

How can we address psychosocial factors in work disability prevention?

Keynote Sessions

Faculty:

Karen Nieuwenhuijsen

Mental health problems constitute a major occupational health problem causing substantial productivity losses. The high impact of mental ill health on workers and workplaces warrants developing, evaluating, and implementing preventive and reintegration strategies. In this talk, I will highlight which strategies are available to assess psychosocial risk factors for mental health problems. These are vital in creating a working environment that promotes, supports, and protects workers' mental and social well-being. Nevertheless, additional strategies are needed for workers at high risk of developing mental health problems. I will review instruments and tools to identify these workers in workplaces and occupational health. Psychosocial factors are also relevant for workers with physical health problems returning to work. These factors can be classified into person-related and work-related factors. A relevant person-related factor is Return-to-work (RTW) perceptions and attitudes. These are predictive for future work participation in workers with mental health issues. In this talk, I will consider how these can be operationalised and used in research and practice.

About Our Speaker:

Karen Nieuwenhuijsen

Karen Nieuwenhuijsen's research focuses on the consequences of mental health problems, including depression and stress, for work. She is an assistant professor at the Department of Public and Occupational Health, Coronel Institute, and a senior researcher at the Dutch Research Centre for Insurance Medicine at the Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam in The Netherlands. Her work includes developing and evaluating instruments that can help prevent and return to work efforts at the workplace. As a principal educator at the medical faculty, she also works on protecting the mental health of medical students. She is the secretary of the ICOH-WDPI scientific committee.

