

Mental Health and Work seminar

17 April 2013, Paris, OECD

Session 2:

Ways to provide evidence-based psychological therapy widely and quickly: The rehabilitation guarantee of the Swedish Social Insurance Agency

Effective treatment of mental health problems can alleviate the enormous costs borne by the individuals concerned and is cost-effective for society at large. Benefits include reduced need for psychiatric hospitalization; fewer sick days and disability claims; greater job stability and better chances of returning to work. Despite such benefits, survey-based evidence suggest that across the OECD almost 50% of those with a severe mental disorder and over 70% of those with a moderate mental disorder do not receive any treatment for their illness. Where treatment is available, individuals' vocational and employment needs rarely receive sufficient attention. A frequent reason for this is the lack of co-ordination between employment and health services. Some countries have started to develop innovative solutions. In Sweden, the Social Insurance Agency is compensating the health sector to increase the access to psychological treatment through a 'Rehabilitation Guarantee' to prevent future inflows into the sickness and disability system. Are incentives sufficient to increase the availability of mental health services? Does this approach encourage the health sector to meet the vocational needs of their patients? What are the key successes and failures of the Rehabilitation Guarantee? What other approaches exist to promote both health and employment needs of individuals with mental health problems?