

Good Work, Good Health

Improving the mental wellbeing of workers within the Telecommunications sector



Good Practice Guidelines



Dr Paul Litchfield
Chief Medical Officer
BT Group plc



ETNO – UNI Europa Conference
GOOD WORK, GOOD HEALTH



European Social Dialogue

EU Treaty Articles 152 - 155

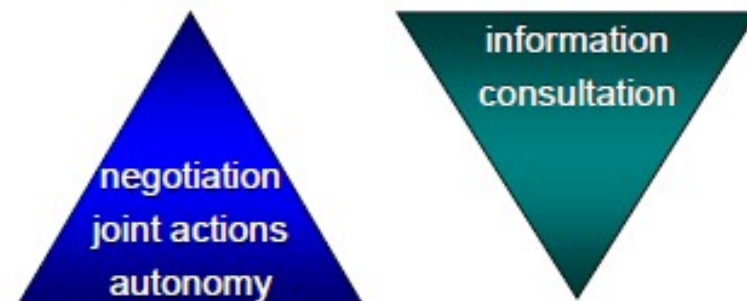
Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee - Telecommunications

Guidelines

- Teleworking
- Call Centres
- MSDs
- Diversity

3. European Social Dialogue - definition

- discussions, exchange of information and best practices; consultations; joint actions; negotiations ...
- ... undertaken by the organisations representing "management and labour" (employer and employee organisations) ...
- ... at European level.





Background to the Project

- mental health and wellbeing an increasing challenge for civil society and companies:
 - almost 50 million EU citizens experience mental disorders (+/- 11% of EU population)
 - 25% of EU population will suffer at least once in their life from mental disorders
 - in EU, work-related stress (WRS) is second most common work-related health problem (after MSD) , affecting about 22% of workers (EU27, 2005)
 - by 2020, depression will be the greatest cause of work-related disability (+ second after cardio-vascular disease) in developed countries (WHO)
- greater understanding of inter-correlation mental – physical health
- European Pact for Mental Health & Wellbeing launched in June 2008 (European Commission + stakeholders + social partners)
 - “good mental health is a key resource for the EU”
 - “mental health in workplace settings” is one of the 5 chapters
- Growing awareness that work is good for health provided that the work is ‘good’



Objectives

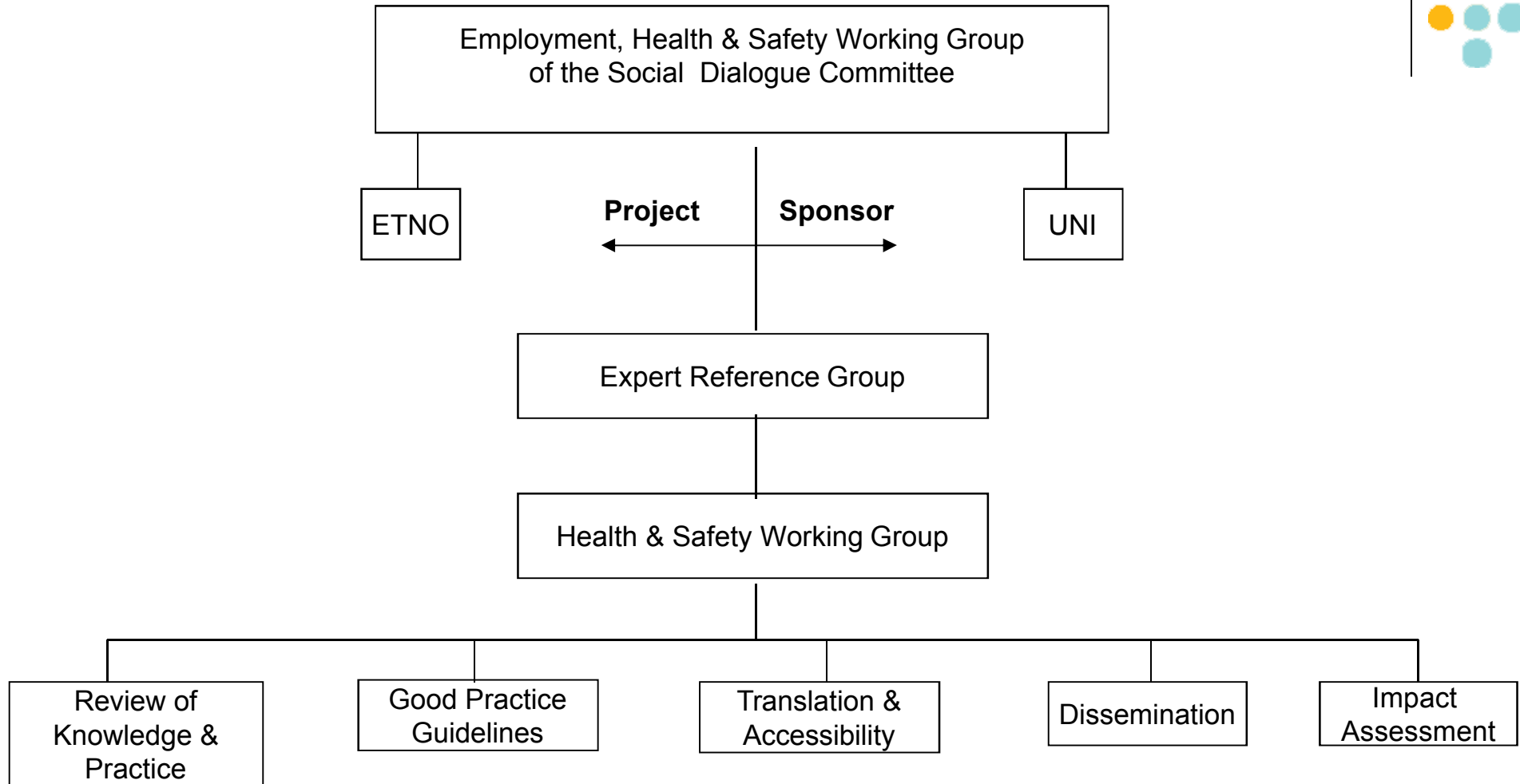
- To improve the mental wellbeing of workers within the telecommunications sector by developing good practice in the workplace
- Focus on good aspects of work and their benefits to individuals and companies
- Disseminate good practice guidelines within telecommunications industry



Workstreams

1. Review of knowledge and practice
2. Synthesis of good practice by small group of experts from both social partners
3. Maximising accessibility and dissemination of Guidelines
4. Assessment of awareness, usefulness, altered practice

Governance structure





Research partner

- Academic institutes nominated (10)
- Structured bid evaluation
- Selection against quality & cost criteria
- Institute of Occupational Medicine, Edinburgh





Evidence Review

- What work factors are associated with impaired mental wellbeing?
- What work factors are associated with enhanced mental wellbeing?
- What work arrangements can mitigate or facilitate return to work for individuals who have poor mental wellbeing?

Report in English, French, Spanish & German

<http://intranet.etno.be/mailroot/GWGH/evidence-review-report/index.php>

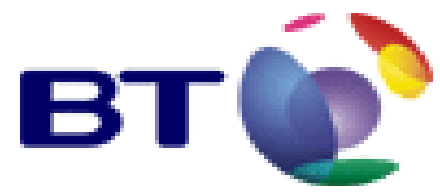


Company visit template

- Measurement of wellbeing
- Organisational justice
- Organisational interventions
- Person-directed or individual interventions
- Return to work after absence with poor mental health
- Working time
- Managers and supervisors
- Training and new technology
- Costs and benefits of interventions



Company reviews





Background to Guidelines

- Key learning from MSD project
- Target audience – line managers & TU
- Concise practical handbook
- Synthesis of research and practice
- Why, what & how?
- Template for action, review & audit
- Easily understood format and wording
- Available in multiple languages



Production Mechanism

- Very tight timescales
- One lead technical author
- Frequent review by small expert group
- Quality assurance by wider expert group
- Text approval in single core language
- Translation & design work in parallel
- Validation of translated versions
- Art work and design adjustments / approval



Setting the Scene

- Mental health 25% of EU disease burden
- Human & economic cost of ill health
- Impact on business regardless of cause
- Benefits to economy & society of good MH
- Work can be good or bad for health
- Technology can be good or bad for health
- Telcos leading in changing world of work
- Good practice here can become the norm



Enhancing Mental Wellbeing

Organisational interventions

- Design tasks to be healthy
- Design organisations to be healthy
- Create a healthy organisational culture
- Implement good change management
- Address the issue of *Perceived Justice*

Romtelecom – “Recognising Values”



Enhancing Mental Wellbeing

Individual interventions

- Promote a healthy lifestyle
- Increase personal resilience
- Maintain a positive outlook
- Achieve a sensible work / life balance

Portugal Telecom – “Mens sana in corpore sano”



Work Hazards to Mental Health

- **Demands** - Volume, Pace, Intensity, Nature & Monotony
- **Control** – Workflow, Method, Time & Environment
- **Support** – Management & Colleagues, Talking & Listening
- **Relationships** - Management style, Conflict & Bullying
- **Role** – Lack of clarity, Blurred accountability & Isolation
- **Change** - Poor Management, Communication & Consultation
- **Justice** - Distributive, Procedural & Interactional

Belgacom – “Addressing the Perception of Justice”



Mitigating Harm/Rehabilitation

- **Primary Prevention**

Management Competencies, Role Risk Assessment & Flexible Employment

- **Secondary Intervention**

Distress Recognition, Stress Audits & Confidential Advice Services

- **Tertiary Rehabilitation**

Mental Health Training, Occupational Health Assessment & Rehab Plans

France Telecom – “Improving Manager Skills”

Telefonica – “Supporting People in Difficulty”



A Framework for Action

	Primary Prevention	Secondary Intervention	Tertiary Rehabilitation
Education & Training	General awareness training to workforce of mental health issues, healthy lifestyle and stigma avoidance	Training of people managers to recognise signs of distress and to signpost support services	Guidance for managers and employees on effective return to work adjustments
Assessment	Risk assessment of work and change to control psychosocial hazards	Stress audits to identify people and/or business units at risk of harm	Access to occupational health service for assessment of sick employees and advice to management
Practical Support	Adoption of flexible working (time &/or location) to help balance work and home commitments	Availability of confidential employee assistance programme	Provision of psychological support (CBT) services for mentally ill staff



Implementing Good Practice

- **Stakeholder Engagement**
Leadership Commitment, Middle Manager Adoption & Workforce Support
- **Constructing the Programme**
Framework, Resourcing and Communication
- **Defining Metrics & Measuring Impact**
Existing Measures, Benchmarking & Baselines
- **Review, Refresh & Renew**
Use data to change, Audit and Horizon Scan

BT – “Measured Approach to Better Mental Health”



The Final Product



English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Czech, Polish, Romanian, Portuguese, Greek, Swedish and Estonian



ETNO – UNI Europa Conference
GOOD WORK, GOOD HEALTH





Good Work, Good Health Project

The GOOD WORK GOOD HEALTH study project has received funding from the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (Grant VS/2009/0162). Sole liability for the publication lies with ETNO-UNI Europa and the EC is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein



ETNO – UNI Europa Conference
GOOD WORK, GOOD HEALTH

