimmermann, executive director, NIDMAR, and Dr. Jan White, Chief Executive Officer, ACC.



term consequences of accidents and health problems that do happen – especially in terms of having an established legal framework and specific company policies to promote the reintegration of the affected employees. For this, a new and complementary strategy and methodology is needed.”

Absenteeism costs Belgian businesses an estimated 6.6 billion euro a year. It also represents a huge societal cost; in Belgium the total cost for disablement benefits represents about eight percent of the total social expenditure.

In practice, there are few companies in Belgium that offer a proactive reintegration policy. Until recently, employers were rarely approached regarding responsibility for disabled persons, both current employees and job seekers.

In addressing the issue of employer responsibility, De Greef stresses “In such a complex matter, it is beneficial to exchange methods, to learn from other organizations and to experience how other nations deal with this issue. Because of this, *Prevent* took the initiative of signing an agreement with NIDMAR.”

Overall, *Prevent* sees benefits for all involved in bringing NIDMAR’s curriculum and the designations to the European countries under its license agreement. While its primary customers are businesses, through its agreement with NIDMAR, *Prevent* is seeking to educate intermediaries who can bring about successful reintegration processes dealing in a professional way with the challenges along the way.

PRESENTATION IN CHINA

NIDMAR Executive Director Wolfgang Zimmermann gave a presentation in Beijing to more than 50 experts from clinics and hospitals run by the China Disabled Persons’ Federation (CDPF). Held at the largest rehabilitation centre in China, the opportunity was arranged by Dr. Joachim Breuer, Managing Director of Germany’s DGUV.

According to the CDPF, there are 60 million people with disabilities in China and with the help of workers’ compensation experts in Germany, the country has built a system that includes compensation and prevention, but does not have an organization for disability management. Deng Pufang, Chairman of the CDPF, who is disabled himself, is an energetic advocate for disability management in the country and has been seeking to change that. After the presentation, Zimmermann and Dr. Breuer were given what they saw as a “political green light.”

Photo L to R: Prof. Marc De Greef and Wolfgang Zimmermann



FORD GERMANY FIRST EUROPEAN COMPANY TO BECOME "IDMSC CERTIFIED"

The scene was Cologne, Germany, June 8, 2006 when the Ford Company, Germany became the first company in Europe to successfully achieve the International Disability Management Standards Council's "IDMSC Certified" award. In attendance were executives from Ford Germany and Ford Europe, as well as senior trade union representatives.

Supported by Franz Thönnies, MdB, Parliamentary State Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the event recognized the leadership of two key individuals whose commitment, dedication and vision were critical to the success of disability management in Germany: Dr. Erich Knülle, Disability Management and Health & Safety Systems, Ford Germany, whose personal engagement led to the development and success of the Ford Germany program, and Dr. Joachim Breuer of the DGUV, whose organization saw the value of international comparisons for German industry and obtained the license rights for the CBDMA in Germany.

Posing in front of a 1925-vintage Model T Ford at the Cologne plant, from left: Rainer Ludwig, managing director, Ford Germany; Heiko Nigmann, deputy chairman, Central Works Council; Petra Zink, CDM, disability manager, Ford Europe; Wolfgang Zimmermann, NIDMAR executive director; Dr. Erich Knülle, CDM, Disability Management and Health & Safety Systems, Ford Germany; Franz Thönnies, MdB, parliamentary state secretary in the federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; Dr. Joachim Breuer, managing director of the Federation of Workers Compensation Boards (HVBG).



THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, WESTMEAD BECOMES "IDMSC CERTIFIED"

The Children's Hospital, Westmead became the first organization in Australia to receive the "IDMSC Certified" certificate, which is awarded by the IDMSC when an organization achieves a score of over 80 percent on the Consensus Based Disability Management Audit.

The 340-bed hospital is a paediatric specialty and tertiary referral hospital that sees around 26,000 admissions each year from New South Wales, Noumea, New Caledonia and other Pacific islands in the region. As Tony Middlebrook, Executive Director NSW Claims for Employers Mutual, the organization that undertook the audit explains, the hospital runs on its own statutory arrangements in dealing with the "very sensitive issues of children's health."

Middlebrook believes the hospital excelled in the audit, because its disability management program was set up right from the beginning to embrace a collaborative approach. He adds that management and workers were open to the audit, and wanted the assessment mostly from the standpoint of "what can we do next?" He cites, in particular, the good relationship-building, quick information exchanges and monthly reporting that are part of the hospital's program.

Photo L to R: David Wilkinson, Risk Manager, NSW Dept of Health; Steve Hunt, Director, NSW Self Insurance Corporation; Ian Palmer, Executive Manager, Corporate Governance & Risk Manager, Childrens' Hospital Westmead; Frank Horn, Executive Director Workforce Development, Childrens' Hospital Westmead; Alan Clayton, IDMSC representative; Tony Middlebrook, Executive Direct NSW Claims, Employers Mutual.



NEW ZEALAND'S ACC BECOMES "IDMSC CERTIFIED"

The Accident Compensation Corporation was the first in New Zealand to undertake the Consensus Based Disability Management Audit reviewing its program for its own employees – and achieved over 80 percent.

The Chair of ACC's Board Ross Wilson credits the organization's high score to teamwork and dedication to best practices, and the ACC setting an example for other employers across the country.

"One of the things that has made ACC's program successful to date has been our commitment to be a leader for the management of disability in the workplace. That commitment has been demonstrated through a dedicated team, participation as an accredited employer under ACC's Partnership Program (to tertiary level) and the development of a holistic approach to employee safety and well-being," explains Wilson.



CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS OFFERED IN HONG KONG

The Occupational Safety and Health Council of Hong Kong invited NIDMAR Executive Wolfgang Zimmermann to provide the keynote address at their International Best Practices Symposium on Occupational Rehabilitation and provide a two-day workshop on disability management and return to work.

The Occupational Safety and Health Council was established under an ordinance in 1988 as the "statutory body for promoting safety and health at work and sustaining the valuable workforce of Hong Kong." Along with providing safety and health education and training, and research and consultancy services, the Council serves as a resource centre for Hong Kong, other parts of China and internationally. This now includes taking the lead in the field of disability management.

This resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council's Executive Director, Wah-shing Tang. The Council held the professional certification examinations for the Certified Disability Management Professional (CDMP) designation in May 2008 in Hong Kong for the first time.

Photo L to R: Alan Clayton, IDMSC Representative, presents ACC CEO, Dr. Jan White with the "IDMSC Certified" certificate on April 18 in Wellington. Also pictured are members of ACC's Executive Leadership Team L-R: Denise Cosgrove, Graeme Osborne and Keith McLea.



PROFILES IN PRESTIGE — RECOGNIZING CDMPs AROUND THE WORLD

In 2008, professional certification examinations were offered in Australia, Canada, Ireland, Germany, Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Africa and the UK.

Unum employees among first certified in the UK

Unum, the UK's leading disability insurer, adopted the disability management protocol in late 2005. "There is a long history of vocational rehabilitation in the UK, but specific professional training in the area has traditionally been very difficult to obtain", says Joy Reymond, Head of Rehabilitation Services. "One of the compelling reasons for adopting the disability management tools was that they're internationally recognized standards."

Since then, Unum has administered the CDMP certification examination, which is open to practitioners in the UK who meet the prerequisite combination of practical experience in occupational rehabilitation and relevant academic qualifications.

Joy Reymond is pleased with the examination results. "Unum is proud to have the first Certified Disability Management Professionals in the UK among its vocational rehabilitation staff."

Unum welcomes new CDMPs from the UK and Ireland pictured here at Unum's Milton Court, Dorking, Surrey office at a special event commemorating their achievements (l to r): Graham Halsey, Ekaterina (Katya) Parry, Elaine Cook, Baljinder (Bal) Rai, Anita Walford, Mairead Conroy (RehabGroup, Ireland), Maxine Bauckham, Terry Fahy (RehabGroup, Ireland), Stephanie Lakin, Sarah Ramsden, Marcia Cumper, Rebecca Doyle, Emma Shakespeare. Missing from the photo are: Bobbie Donovan, Lesley Scott, Susan Mackenzie.

Germany takes the lead in certification examinations

The DGUV (the social accident insurance for Germany, formerly known as the HVBG) is the license holder for the professional certification examinations in Germany. The CDMP examinations have been held annually since 2003 and there are now over 600 individuals with the designation in Germany. The DGUV was the first organization outside Canada to adopt the professional standards. This year, the DGUV renewed the agreement for an indefinite period with the expectation of holding as many as three examination sittings per year.

In 2007, the CRTWC examination was offered for the first time and 14 individuals were successful in achieving this designation. December 2007 marked the special occasion in the collaboration between NIDMAR and the DGUV, namely the 5th anniversary of the initial licensing agreement providing the DGUV the right to award these professional designations across Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

ACC New Zealand clinical advisors achieve CDMP designation

Following the lead of Dr. Kevin Morris, Director of Clinical Services at the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) in New Zealand, another five medical professionals on ACC's clinical advisory team have become CDMPs.

ACC's network of clinical advisors provides advice on disability management to case and claims managers on a case-by-case basis. According to Dr. Morris, "Advice from the physicians in this network is most often focused on the treatment issues related to disability management."

Dr. Morris explains his own motivation in writing the examination, "Certification in disability management allows ACC and its clients to be assured that clinical advisors have a level of knowledge, training and experience that is internationally recognized and world class." He advises that ACC plans to provide access to training for all staff working in the area of disability management "with a view to having as many staff as possible attaining either the CRTWC or CDMP qualifications."



Certification examinations offered in Australia

Employers Mutual Limited (EML) is a provider of workers compensation services in New South Wales and in South Australia. EML licensed the Consensus Based Disability Management Audit as far back as 2004 and has more recently been offering the audit as a service to its clients. EML has congratulated several of its employees on achieving their CDMP designations.

In the State of Victoria, Occupational Physician Dr. Mary Wyatt, chair of the nonprofit organization ResWorks, a foundation for research into workplace injury and illness, has also become certified as a CDMP. Dr. Wyatt is already at the top of her profession, but achieving the designation has provided new perspectives. With certification, she sees the ability to share information, developments and best practices as major advantages, "The whole issue of return to work is a global issue and there is much to be learned."

Also motivated by the desire to lead in their chosen field, the principals of Keystone Professionals of Sydney, Meaghan Gill and Jennifer Quintana, achieved their CDMP designations. Keystone is an accredited occupational rehabilitation provider delivering injury management services. "Maintaining our relevant accreditations and certifications enables us to ensure we remain at the forefront of best practice and also ensures we utilize relevant resources to support our roles within the injury management and rehabilitation fields," says Occupational Therapist Meaghan Gill.

Photo L to R: IDMSC representative in Australasia Alan Clayton joins ACC Director of Clinical Services (and new CDMP) Dr. Kevin Morris, and Dr. Jan White, Chief Executive ACC in congratulating other clinical advisors on achieving their CDMP designations.

REHAB GROUP OFFERS CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS IN IRELAND

As NIDMAR licence holders in Ireland, the Rehab Group is actively working to develop services to support private and public sector employers to manage illness, injury or disability related workplace absence. The smaller audit assessment tool will further enhance the services the Rehab Group can offer as the majority of people employed in Ireland work in the small to medium enterprise (SME) sector and the assessment will provide an attractive cost/benefit option for employers in this sector.

A number of the Rehab Group's employees are now Certified CBDMA Auditors. In May 2008, the Rehab Group hosted the international CDMP examination in Ireland for the first time and welcomed seven individuals who successfully achieved the CDMP designation. Work is ongoing in adapting the curriculum modules for the Irish market.

The Rehab Group is offering absence management services to Irish employers through one of its companies, Rehab Enterprises Access Ability. This absence management service focuses on returning employees who have acquired a disability, or a long-term illness, to meaningful and productive work as quickly as possible and in a safe manner.

Photo L to R: Dr. Graham Corbett, Medical Advisor Whangarei; Dr. John Monigatti, Director ACC Workwise Auckland; and Alastair Wilson, Corporate Medical Advisor. Missing from the photo are: Dr. Margaret Macky, Director ACC Workwise Wellington, and Dr. Gerard Walker, Director ACC Workwise Christchurch.



In addition, Rehab Enterprises Access Ability was commissioned by the Irish National Disability Authority to develop a "Good Practice Guide" on back to work strategies and retention of people with disabilities in employment following onset of a disability. The purpose of the guide is to provide practical and comprehensive information for Irish employers and employees on what is good practice in the retention and reintegration of workers back into employment after onset of an illness, injury or disability in adult life. The guide is based on research evidence as well as good practice, and was published in April 2008.



CERTIFICATION ACHIEVED IN SOUTH AFRICA



Dr. Nomsa Maku, an occupational medical practitioner currently working with the Department of Minerals and Energy for the Government of South Africa, successfully achieved the CDMP professional designation. "I was indirectly doing occupational health in that I had a medical practice near a coal mine," said Dr. Maku. "Employees got injured and the feeling was that employees should be given a disability package and leave the company." Maku completed the online educational modules and found that one of the most appealing aspects was the international exchange. "I have a vision to work with Canada to help South Africa, which is still backward regarding disability management," said Dr. Maku.

IFDM BERLIN, SEPTEMBER 22 – 24, 2008: BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TOGETHER

Dealing with the vocational capacity of employed citizens who are unable to work as a result of an accident or illness is the yardstick by which a "healthy" society is measured – especially when older people remain in employment as a result of the demographic development. The retention of their working capacity, not allowing them to be unemployed or send them into "retirement" is the global goal of disability management; valuable knowledge remains in companies, employees retain their standard of living and social systems/insurances are not burdened.

With the IFDM, a new movement has emerged over the past few years in addition to new alliances being formed. This is where people meet who wish to pull down walls between the stakeholders and develop cross-border return-to-work strategies. The participants are from among the state, companies, disabled persons, lobbyists, insurance companies and other service providers, especially physicians, clinics, vocational promoters, health and social services in prevention and rehabilitation. Disability managers from all over the world exchange experiences and can learn from each other.





The German Federation of Social Accident Insurances and the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs are the hosts of this congress in Berlin. More than 120 speakers from almost all parts of the world will be presenting the latest knowledge concerning how to get employees who have become ill back to work. Please refer to the program at www.ifdm2008.de.

To date, more than 500 conference attendees have registered to participate in this global “mega-event” in Berlin. DM Dialogue will provide details of the conference and key note addresses in the January 2009 issue.



IDFM 2010, CALIFORNIA, USA

The fifth IFDM will be held in the United States, hosted by the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions. The event will coincide with the association’s annual convention.

“We want to become much more active in disability management programs,” says Gregory Krohm, the association’s executive director. “Disability management is relatively undeveloped in the U.S., the States are keen on promoting it. The association is embracing this new-found interest and trying to become a more active advocate in disability.”

Chairing the planning committee for the event is Christine Baker, executive officer of California’s Commission on Health and Safety and Workers’ Compensation. “Everyone – workers, employers and the public – benefit from appropriate, well-managed and effective disability management,” she says. “Improved return to work could reduce workers’ compensation temporary and permanent disability payments, decrease workers’ wage losses, cut down on indirect costs such as hiring and training; and lessen the potential for litigation. This forum will provide an opportunity to examine and gain knowledge about these important issues from an international perspective.”

Further information will be posted at www.idmsc.org as it becomes available.

UNUM TO HOST THE 2012 IFDM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Unum, the UK’s largest group income protection insurer, announced it would host the IDFM in London, England in 2012 – the tenth anniversary of the conference.

Hosting the conference is a natural fit for Unum. The company has proven its leadership in disability management by hosting the Beginnings conference over the past five years, which brings together government and disability groups to raise the profile of significant disability issues nationally.

Unum has already built an innovative occupational rehabilitation program, incorporating best practices from a number of jurisdictions. Hosting the IFDM will help spread understanding about the approach Unum takes to disability management.

“We hope the conference will give a really strong profile to the work we are doing in occupational rehabilitation training and auditing because nothing occurs in isolation, it all occurs in context,” said Joy Reymond, Unum’s head of Rehabilitation Services. “If people understand the different approaches to disability management in North America and Europe, then they are more likely to value what we do at Unum.”

While Unum plans to build on the success and format of previous IFDM conferences, there will be one outstanding difference to the 2012 event – it will be held in London, home to the Olympic summer games that year.



NIDMAR NEWS

The Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences Bill, proposed and advocated by NIDMAR, passed third and final reading in the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia On May 14, 2007, with unanimous bi-partisan support. Since then, the search has been on to find a suitable site for the university in the province of British Columbia.

The university, slated to be a leading global educational and research centre, will use an interdisciplinary approach to the critical issues associated with the lifelong workplace health cycle – health and safety, return to work and disability management, as well as rehabilitation.

“From its inception, this initiative has enjoyed an ever-increasing number of key supporters, whether they’re front-line workers, executives or key decision-makers from across all stakeholder groups and the political spectrum here in Canada and around the world,” said NIDMAR’s Wolfgang Zimmermann.

“Consensus has been key all along, and will continue to be essential as we move forward. All of the proponents involved have recognized the value and potential impact of this initiative and supported it, while advocating its goals and objectives.”

For more details on this initiative, please visit the Government of British Columbia website at www.leg.bc.ca or contact wolfgang@nidmar.ca.

Photo L to R: Minister of Employment and Income Assistance Claude Richmond; MLA Scott Fraser; Canadian director for the United Steelworkers, Ken Neumann; NIDMAR executive director, Wolfgang Zimmermann; director of Public Affairs for Canfor, Lee Coonfer; MLA Ron Cantelon; and Minister of Advanced Education Murray Coell.