

Workplace Health Promotion at the Heves County Court

Details on the authority

The Heves County Court has 269 members of staff, 76 % of whom are women. The distribution of the employees by age is as follows:

■ under 25:	4 %
■ 25-29:	26 %
■ 30-39:	26 %
■ 40-49:	28 %
■ 50-61:	23 %
■ over 61:	3 %

Background

In Hungary every employer must provide occupational health care service for all the employees in compliance with the Labour Safety Act and the sectorial decrees. One service (consisting of one physician and one nurse) may cover 1000-2000 workers depending on the health risks. Occupational health examination serving as basis of risk assessment makes 50 % of the work of the occupational health care service, while the other 50 % is made of the pre-employment, periodic, extraordinary and final fitness for work examinations. Employees without the fitness for work examination may not be employed in Hungary. The occupational health care service knows and maintains a good relationship with the management of the institution or enterprise served. The benefit of the project is the prevention of diseases and preservation of working ability. As a new requirement, judges have to undergo an aptitude test, regulated in a separate decree, in addition to the fitness for job examinations. For the evaluation of the suitability of

judges' carrier, the presence of health, physical and psychical abilities, necessary to the judges' work must be examined. The aptitude test for judges consists of the general medical examination, including psychiatric examination and psychologic examination. The health promotion programme of the occupational health care service is an important tool to assist judges to cope with the aptitude test. At present, the courts of justice are undergoing a reorganisation process, the courts of appeal are planned to organise in addition to the present courts.

Current state of health at work

■ Taking responsibility for OHS

The Court provides occupational health care service for the employees. Participation in a preemployment medical examination is compulsory for everybody and the examinations must be repeated annually. Performing of the examinations is controlled. OHS participates in the tasks related to labour protection. Prior to employment the labour protection officer provides training and its accomplishment is documented.

■ Creating a happy working atmosphere

Within the 8 hour work shift the employees are entitled to a half hour paid lunch time in a civilised canteen at the workplace where they can meet the provision of subsidised food. The choice of menu is developed on a scientific base (OÉTI) and the buffet is regularly controlled by the public health authority. Smoking is prohibited at the workplaces. It is allowed only in desig-

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nated areas. Alcohol is banned during working hours and intoxicated employees may not resume work. In the institute satisfaction of both the employees and that of the customers is examined and found to be good.

How the project was set in motion

The project is under the control of a team consisting of two occupational health and work hygiene specialist physicians and a Ph. D doctor, all familiar with workplace health promotion. The practice of workplace health promotion was studied by the following stepwise procedure:

■ Step 1

Controllers of the project approach the management to obtain approval for the project.

■ Step 2

Personal interview with the employees and preparation of the checklist in the form of a questionnaire.

■ Step 3

Recording of workplace data. Performing of risk assessment during onsite workplace inspection, determination of the workplace stress and strain.

■ Step 4

Recording the results of the examination of the employees. The OHS provide data on the health status of the employees.

■ Step 5

Demonstration of the health promotion programme of the Heves County Court

and the Heves County Chief Attorney General's Office.

■ Step 6

Results of the programme.

Systematic needs analyses

■ Risk factors on working environment

Noise exposure of the typists:	20%
Workplaces with computer monitor equipment:	40%
Increased psychic stress: during the work of judges and prosecutors	20%
Chemical pathogenic factor (ozone exposure: copy machines)	10%

■ Health status of the employees

The health status of the employees is evaluated by the occupational health physician on the basis of a detailed medical examination. The following relevant items of the occupational health evaluation can be stressed.

Smoking habits

■ Smoker:	38%
■ Non-smoker:	62%

Drinking habits

■ Regular drinker:	0%
■ Occasional drinker:	12%
■ Abstinent:	87%
■ Ex-drinker:	1%

Sport

■ Sporting:	38%
■ Non-sporting:	62%

Eating habits

■ Up-to-date:	71%
■ Obsolete:	29%

Morbidity data

■ Not classified complaints, symptoms and pathologic clinical and laboratory findings:	6%
■ Diseases of the circulatory system:	13%
■ Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases:	5%
■ Diseases of the bone, muscle and connective tissues:	8%
■ Diseases of the digestive system:	6%
■ Diseases of the blood and hemopoietic system and certain disorders of the immune system:	1%
■ Diseases of the respiratory system:	8%

Implementing WHP

At the courts the greatest source of stress comes from dealing with the clients as increased psychic stress and biological pathogenic factor. This causes the increased number of upper respiratory diseases, especially in the winter months. The management supported the occupational health care service in the organisation of the health promotion programme from the beginning. It was obvious for them that health promotion has a beneficial effect on the work time basis and on the quality of the professional work. This was the objective and, at the same time, the importance of the health promotion programme. The employees were informed on this by circulars and the management allowed the employees to participate in the health promotion programmes during working time. In 2001 three health promotion programmes were announced.

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- Provision of free vaccination of the employees against flu on a voluntary basis. (50 % of the expenses was covered by the health insurance scheme, the other 50 % was paid by the employer.)
- Screening examinations, serving health promotion (e.g. allergy screening).
- First aid courses, initiated and asked for by the employer.
- 106 persons participated at the allergy screening, 22 persons proved to be positive. The detected persons were informed about the possible ways of prevention and they received pulmonology or dermatology recommendation for medicines with high insurance support. In the case of these employees the decrease or disappearance of the symptoms, and in this way, the improvement of their work output are expected.
- 40 employees participated at the first aid courses and all of them passed the examination successfully.

The programmes were also publicised by the occupational health care service at the consulting room by convincing individual employees.

Has health improved?

The occupational health care service measures the success of the health promotion programme by the number of participants and the number of those detected during the screening programmes.

- 65% of the employees were vaccinated against flu, no complication was observed. The number of flu cases decreased compared to the years when no vaccination was available.