

“Healthy Skin @ Work”: The EADV Europrevention Campaign against Occupational Skin Diseases

Bilbao (15/06/2011) - The European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) launched a pan-European “Healthy Skin @ Work” campaign, which seeks to raise public and political awareness on the challenges of occupational skin diseases at European and national level.

It aims at creating a dermatological prevention service system that interlocks and builds upon each other for the benefit of exposed individuals in high risk work environments throughout the EU. The ongoing campaign is supported by national sub-campaigns in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany and Romania. This year, the national campaigns are being replicated and joined by additional ones in Denmark, Austria and Slovenia.

One important objective of the campaign was achieved in September 2010 through the adoption of the European framework agreement on the prevention of health risks in the hairdressing sector, also referred to the Declaration of Dresden (DoD; www.safehair.eu) by the social partners of the EU Commission’s Social Dialogue. The DoD is the main outcome of the EU-funded SafeHair project and is an EADV-scientific-guided voluntary consensus reached amongst all stakeholders (European hairdressers’ employers’ and workers’ associations, suppliers and safety engineers) on the importance of prevention and of implementing respective measures in the hairdressing trade. It is a unique tool in terms of providing practical recommendations for the implementation of prevention standards pertaining to a number of complementary spheres of action.

The EADV-campaign is scientifically guided by the European Initiative for the Prevention of Occupational Skin Diseases [EPOS], which is a network of 79 experts from more than 50 dermatological centres in 24 European countries under the umbrella of the EADV.

According to the WHO, occupational skin diseases (OSD) are the leading cause of occupational illnesses as they represent up to 27 per cent of all diseases worldwide. OSD can affect workers in almost all sectors and occupations. In Europe, they are considered to be the second most common work-related health problem and one of the most important emerging risks related to the exposure to chemical, physical and biological risk factors. In the context of increased exposure to solar UV radiation, occupational non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC) is becoming a rising problem. OSD cost up to € 5 billion per year due to loss of productivity and cause extensive suffering for workers as it can result in detrimental socioeconomic and psychological consequences, including job loss and long-term unemployment.

Do consider activities in the framework of the EADV campaign in your country. For more details on the campaign and on how to support it, please contact pweinert@uos.de

- www.eadv.org/press-corner/campaigns/
- www.safehair.eu