



The number of Certified Disability Management Professionals (CDMPs) and Certified Return to Work Coordinators (CRTWCs) has continued to grow worldwide with thirteen countries offering the professional certification examinations. Along with the recognition that these designations provide, they also indicate a competitive edge and considerably enhanced outcomes for all parties involved in the disability management and return to work process. To exemplify, here are profiles of some of the newly certified professionals making a difference in diverse parts of the world from the UK and Ireland to New Zealand and South Africa.

Photo: L-R: Denise Cosgrove, General Manager, People and Business Services, ACC; Wolfgang Zimmermann; David Wutzler, CDMP, Certified CBDMA Auditor; Margo Campbell, CDMP, Certified CBDMA Auditor, Programme Manager, Audit Systems and Standards, ACC; and Martha Rowbotham, CDMP, Certified CBDMA Auditor.

Certified DM professionals expanding around the world



ACC NEW ZEALAND INCREASES NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WITH DESIGNATIONS

The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) in New Zealand wishes to provide a clear career path for its staff working in disability management and believes that the IDMSC internationally-recognized certifications will help to achieve this. The training will also help ACC's case managers to work with clients who have more complex cases, and to support their early return to work.

Denise Cosgrove, General Manager, People and Business Services, reports that 31 staff members and two external service providers successfully achieved either the Certified Return to Work Coordinator (CRTWC) or the Certified Disability Management Professional (CDMP) designation during examinations administered in 2008. The Chief Executive of ACC, Dr. Jan White, has commended staff on this achievement noting that these international qualifications place staff among a growing number of professionals seeking a recognized career in disability management.

Included in this group are an ACC staff member and two external service providers who have undergone auditor training and passed an IDMSC examination to become Certified CBDMA Auditors, qualified to administer the Consensus Based Disability Management Audit.

Newly designated CDMP and Certified CBDMA Auditor Margo Campbell, who is Programme Manager, Audit Systems and Standards, explained more about her work with ACC. "The Partnership Programme is ACC's largest workplace incentive program. Employers in the Partnership Programme have the ability to provide for themselves claims and case management for all work-related injuries on behalf of ACC. The focus is on safer workplaces while building a strong consensus-based approach between the employer, employees and their employee representatives."



Campbell sees her new qualifications as benefiting her management role within the Partnership Programme. “Achieving the CDMP designation has enabled me to gain a thorough understanding of the IDMSC’s philosophy. It provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to provide a consistent message regarding rehabilitation and it is great to have a qualification that is internationally recognized.”

As a contractor working for ACC from the outside, Martha Rowbotham, CDMP and Certified CBDMA Auditor, has worked in the health and safety sector for a number of years.

“Originally my background was focused on wellness and health promotion – over time I have become increasingly interested and involved in the management of workplace injury. The IDMSC’s disability management philosophy and the development of the Consensus Based Disability Management Audit provide a further opportunity to assess and promote best practices in the management of disability in the workplace.”

She describes feedback from the employer community. “A comment commonly expressed by employers is their ‘aging workforce’ and the recognition that if skilled and experienced employees are to be retained in a meaningful and productive way, accommodations for those who experience injury and illness irrespective of causation will be of benefit to all involved.”

David Wutzler is another recently qualified CDMP who provides workplace audit services under contract to ACC. He too sees a growing recognition by employers of the benefits of a safe and healthy workforce, and an increase in the number of employers seeking practical advice on ways to better manage workplace absence.

“I believe the CDMP certification has helped me to gain an understanding of the benefits of a more holistic approach to injury and disability management, and how this can be practically applied in New Zealand workplaces. In particular, I now feel better equipped to assess a workplace’s current approach to disability management and to recommend areas where they can improve their performance.”

Deborah Williams, Case Manager, ACC Tauranga, New Zealand is among those who achieved the CRTWC designation in 2008. She found that being part of the training was challenging, yet rewarding.

“Initially the work load looked huge, but once the reading began, I realized that a lot of the information I already knew and applied it to my everyday job as a case manager. On a day-to-day basis, the IDMSC philosophy has made me focus on the rehabilitation of our long-term clients I manage with much more of a return to work goal, even if they have been out of work for a long period of time. I can identify the support they need to achieve this transition back to work, and more importantly, sustain their return to independence. The training also extended my knowledge on legislation, such as the Privacy Act and Employment Act, which has allowed me to be more conscious of clients’ rights when communicating and managing their rehabilitation.”



UNUM TAKES LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE UK

Unum, the UK’s largest group income protection insurer, adopted NIDMAR’s entire disability management protocol in 2005. Unum has already built an innovative occupational rehabilitation program incorporating best practices from a number of jurisdictions.

Unum held its first professional certification examinations in 2007 and in 2008 welcomed 15 newly certified employees to its group. Among them is Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant Alix Hicklin, who along with holding a Bachelor of Science Degree with Honours in Psychology, added CDMP to her credentials this year.

Her job entails supporting both employees and their employers with return to work planning and implementation following

Photo taken at Milton Court: L to R: Donal Byrne, Bernie Earle, Sarah Pearson, Sally Brady, Jennifer Alefounder, Elisabeth Skeet, Scott Jardine, Julie Hatton, Georgina Kerwin, Judy Reading-Kitchen, Joanne Lancaster, Sue Godby, Helena Barker, Alex Hicklin, Megan Owen.



injury or illness. When it came to writing the CDMP exam, she had clearly defined goals. “My motivation for doing the examination was two fold – I love the work that I do and want to gain as much as I can in the way of skills and knowledge in order to do the best for my clients, but I also wanted the formal certification to be able to demonstrate development of my skills and knowledge base.”

She continues, “It is very important to me at this stage of my life, as who knows where life and indeed my career may take me. I feel there are two levels to this, one from a personal perspective in that it allows the portability of my career and the flexibility to work in different parts of the world. From another perspective, working in a role where I am dealing with other professionals and clients from around the world, it helps create a mutual understanding and respect.”

Hicklin also notes that while she has only recently been certified, she has seen early benefits for herself and her clients, noting that certification gives her clients reassurance about the services that she delivers.

Unum’s signature line is “Keeping dreams and ambitions alive when accident or illness strikes.” Hicklin and her certified colleagues are bringing quality standards and best practices to the realization of that vision.

SOUTH AFRICAN DOCTOR BECOMES COUNTRY’S FIRST CDMP

Dr. Nomsa Tembisa Maku is an occupational health medical practitioner currently working with the Department of Minerals and Energy for the Government of South Africa. She has a depth of experience gained in the healthcare, utility, manufacturing and mining industries in South Africa. Her most recent focus has been in the fields of occupational medicine, HIV-related medicine and disability management. Along with the MB chB she obtained at MEDUNSA in Pretoria with majors in Medicine and Surgery, she also holds a Diploma in Palliative Medicine and a Certificate in HIV Management and she is currently pursuing a Master’s programme in Occupational Health and Environment at



the University of Natal. She was successful in writing the CDMP examination in Pretoria in May 2008.

“I was indirectly doing occupational health in that I had a medical practice near a coal mine” said Dr. Maku. “Employees got injured and the feeling was that employees should be given a disability package and leave the company.”

According to Dr. Maku, “My interest is to pursue and spearhead disability management and return to work in South Africa. I would like to introduce the concept to South African companies, Compensation Commissioner, Department of Health, Department of Social Services and to participate in the development of disability management policies and an implementation strategy for South Africa. I would appreciate any form of assistance that will enhance achievement of the goal.”

With certified disability management practice and standards growing worldwide, Dr. Maku has an ever-increasing base of international colleagues to call on for help in achieving her objectives in South Africa.



REHAB ENTERPRISES LEADS THE CHARGE IN IRELAND

Rehab Enterprises is the largest employer of people with disabilities in Ireland. As an employer, Rehab Enterprises is focused on recruiting and retaining people with disabilities. On top of that, more than 50 percent of the company’s workforce is made up of people with disabilities.

Photo: L to R: Hugh Cassidy, Jane McCarthy, Wolfgang Zimmermann, Niamh Byrne, Susan Slater. Missing from the photo: Seónaid Dunne, Caroline Gunning and Susan Panter



So for Human Resources Manager Niamh Byrne, “Gaining the CDMP qualification was important not only for me personally, but also for the organisation as a whole.”

Byrne sees a number of immediate benefits to becoming a qualified CDMP. “It has increased my awareness and made me think a little more laterally. I’m more inclined now to think outside the box when faced with difficult situations. I’ve also become more aware of the tools that are available to assist people with disabilities to retain employment or to return to the workplace following an illness or disability.”

She adds, “From a career point of view, the CDMP qualification has opened up new career opportunities for me. I now have a professional qualification that many others working in the disability sector in Ireland do not have as yet. What’s more, the CDMP is an internationally recognised qualification. Should I ever decide to return to Australia, where I lived and worked for over 10 years, the qualification would certainly prove invaluable.”

Hugh Cassidy is Operations Manager for Workability, part of Rehab Enterprises, the commercial division of the Rehab Group. He earned the CDMP designation this year as well.

“As Operations Manager, I am in charge of a highly-qualified and committed team who provide disability management services and support to industry, business and public bodies. The CDMP qualification has certainly boosted my confidence around the delivery of services that we provide to businesses around Ireland. Two of my colleagues in Workability also attained the CDMP qualification and it has enhanced our standing amongst our customers.”

Cassidy sees the client benefits too. “As an internationally recognised and respected certification, we can be sure that by attaining the CDMP qualification we are providing services that are best practice and at the cutting-edge of disability management.”
