

Working Title: Disability Management: An Examination of Job Functions, Knowledge, and Competencies in Australia, Germany, and The United States

Presenters:

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Abstract

The evolution of disability management is driving the emergence of a group of rehabilitation professionals with unique job functions, knowledge, and expertise in disability management practice. While more countries seek to manage disability-related costs in the workplace, the need to empirically examine the competencies required for effective practice is necessary. Three countries have conducted such research by analyzing the job tasks, functions, and knowledge domains of rehabilitation professionals working in vocational rehabilitation and disability management settings including employer, government, and insurance entities.

An international panel comprised of educators and researchers from Australia, Germany, and the United States will discuss and compare recent study results. The studies have shown that the role of the vocational rehabilitation professional is expanding into areas beyond traditional case management, vocational rehabilitation, and return to work coordination. The study results have examined current disability management job functions and knowledge areas and analyzed the importance and frequency of these domains. Several universal knowledge domains and competencies have emerged including workplace disability case management, workplace intervention and disability prevention, and disability program development, management, and evaluation.

The panel will focus on the applicability of research findings as they relate to the development of a comprehensive professional identity, provide empirical evidence to build global performance standards, and create a foundation for relevant educational programs and professional certification.