

GSO Program on Diabetes and Social Responsibility

Phase Two - Developing a Workplace Strategy on Diabetes and Wellness

Workshop to Develop a Workplace Strategy on Diabetes and Wellness
18-19 March 2008, Geneva, Switzerland

WORKSHOP MEETING REPORT

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I Acknowledgements

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Thanks are also due to the other dedicated members of the Planning Committee who have worked to ensure the success of the Program to date. They are:

Helen Alderson, World Heart Federation
Manuel Carballo, International Centre on Migration and Health
Linda Carrier-Walker, International Council of Nurses
David Gold, International Labour Organization

GSO extends a special thank you to special guest speakers the Honorable Minister Dr. Vasant Kumar Bunwaree, Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, Mauritius for the keynote presentation and his active leadership as moderator, to Dr. Jean-Claude Canavese, Consulting Physician, Procter & Gamble, Geneva, for his presentation on Procter & Gamble's wellness program for Geneva employees and participation throughout the conference, and to Dr. D. Prabhakaran, Executive Director of ICHHealth, New Delhi, India, for his presentation via teleconference on research into wellness programs in industrial India.

Special mention should be made of Karin Holm, consultant to the Program who has been instrumental in the preparation of materials for the Workshop, this Meeting Report and the Draft Workplace Strategy on Diabetes and Wellness. Last but certainly not least our thanks go to the GSO interns Jennifer Hanley, Stephanie Wahba, and Eliana Monteforte for their excellent analysis and teamwork in research and workshop activities.

II Summary Report of Workshop

Introduction

The mandate for the 18 to 19 March 2008 GSO Workshop to Develop a Workplace Strategy on Diabetes and Wellness was to prepare a first draft of a working document that will present a compelling rationale for concerted action. The draft can then be vetted and disseminated widely with the goals of: 1) persuading employers and other relevant parties that it is in their best interest to promote employee well-being and 2) providing general guidance for employers and other interested parties on steps to take to effectively prevent and/or manage diabetes in their workforce. To facilitate the process, the workshop was focused around three working groups that cover the main elements of a proposed strategy. Participants were asked to select one of the three groups in which to work with the group's moderator to put their thoughts into a resource document. The three Working Groups were:

1. Preamble and Scope of the Problem
2. Prevention and Wellness
3. Treatment, Care and Support (Working Groups 2 and 3 were merged on the second day into Prevention, Wellness, & Treatment due to the fact there was much synergy across the areas.)

Information was provided in a background note and distributed in advance of the workshop to help prepare participants for the task of formulating the various parts of the draft strategy. Much of the information reflected the current momentum for promoting health lifestyles and "wellness programs" in the workplace. The GSO Workshop sought to build on this momentum with a specific focus on diabetes. While much that can be done to address diabetes is also applicable to wellness generally, there are aspects of the diabetes epidemic that merit this special attention.

The workshop attracted 24 participants from a wide range of organizations including the World Health Organization, International Labor Organization, the Mauritius Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, and Employment, World Medical Association, World Heart Federation, International Council of Nurses, the International Centre for Migration and Health and companies including Procter & Gamble, DuPont, Johnson & Johnson, Eli Lilly, Pfizer, Merck, and sanofi-aventis. The workshop spanned a day and a half, including plenary sessions and three working group sessions.

Opening Plenary

GSO Executive Director Dr. Katherine Hagen opened the workshop with an overview of the process that brought forth this multisectoral dialogue on the topic of diabetes. The process started with a series of roundtables (Phase One) which produced an action plan (for Phase Two of the project). Participants in the roundtable series agreed that the action plan should include the broadened dissemination of information among employers about the impact of the diabetes epidemic on the workplace and the development of a workplace

strategy to address the diabetes epidemic. Participants also emphasized the urgency of action to combat the spreading epidemic in developing countries. This workshop was convened to move forward on these recommendations. Dr. Hagen called for participants to focus their best thinking over the next day and a half on a strategy that will present a compelling rationale for concerted action, support targeted action on diabetes as a complement to action on chronic diseases generally, and identify avenues for practical and effective prevention and treatment.

Keynote Speaker

To provide guidance to workshop participants on the developing country perspective, a keynote speech was delivered by the Honorable Dr. Vasant Kumar Bunwaree, Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations, & Employment, Mauritius. Minister Bunwaree gave a fascinating presentation about the innovative diabetes program underway on a national scale in his country. In addition to recently introducing the National Service Framework for Diabetes, the Mauritius government is introducing the project 'Santé au Travail' (Health at Work), which aims at detecting at an early stage non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension and cardiac problems suffered by workers. Also, Mauritius is initiating the project "Using the Workplace for a Better Lifestyle," which aims at sensitizing workers in the world of work on living and eating habits and thereby promoting their health and preventing them from becoming victims of these non-communicable diseases. The full speech will be included in the full meeting report.

Illustrative Presentations

The minister's talk was followed by a presentation by Dr. Jean-Claude Canavese, Occupational Physician at Procter & Gamble, Geneva, who provided a comprehensive overview of P&G's wellness program at its Geneva location, which impressed participants by the extensive investment in employee health and well-being. P&G provides everything from voluntary health risk assessments through the Wellness Checkpoint©, an online, confidential service, to excellent medical benefits, to lifestyle coaching, and even to "nap pods" to assist jet-lagged, globe-trotting professionals. P&G appeared to set the gold standard in terms of its wellness approach, something that participants could recognize as beyond the means of many employers but something to which they might aspire.

On the second day of the workshop, Dr. D. Prabhakaran, Executive Director of IC Health, New Delhi, India, presented via teleconference the preliminary results from his organization's research into a sentinel surveillance system and the impact of health intervention programs in Indian industrial populations. With funding from WHO and the Indian government and with the assistance of public academic institutions throughout the country, employers introduced a variety of health promotion materials into ten medium to large industrial enterprises in India. Biochemical testing and behavioral factors (including those related to diabetes) were tracked and shown to improve with relatively minor investments. The study shows the feasibility of private-public partnerships in carrying out cardiovascular disease prevention programs and offers a sustainable health system model built on shared responsibility between private and public organizations. Dr. Prabhakaran's

presentation will be included in the full meeting report, although the data is pre-publication and thus should not be quoted.

Both illustrative presentations elicited questions and discussions from the participants and served as extremely useful reference points throughout the workshop. These presenters' willingness to outline their projects for examination is to be encouraged and it is hoped that more participants will come forward with examples of wellness program or research that could be helpful in our work.

The Working Groups

After the first day's presentations, the group received a review of the workshop agenda, its objectives and arrangements for the working groups. The working groups then met in three sessions, and the subsequent plenary sessions were used to report back on progress and ultimately to present the drafts of the working groups. The group split up originally into three working groups that met in separate locations to facilitate their discussions. The working group 1 on the Preamble and Scope of the Problem had as moderators David Gold, ILO, and for a later session, Evelyn Boyd Simmons, Pfizer. The rapporteur for the group was Helena Brus, Merck.

The working group 2 on Prevention and Wellness started out separately but on the second day merged with working group 3 on Treatment and Care. The moderator was the Hon. Vasant Kumar Bunwaree, Mauritius. For working group 3, Manuel Carballo, ICMH, was the moderator. The groups presented summaries and then final suggestions for the draft strategy.

Recommendations: Draft Strategy

The primary output from the meeting is the Draft Workplace Strategy on Diabetes and Wellness which is presented in a separate document.

Conclusions and Adjournment

In the closing plenary, workshop participants had the opportunity to strategize about the process for the further vetting and dissemination of the Draft Strategy. Participants raised the idea of having drafts ready for distribution at the ILO Conference (ILC) and the World Health Assembly (WHA) in mid- to late-May. Also mentioned was dissemination through transmission to the International Diabetes Federation, other health-related NGOs and through an OECD meeting in May/April. An international conference on early diabetes intervention is set for June in Finland, the same time as the American Diabetes Association annual meeting. It was noted that we should involve the occupational safety and health experts at both the ILO and WHO and make reference to the WHA-adopted resolution in 2007 for a global plan of action on workers' health.

Katherine Hagen explained that the GSO is prepared to move forward with the Draft Strategy by convening two forums over the course of the next several months. The forums will provide opportunities to comment on the Draft Strategy and to share experiences with prevention and treatment programs. Particular attention will be given to the adaptability of the Draft Strategy to small and medium-sized employers, public employers and employers in developing countries. At the conclusion of these forums, comments and suggestions on the Draft Strategy will be reviewed by the GSO Planning Committee with the objective of adopting a useful and flexible Strategy on the Prevention and Treatment of Diabetes in the Workplace. This will be published by the GSO and disseminated through participant channels.

Katherine Hagen welcomed additional ideas to be voiced and asked the audience to seek additional opportunities to present and disseminate the Strategy. She concluded the workshop by thanking the participants for their openness, enthusiasm and efficacy which resulted in a highly productive and successful workshop with a very promising draft document.

III Supplementary Documents and Presentations

The following documents are available to download online at www.gsogeneva.ch or by request at contact@gsogeneva.ch.

Documents used during the Workshop

- Meeting Agenda
- Backgrounder
- Backgrounder Appendices
- Questions for Working Group Moderators
- Working Group Progress Reports
- Participant List

Presentations made during the Workshop

- Workshop Overview, Katherine Hagen, GSO Executive Director
- Keynote Address, The Hon. Vasant Kumar Bunwaree, Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations, & Employment, Mauritius
- Illustrative Presentation, Dr. Jean-Claude Canavese, Physician, Proctor & Gamble, Geneva
- Illustrative Presentation, Dr. D. Prabhakaran, ICHealth, India

Background Materials

- Healthy Pfizer: Pfizer's Internal Health Improvement Program

Workshop outcome

- Draft Workplace Strategy on Diabetes and Wellness