Strong service. Strong firm. The German Statutory Pension Insurance Scheme's service for firms
A case of the German Federal Pension Insurance

German Federal Pension Insurance
Germany

Published 2030
**Summary**

In March of 2015 the German Statutory Pension Insurance Scheme (Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund) launched a new consulting service specially tailored to the needs of employers and firms. One of the aims of this service for firms is to reinforce preventively and sustainably employee health.

Qualified company consultants from the statutory pension insurance scheme are available to firms as their first point of contact across the country. These professionals help firms through free on-site information and consultation to secure employability and avoid an early exit from the labour market for employees. Both employers and employees benefit from this.

The service for firms provides information about the range of preventive services and medical and occupational rehabilitation thus providing early access to these services. Furthermore it also helps to find solutions for the sustainable reintegration of employees after a long period of illness even in individual cases. The service for firms also provides a non-bureaucratic conduit for contact with social insurance institutions. Consulting on pensions, demographics, old-age provision and social contributions round off the list of services available.

**CRITERIA 1**

**What was the issue/problem/challenge addressed by your good practice?**

Every year many employees exit active employment either temporarily or permanently for health reasons. Firms are thus deprived of the valuable professional competence and experience of employees who have been with them for a long period of time. In addition they face skill shortages and demographic change both of which represent great challenges for small and medium-sized enterprises in particular.

Employers and firms make too little use of - or use too late - the support possibilities on offer from the German Statutory Pension Insurance Scheme to secure the employability of their staff and are not sufficiently informed about the services available and the responsibility of the various social insurance institutions. The service for firms addresses this problem by proactively engaging with companies and enterprises and developing and accompanying solutions on-site with the employees affected.

Employers are looking for a one-stop-shop for consulting services with a single contact. The service for firms offers just such a tailored and individual service.
CRITERIA 2

What were the main objectives and the expected outcomes?

The service for firms is designed to contribute towards an early identification of stakeholder participation and needs as well as an early introduction and implementation of rehabilitation services. The services on offer are mainly aimed at supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in preserving the employability of their staff individually through a needs-based approach.

The aim is to provide a one-stop consulting service that is both easily accessible and identifiable. This is done through combining the range of services from all pension insurance institutions using a uniform presentation, a uniform appearance and clearly defined communication paths.

CRITERIA 3

What is the innovative approach/strategy followed to achieve the objectives?

Pension insurance institutions make a single point of contact available to employers regardless of the insurance legislation responsibilities in each individual case which can then advise on the services available from the pension insurance institutions and also act as a guide to other social insurance institutions.

The service can be reached nationally through a single free telephone number and email address. Consultation can be on-site if desired or necessary.

Works doctors and occupational health officers and employer associations are co-opted into partnership agreements with the German Statutory Pension Insurance Scheme to implement the range of services on offer. Pension insurance internal structures and processes were adjusted to make it possible to provide a smooth service for customers, on-site if necessary.

CRITERIA 4

Have the resources and inputs been used in an optimal way to achieve the set objectives and the expected outcomes? Please specify what internal or external evaluations of the practice have taken place and what impact/results have been identified/achieved so far.

A provisional review and analysis of the current situation of the consultation services provided across the country by the service for firms since 23 March 2015 shows that the new service is being implemented to meet the needs of each target group.
Regional launch events for the service for firms and regular events locally to inform target groups about the support services available from pension insurance institutions raise the level of awareness about the range of services on offer and ensure early access to stakeholder benefits by employees.

A survey and analysis of how the service for firms is perceived and evaluated by customers is also in preparation, as is a survey of the concrete implementation of the service for firms at each pension insurance institution (structural connection, operational implementation, staff resources allocated).

Pension insurance institutions are working towards an ongoing needs-based development for the various target groups. The basis for the ongoing development is customer evaluations together with evaluations of the services provided.

CRITERIA 5

What lessons have been learned? To what extent would your good practice be appropriate for replication by other social security institutions?

The targeted services on offer and the procedural agreements reached to deliver these services are leading to a situation where responsibilities are being assigned and met clearly and effectively. At the same time, it has been possible to satisfy the often-expressed wish for a single point of contact for all questions relating to pension and social insurance support services through the service for firms with a competent, low-threshold range of consultation services.

This helps all concerned to identify stakeholder requirements early and bring in and carry through needs-based rehabilitation services in a timely fashion.