**TASK FORCE 7: PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS AT WORK**

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In addition to the traditional risks and hazards, globalization, increasing competition and changing work organization bring along many new challenges; such as introduction of new technologies, new work organizations, haste at work, new work practices, and growing mobility. These are associated with new types of diseases and burdens, such as ergonomic problems, musculoskeletal disorders and injuries, increased psychological stress, and violence at work. The objective of this Task Force is to make workers aware of the problem and provide tools for increasing psychological and physiological well-being at work.

It is clear that the level of expertise, experiences and research in this area vary in different countries. Therefore, defining the target audience and countries for each product is a necessity.

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**Publication : Work organisation and stress**

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Keywords: work organisation, stress, prevention, organisation culture, risk assessment

Target group: employers, managers and trade union representatives

This document is the third in a series of occupational health documents entitled: *Protecting Workers’ Health*. The World Health Organization (WHO) within the Programme of Occupational Health publishes it. It is the result of the implementation effort of the Global Strategy on Occupational Health for all as agreed upon at the Fourth Network Meeting of the WHO Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health which was held in Espoo, Finland from 7-9 June 1999.

Work stress is thought to affect individuals' psychological and physical health, as well as organisations' effectiveness, in an adverse manner. This booklet provides practical advice on how to deal with work stress. Discussed are the nature of stress at work, the causes and effects of stress, as well as prevention strategies and risk assessment and management methods. Also discussed are the role of the organisational culture in this process and the resources to be drawn upon for managing work stress.

The advice should be interpreted in the light of the particular problems faced by different groups of workers and what is reasonably practicable by way of solutions for each individual employer. Lists of common causes and effects of stress are included for illustrative purposes. References and suggestions for further reading are listed in Chapter 12.

The Brochure is available in English, French and Spanish on http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/stress

The brochure has now been published in English, French and Spanish. It has been translated into Japanese.

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**Raising awareness on psychological harassment at work through a brochure**

Renato Gilioli, Maria Grazia Cascitto, Emanuela Fattorini and Chiara Rengo, Istituti Clinici di Perfezionamento, Dipartimento di Medicina del Lavoro e Sicurezza sul Lavoro e Consorzio ISPESL/ICP per il Centro di Collaborazione con l’OMS per la Medicina del Lavoro e l’Igiene Industriale, Clinica del Lavoro “Luigi Devoto”, Milano, Italy (omscons@uni.mi.it)

Viviane Gonik, Institute of Occupational Health Sciences, Switzerland (viviane.gonik@inst.hospvd.ch)

**Keywords**: harassment, mobbing, stress, work-related diseases, prevention

**Target group**: health professionals, decision-makers, managers, Human Resources Directors and staff, Trade Unions and workers.

The purpose of the project is to raise awareness among health professionals, decision-makers, managers, Human Resources Directors and staff, Trade Unions and workers on the importance of psychological harassment at work, its health and social consequences and preventive measures. Psychological Harassment, also termed mobbing and bullying, is a form of employee abuse, without sexual connotations, due to
unethical behaviour of colleagues or superiors, leading to victimization of the worker, with possible health effects, mainly of the psychic conditions. Social consequences and ways to combat the phenomenon are dealt with.

The brochure covers general information on psychological harassment at work, health effects, management and preventive measures. This project has been completed. The publication was presented and 2000 copies were distributed at the VI Network Meeting of the WHO Collaborating Centres and at the International Conference Occupational Health (ICOH) held in Iguassu (Brasil), February 2003. The booklet has been translated into Spanish by Fundación Iberoamericana de Seguridad y Salud Ocupacional (FISO). Other WHO Collaborating Centres have shown interest in the translation into other languages.

English/ French/Spanish/ Italian versions are available on http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/harassment/en/.

The document has now been published in English and French. The Spanish version is in print. Japanese version is ongoing.

Project start date: November 2001
Project end date: October 2003

**Diffondere conoscenza e consapevolezza sulle molestie morali sul lavoro attraverso una guida**

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Parole chiave: Molestie, mobbing, stress, patologie correlate al lavoro, prevenzione.

Utenza destinatari: professionisti della salute, responsabili dei processi decisionali, managers, addetti al personale, Sindacati e lavoratori.

Scopo del progetto: Diffondere conoscenza e consapevolezza tra professionisti della salute, responsabili dei processi decisionali, managers, addetti al personale, Sindacati e lavoratori sull’importanza delle molestie morali sul lavoro, le loro conseguenze sulla salute e sociali, e le misure preventive.

Descrizione sintetica del progetto: La guida fornirà informazioni generali sulle molestie morali sul lavoro, gli effetti sulla salute, il loro trattamento e le misure preventive.

Le molestie morali sul lavoro, dette anche Mobbing e Bullying, sono una forma di abuso esercitato su un dipendente, senza connotazioni sessuali, dovuto a comportamento non etico, di colleghi o superiori che provoca una condizione di vittimizzazione del lavoratore, con possibili effetti sulla salute, in particolare sulle condizioni psichiche. Sono trattate anche le conseguenze sociali e le modalità per contrastare il fenomeno.

La brochure fornisce informazioni sulle molestie psicologiche nell’ambiente di lavoro, sui loro effetti sulla salute, su come gestirne gli effetti e mettere in atto misure preventive. Il progetto è stato completato e la pubblicazione è stata presentata e distribuita in 2000 copie al VI Meeting del Network dei Centri di Collaborazione con l’OMS e alla Conferenza Internazionale di Medicina del Lavoro (ICOH) che si sono svolti ad Iguassu (Brasile) nel Febbraio 2003. E’ in corso la traduzione in lingua spagnola, a cura della Fundación Iberoamericana de Seguridad y Salud Ocupacional (FISO), Colombia.

Altri Centri di Collaborazione hanno mostrato interesse alla eventuale traduzione in altre lingue.


Il documento è stato pubblicato in inglese, spagnole e francesi.

La versione giapponese è in preparazione.

*Data iniziale del progetto: novembre 2001*

**Prise de conscience de la problématique du harcèlement psychologique au travail au travers d’une brochure**

Renato Gilio, Maria Grazia Cassitto, Emanuela Fattorini and Chiara Rengo, Istituti Clinici di Perfezionamento, Département de sécurité et santé au travail et Consortium ISPESL/ICP en tant que centre collaborateur de l’OMS en santé au travail, Clinica del Lavoro "Luigi Devoto", Milan

Viviane Gonik, Institut universitaire romand de santé au travail, Suisse (viviane.gonik@inst.hospvd.ch)
Mots-clés: harcèlement, mobbing, stress, maladies en relation avec le travail, prévention

*Gîble*: professionnels de la santé, décideurs, managers, directions des ressources humaines, syndicats et travailleurs.

L'objectif de ce projet est de faire prendre conscience aux professionnels de la santé, aux décideurs, managers, personnes des ressources humaines, personnel d'encadrement, syndicats et travailleurs de l'importance du harcèlement psychologique au travail et de ses conséquences sociales et médicales afin de mettre sur pied des mesures préventives. Le harcèlement psychologique, également appelé mobbing, est une forme d'abus sur l'employé, sans connotation sexuelle, provoqué par des comportements non-éthiques de la part de collègues ou de supérieur provoquant une victimisation du collaborateur–rice avec des effets, principalement psychiques, sur la santé des personnes victimes.

La brochure donnera des informations générales sur le harcèlement psychologique au travail, les effets sur la santé et les mesures à prendre en terme de management et de prévention. Les conséquences sociales et les moyens de combattre ce phénomène sont décrites. Les travaux sont relativement bien avancés. Les travaux sont maintenant terminés. La publication a été présentée et 2000 copies distribuées, lors de la 6ème rencontre du réseau de centres collaborateurs de l’OMS, en parallèle avec la Conférence Internationale de santé au travail (ICOH) qui s'est tenue à Iguassu (Brésil) en février 2003. La brochure est en cours de traduction en espagnol par la Fundación Iberoamericana de Seguridad y Salud Ocupacional (FISO), Colombia. D'autres centres collaborateurs ont manifesté leur intérêt pour des traductions dans d'autres langues.


*Date du début du projet:* novembre 2001

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**Publication on mental health and stress at work in Chile**

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*Keywords:* mental health, stress, work, promotion

*Target group:* managers , personnel managers, prevention experts, union officials, occupational health professionals and other personnel involved in health and safety activities in private and public organizations.

The purpose of the project is to introduce and promote basic knowledge regarding the prevalence and effects of stress and mental ill health in the workplace, and to provide recommendations and methodological elements to include mental health promotion activities in workplaces. The project involves the development of a manual, which will include sections on the scope of mental ill health in the general population and in the workplace; definitions of the stress process; basic information about mental health promotion; risk factors for stress and mental ill health at work; criteria for healthy workplaces; strategies for the introduction of mental health promotion in the work place.

A first version of a "Guide to Mental Health Promotion in the Workplace" is available in Spanish. This publication will serve as back-up material for the development of workshops or short seminars on this topic.

Centres collaborating on the project: Nina Horwitz, Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Chile (nhorwitz@machi.med.uchile.cl)

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**Training programme for prevention of workplace social violence in several economical sectors for the Colombian case**

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FISO, Colombia

*Keywords:* Prevention of terrorism, Kidnapping, extortion, interfamily violence, work violence, self-protection, self-care, self-management.

*Target group:* Decision makers, planners and managers, and occupational health staff in companies and enterprises exposed to violence in Colombia, and perhaps other countries exposed to the violent phenomena mentioned.

The purpose of the project is to provide methodologies and skills to prevent different types of violence at the workplace, through different techniques of self-protection based in self-care and self-management.
An innovative initiative to prevent violence was designed and called “Self-protection program based on self-care and self-management”. It consists of five (5) modules which include a theoretical framework, a student guide, a guideline for planning the training, and a set of slides for training. The modules were built to cover the most frequent different types of violence present at the workplace in Colombia, which are: terrorism, kidnapping, extortion, inter-familial violence, work violence and a guide to implement these programs within the enterprises. The modules were implemented and validated through 7 workshops done with employers and employees during 2002 and their results are being followed during the present year. They are now completed and available in Spanish.

The modules are finished and written in Spanish. The product is a “Self-protection program based on self-care and self-management” consisting of a set of (5) modules to prevent the most frequent types of violence at work, in Spanish, focused for the Colombian case.

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**A guide for the promotion of mental health in the workplace**

University of Nottingham (Stavroula Leka, stavroula.leka@nottingham.ac.uk )

*Project start date: October 2002  
Project end date: May 2003*

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**Mental health and stress at work: Programme design, evaluation, Chilean experience**

Marcelo Trucco (mtrucco@achs.cl) and Alejandro Sallato (asallato@achs.cl), Asociación Chilena de Seguridad (ACHS)

*Keywords:* mental health, stress, work, promotion

*Target group:* This publication will serve as back up material for the development of workshops or short seminars on this topic. It will be addressed to managers, personnel managers, prevention experts, union officials, occupational health professionals and other personnel involved in health and safety activities in private and public organizations.

The purpose of this project is to introduce and promote basic knowledge regarding the prevalence and effects of stress and mental ill health in the workplace, and to provide recommendations and methodological elements in order to include mental health promotion activities in workplaces. The project involves the development of a manual type of publication which will include sections on the scope of mental ill health in the general population and in the workplace; definitions of the stress process; basic information about mental health promotion; risk factors for stress and mental ill health at work; criteria for healthy workplaces; strategies for the introduction of mental health promotion in the workplace.

A draft outline and preliminary texts that are to be included in the definitive document have already been prepared. The Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Chile is collaborating on the project. Funds will be provided by the host country. The project will be completed in 2003.

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**SOLVE - Addressing psychosocial issues at work through training**

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*Keywords:* HIV/AIDS, Tobacco, Violence, Stress, Drugs and Alcohol, psychosocial issues at work

*Target Group:* Policy makers, managers, workers

SOLVE is an interactive educational programme designed to assist in the development of policy and action to address psychosocial issues in the workplace. Stress, alcohol and drug use, violence (both physical and psychological), HIV/AIDS and tobacco use can lead to health-related problems for the worker and loss of productivity for the enterprise or organisation. Taken together, they represent a major cause of accidents, fatal injuries, disease and absenteeism in developed and developing countries. SOLVE focuses on prevention.

The methodology of the SOLVE training courses is designed to enable an enterprise or an organisation to integrate psychosocial issues into their policy and establish a framework for preventative action. SOLVE recognises that each of the five psychosocial issues treated can cause the other, leading potentially to a downward spiral that can effectively be countered by an integrated policy approach. In order to meet the needs of various audiences, SOLVE includes five training packages:
SOLVE for Managing Directors (2.5 hours), The Policy-level SOLVE Course (40 hours), SOLVE for Workers (1.5 hours of orientation), MicroSolve (2 hours focussed on shopfloor action), Course Directors' Course (24 hours).

The design of the SOLVE training package is based on the manufacturing industry. It is also adapted to the health care industry, the fire service and the maritime sector through modifications of handouts, activities and the simulation exercise. Further adaptations are foreseen. Selected institutions will act as host institutes for SOLVE. They take on the responsibility for coordinating the facilitation and instruction of the courses at national level. As the SOLVE methodology develops within a country, the institution may wish to consider adapting SOLVE to the local culture and to various occupational sectors or target audiences. The host institution may also consider the development of MicroSolve modules for application at the national level and the translation of SOLVE into local languages. Translations into French and Thai have been completed, translation into Italian is underway; German, Spanish, Bulgarian and Chinese are planned.

A modern hazard in a traditional working environment: Raising awareness of stress in developing countries

Irene Houtman ( hoi@arbeid.tno.nl ) TNO Work and Employment, NL,
With WHO/HQ (Evelyn Kurten, kurtummargate@who.int), University of Nottingham (Stavroula Leka, stavroula.leka@nottingham.ac.uk ), University of Dortmund, IFADo, Federal Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Berlin.

*Keywords:* brochure, stress, work, education

*Target group:* developing countries, employers & workers' representatives

The objective of this project is to raise awareness on the issue of work stress in countries which for obvious reasons do not yet recognise stress as a priority issue, but could learn from the mistakes and successes of combatting work stress in the developed countries to be prepared for the near future in which it can be expected that the issue of work stress will become important. The brochure will cover an introduction to stress by discussing its causes and effects on health and productivity. It will then proceed to discuss how it can be best managed at work.

A draft outline of the proposed brochure is ready. Collaboration with other Centres is under way.

Raising awareness in small businesses on workplace stress (English and Spanish versions)

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The objective of this project is to contribute informational and educational materials being developed for small businesses on a variety of occupational safety and health issues, including workplace stress. A video describing workplace stress and recommendations for abating and dealing with it has been produced. Currently, it is available in English on DVD and VHS. Accompanying print materials are in draft from and are scheduled for evaluation by owners of small businesses during 2004 and 2005 as part of a larger intervention study. English and Spanish versions are planned. Funds are in place.

*Project start date:* 2002

*Project end date:* The project will be completed in 2005.

Preparation of guidelines for occupational health services on prevention of stress at work

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*Keywords:* brochure, guidelines, stress, occupational health, prevention

*Target group:* decision-makers, educators, health authorities, occupational health services, occupational health and safety professionals, companies operating in the health services sector, trade unions.

*Project start date:* January 2004

The project aims at putting an emphasis on preventative actions for stress at work, and to provide guidelines for its management in the sector of occupational health services. A brochure will be developed that will focus on the incident of work stress in the occupational health services and will provide guidelines for its prevention and management.

A draft outline of the proposed brochure is being prepared. Collaboration with other centres is under way.
Project start date: January 2004
Project end date: June 2005.

Towards the Development of a Psychosocial Risk Management Toolkit (PRIMAT)
Dr Stavroula Leka, Stavroula.Leka@nottingham.ac.uk, Institute of Work, Health & Organisations, University of Nottingham, 8 William Lee Buildings, Science & Technology Park, Nottingham NG7 2 RQ, UK

Keywords: psychosocial risks, toolkit, stress

Target group: Policy makers, Occupational Health Services, Employers, Trade Unions, SMEs, OHS experts

Purpose of project: Development of a Psychosocial Risk Management Toolkit (PRIMAT)
Over the years, a need has been identified through the work of the WHO’s Network of Collaborating Centres (CCs) in Occupational Health for practical procedures and tools for the management of occupational health and safety at work. It is clear that such procedures and tools should be suitable for use in developing countries and also in countries in transition as well as in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In addition, emphasis has been placed on the changing nature of work and new forms of risk that could negatively affect employee health and safety. Issues such as work-related stress, bullying and harassment are now receiving attention on a global basis and efforts have been made to address them at the workplace level. However, the complexity of the aetiology of such issues and their context-specificity have made it difficult until now for practical, prevention-oriented tools to be developed that could be adaptable and usable to a wide range of enterprises, sectors and countries. This project explores the development of a framework for action to address this challenge; it proposes the development of a Psychosocial Risk Management Toolkit (PRIMAT). This toolkit could form part of a wider Occupational Risk Management Toolbox that would address health and safety issues at work in a comprehensive manner. The project has been funded by SALTSA that is a joint undertaking by three Swedish confederations of employees and the Swedish National Institute for Working Life. It is led by I-WHO within the context of the WHO Workplan on Occupational Health and involves the WHO and partners from Sweden (National Institute for Working Life), Finland (FIOH), Italy (ISPESL), the Netherlands (TNO) and Germany (BAuA). Work on the toolkit commenced in January 2005 and has focused on a review of practical approaches and tools for psychosocial risk management developed across Europe for the development of a European inventory of best practice, evidence-based, examples in different countries and organisations. Best practice principles will be developed on the basis of this review that will be fed into PRIMAT.

Names of other Centres collaborating on the project: FIOH, ISPESL, TNO, BAuA, Swedish National Institute of Working Life (Arbetslivsinsitutet)

Product: Report to SALTSA

Project start date: January 2005
Project end date: December 2005

Preparation of guidelines on the prevention of stress at work for small and medium-sized enterprises
Stavroula Leka, (stavroula.leka@nottingham.ac.uk), Institute of Work, Health & Organisations (I-WHO), UK

Keywords: brochure, guidelines, risk management for work stress, small and medium-sized enterprises

Target group: small and medium-sized enterprises, managers, occupational health and safety professionals.

The aim of this project is to educate small and medium-sized enterprises on the causes and prevention of work stress, addressing issues of work organisation and risk management. The outcome of this project will be a brochure that will address the issue of work stress in small and medium-sized enterprises. It will aim to educate on the causes of work stress, its symptoms and its prevention through the implementation of a risk management approach.

A draft outline of the proposed brochure is being prepared.

Project start date: January 2004
Project end date: December 2005

Preparation of guidelines for training the trainers on prevention of stress at work
Alberto Zucconi, Istituto dell'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona (IACP), Italy (health.promotion@iacp.it)
The aim of the project is to develop a “Training the trainers package” on stress prevention and management.
The project began in May 2002. It will be completed by June 2003. Funding is in place.

**Study of the mental and physical burden, in collaboration with the Habib Thameur Hospital, Medicine at Work Service of the company Light Subway Tunis**
Samira Miled and Habib Nouaigui, Institute of Health and Security at Work, Tunisia (dg.isst@email.ati.tn)
**Keywords:** mental burden, physical burden, cardio-frequencymetrics
**Target group:** health personnel in the 3 services of a hospital-university centre of Grand Tunis (Habib Thameur Hospital) and drivers of the Light Subway.
The purpose of the project is to evaluate the mental burden and identify its causes (questionnaire), to evaluate the physical burden by an objective method (cardio-frequencymetrics) and to propose, according to the results obtained, recommendations in order to improve the work conditions. The project will start in 2003 and will last a year.

**Etude de la charge mentale et physique, en collaboration avec l'Hôpital Habib Thameur, Service Médecine du Travail de la Société Métro Léger Tunis**
Samira Miled et Habib Nouaigui, Institut de Santé et de Sécurité au Travail, Tunisie (dg.isst@email.ati.tn)
**Mots-clés:** charge mentale, charge physique, cardio-fréquentemtrie.
**Cible:** Personnel de santé dans trois services d’un centre hospitalo-universitaire du Grand Tunis (Hôpital Habib Thameur) et les conducteurs du Métro léger.
L’objectif de ce projet est d’évaluer la charge mentale et en identifier les causes (questionnaire), évaluer la charge physique par une méthode objective (la cardio-fréquentemtrie) et de proposer, en fonction des résultats obtenus, des recommandations afin d’améliorer les conditions de travail. Le projet débute en 2003 et durera une année.

**Preparation of guidelines for shiftwork**
Barbara Griefahn, IfADO, Germany (griefahn@ifado.de)
**Keywords:** shiftwork
**Target group:** Professional Associations, Physicians specialised in Occupational Health and Preventive Medicine, employers, employees
The purpose of the project is to establish a guideline for the prevention of adverse effects related to shiftwork
Shiftwork is regarded as an unspecified stress that causes partial sleep deprivation thus causing impaired mood and performance as well as gastrointestinal disturbances. Eventually, shiftwork was identified as a risk factor for cardiovascular diseases. Shiftwork is, however, unavoidable due to economic, technical and social reasons. Based on extensive experimental studies and field observations the brochure tries to inform employers and employees how to avoid deleterious effects of shiftwork by design and behaviour.
Product: Brochure  Completion date: 2006  Funding: in place
Other collaborating centers: Potential participants did not yet decide on collaboration

**Violence at work - characterization of violence in the workplace, the Colombian case**
Julietta Rodríguez Guzmán, FISO, Colombia (jrodriguezg@fiso-web.org)
**Keywords:** Descriptive study, violence at work, characterization.
**Target group:** Decision makers, planners and managers, and occupational health staff in the ministry of Social Protection (Health and Labor), employers and Trade Unions, Directors, managers, team leaders and occupational health staff of companies and enterprises exposed to violence.
The purpose of the project is to describe and identify factors associated to violent facts occurred in the workplace environment, and that will contact the forensic Colombian system, with the purpose of defining preventive actions and early interventions.
Considering violence is the first cause of death and the worst public health problem in Colombia, the project’s final report will include the description of the different types of violence that converge at the workplace, the national workplace violence situation identified as well as its most frequent associated factors in Colombia, a brief review of the established approaches to prevention, and a brief history of the national programs designed to eliminate violence at the workplace, as a complementation of the general violence prevention programs that are being conducted now days.

We are collaborating with The National Reference Violence Centre of Colombia on this project. The protocol of the project has been prepared, with content and format defined. Products will include a proposal for a new classification of violence at work, based on the Colombian experience.

Funding is not yet in place. The project will be completion by July 2004.

Protection of policemen against effects of occupational stress

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Keywords: Chronic occupational stress, prevention, police
Target group: Polish police forces

The purpose of the projects is to develop primary and secondary prevention of occupational stress for police officers. The project is focused on development of occupational stress preventive measures. These include both stress management and organizational intervention. The experimental version of stress prevention programme has been implemented and evaluated. A preliminary report is available in Polish.

Protection of workers’ health against psychosocial factors

Bogdan Dudek (dudek@imp.lodz.pl) and Stanislaw Tarkowski (tarko@imp.lodz.pl), Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine, Poland

Keywords: psychosocial factors related to work, life style, risk factors, prospective study
Target group: Police officers, fire fighters, prison personnel

The purpose of this project is to assess stress in specific group of workers and looking for predictors of health disorders to organise better prophylactic activities by occupational service. The project is planned as a prospective study.

A group of 500 subjects in the professions mentioned below will be examined twice or more often. The first stage is ongoing. The following variables are measured: stress caused by psychosocial problems, a sense of coherence, emotional reactions to work, IHD risk factors (blood pressure, cholesterol, smoking, alcohol consumption, physical activity) health status (psychosomatic disorders and symptoms, mental health).

The subjects are being followed during two years. Up to now (30.06.03) 350 subjects have been examined. The project is funded and will completed in 2005.

Occupational stress in healthcare workers in Vietnam

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Keywords: occupational stress, health-care workers, psycho-physiology at work, guideline, prevention
Target group: academic institutions, decision-makers at Ministries, health care facilities

Objectives of this project are the evaluation of occupational stress of healthcare workers in Vietnam, the preparation of guidelines on the prevention of stress at work for healthcare workers, and recommendations on the establishment of policies for healthcare workers. Funds have been secured by WHO.