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 web magazine
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Page 3: Digitalisation in the healthcare sector – not without the German Social Accident Insurance: An interview with Dr Edlyn Höller, DGUV

Violence affects everyone!

Many employees are threatened or experience violence during their day-to-day work. This is also affects firefighters and emergency service personnel. With the #GewaltAngehen (#Fighting-Violence) campaign, the German social accident insurance institutions and their umbrella association, DGUV, are taking a stand for more respectful interactions, more prevention measures and clear consequences. Hubertus Heil, Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs in Germany, is the patron of the campaign.

Emergency service personnel encounter challenging and often dramatic accident and rescue situations on a daily basis. As if this wasn't challenging enough, many emergency service workers also experience verbal abuse and physical violence. A survey conducted by the Social Accident Insurance Institution for the Fire Services in Lower Saxony in 2023 shows that around 34 percent of respondents had experienced violence – whether it be verbal abuse, insult or physical violence – within the last two years. Unwilling to sit back and accept this, the German social accident insurance started the #GewaltAngehen campaign. "We are calling for broad political and social solidarity with those who work or volunteer to save lives", explain Manfred Wirsch and Volker Enkerts, Chairs of the Governing Committee of DGUV. Hubertus Heil, the Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, is the patron of the campaign. "This year, the Federal Government passed the law on the elimination of vi-



Photo: © Philipp Köhler/German Red Cross

Daniel Schon has worked in emergency services for 30 years and manages an ambulance station. He is one of six emergency service workers that serve as the faces of the campaign. Their cause: more respect and support – from society and the political field.

olence and harassment in the world of work, thus sending out a clear signal. We will not tolerate any form of violence in our society! That is why I support the #GewaltAngehen campaign and promote fair and respectful interaction and civic courage", explains Heil during the kick-off event for the campaign.

Consistent action

The violent events that took place on New Year's Eve 2022/2023 received nationwide media and political attention. In several cases, the attacks were also targeted at fire fighters. The heavy focus on these attacks masks the fact that the problem of verbal and physical violence is not one that is limited New Year's Eve. In their resolution, the Members' Meeting of DGUV calls for perpetrators of violence to be consistently reported to the authorities and held accountable. The federal, state and local authorities must also investigate how health and safety can be guaranteed during rescue operations.

Talk about incidents

There also needs to be an awareness that violence is more than just physical attacks. In-

sults, threats and yelling are also forms of violence and can have a significant impact. The study by the German Social Accident Insurance Institution for the Fire Services in Lower Saxony shows that insults and intimidation or verbal threats have increased (see infographic on page 4). "We encourage emergency services to consistently report all incidents of violence", Wirsch and Enkerts emphasise. "No one should have to deal with such experiences alone. Speak about them openly within your team. Verbal attacks are not a trivial."

Go to campaign → www.dguv.de/gewalt-angehen (German only)

Prevention first

The German social accident insurance institutions help companies to consider the risk of violence-related accidents in their risk assessment process and provide advice on protection concepts and de-escalation training courses. They also support insured individuals if they have been injured or traumatised as a result of violence at the workplace.



Starting the new year with a strong autonomous administration

I am pleased to welcome our new autonomous administration – voluntary representatives of the employers and insured individuals. This voluntary role comes with huge responsibility. After all, we need to balance the interests of different stakeholders as we attempt to navigate the many challenges that lie ahead.

At the same time, this role comes with a wide range of opportunities to make a difference. After all, autonomous administration means being able to actively contribute to good working conditions and safe companies.

The issues we will face in the coming years are challenging. Digitalisation, an ageing population, new forms of work and climate change call for a re-conceptualisation of safety at work. The German social accident insurance is in a good position to meet these challenges head-on – with committed employees and an autonomous administration with a vision.

The German social accident insurance institutions ensure that employees can continue to enjoy a safe and healthy work environment despite all the crises and changes. On this note, I would like to wish you happy holidays and a healthy and positive start to the new year.

Yours,

Dr Stefan Hussy
Director General of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV)

DGUV self-administration reorganizes

On 23 November, as scheduled, DGUV – as the umbrella association of the German social accident insurance institutions – elected the chairpersons of the Governing Committee and the General Assembly. The General Assembly elected Bernhard Wagner as the representative of the insured and Gabriele Axmann as the representative of the employers as their chairpersons. Bernhard Wagner replaces Mathias Neuser, who is moving to the DGUV Governing Committee. Gabriele Axmann succeeds Helmut Etschenberg, who no longer stood for the chairmanship.

The Governing Committee of DGUV was also newly elected by the General Assembly. The previous Chairmen Manfred Wirsch and Volker Enkert were confirmed in their positions. For Manfred Wirsch, this marks the start of the third social election



Re-elected – Manfred Wirsch (right) and Volker Enkert (left) are the old and new Chairs of the Governing Committee of DGUV.

period in which he represents the insured side as chair of the Governing Committee, while for Volker Enkert, it is his second term.

...> www.dguv.de > Webcode: dp1387929 (German only)

Better protection against lead and diisocyanates

The European Commission wants to strengthen the protection of workers against the dangerous chemicals lead and diisocyanates by amending two directives.

Lead and diisocyanates are chemicals that can endanger the health of workers. Both compounds are used, for example, during building renovations and during the production of batteries and wind turbines. They can have serious negative health effects, such as infertility, respiratory diseases or skin allergies. However, there is now hope that workers will have more protection: The European Parliament and the European Council have agreed to a proposal from the EU Commission to amend Directives 98/24/EC and 2004/37/EG. Among other things, these provide for lower exposure limit values for lead and, for the first

time, limit values for diisocyanates to protect workers. Transitional limits and deadlines have been agreed to make it easier for companies to adapt.

The agreement was preceded by a consultation process, in which the German Social Insurance European Representation (DSV) also participated. Among other things, it emphasised that technical and organisational protective measures at the workplace and personal hygiene measures remain important in addition to the limit values.

...> www.dsv-europa.de/en > News > 2023

Good to know!

The principle of autonomous administration applies to the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) and all of its social accident insurance institutions. In the committees, the employers and insured individuals are always represented with the same number of votes. The autonomous administration is elected every six years.

...> www.tube.dguv.de > Unfallversicherung (German only)



The German social accident insurance must be included in the digitalisation strategy

DGUV Kompakt spoke with: **Dr Edlyn Höller** | Deputy Director General of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) – about digitalisation.

Dr Höller, according to the German government's Digital Act (Digitalgesetz, DigiG) the electronic patient record (ePA – elektronische Patientenakte) will be set up for all people with social health insurance by 2025. What does this mean?

Medical findings and information from examinations and treatments can be stored in the ePA – and have actually been since 2021. However, the application was previously voluntary and was rarely used, which is why the so-called objection procedure – opt-out – is now being introduced. This means that anyone who does not want to use the file must object.

“ Duplicate structures should be avoided.

Can the ePA optimise medical care for approx. 65 million people in Germany covered by social accident insurance?

It makes patient care simpler, more transparent and even safer. In the accident insurance system in particular, many parties work together. As accident insurance provides all services from a single source, there are already fewer interfaces that hinder the process. Nevertheless, the digital exchange of data can further accelerate established procedures. And that is in everyone's interest. After all, we want to act quickly and safely so that patients can resume their full participation in life as quickly as possible.

What requirements does the German social accident insurance have for the electronic patient record?

The priority is to integrate the medical reports of the social accident insurance into the ePA. In our view, it would also be expe-

dient to grant access rights to all accident insurance service providers. Furthermore, it should be discussed whether a filter option for treatment by the accident insurance should be introduced in the file.

Why is it important to involve the German social accident insurance in the implementation of the infrastructure?

It is important to take a holistic, cross-sectoral view of the healthcare system so that digitalisation projects can develop their full potential for the benefit of patients. This is why accident insurance and its special features should definitely be taken into account. Accident insurance works closely with service providers in the healthcare sector, especially those that are tied to special qualifications and licences – such as accident insurance consultants and BG hospitals. These special features must be taken into account in the infrastructure. Information about treatment following accidents at work, commuting accidents or school accidents or occupational illnesses and the corresponding diagnoses, operations or medication are also sensibly contained in the electronic patient file. This means, for example, that drug interactions can be ruled out even more comprehensively or final prostheses can be taken into account when prescribing physiotherapy. From the DGUV's point of view, this represents a key improvement for all parties involved compared to the status quo.

The electronic prescription (e-prescription) is set to be rolled out next year and video consultations will be used more extensively. What does this change mean for the German social accident insurance?

We welcome these plans, as they all have the potential to improve patient care. In relation to the current developments, we believe that the use of standards to ensure

Two draft Acts aim to accelerate digitalisation in patient care:

The Act to Promote Digitalisation in the Healthcare Sector (DigiG)

The Act to Improve the Use of Health Data (GDNG)

interoperability of the technical processes is key. The German social accident insurance institutions already provide telemedicine services and are also developing their own digital health applications, such as those for rehabilitation aftercare. The majority of service providers in the German social accident insurance are already connected to the telematics infrastructure. Duplicate structures and unnecessary additional costs should be avoided.

How will the German social accident insurance participate in the proposed legislation?

We have emphasised to the Federal Ministry of Health and the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs that we are to be involved in the further development and implementation of the Act. The role of gematik will be to actively support us in the implementation of the Act.

On 15 November, the public health committee held a hearing on the Act to Promote Digitalisation in the Healthcare Sector". The DGUV took part as an expert and submitted an opinion (see QR code).

→ www.bundestag.de
> DGUV Statement
(German only)



Verbal abuse of volunteer firefighters is on the rise

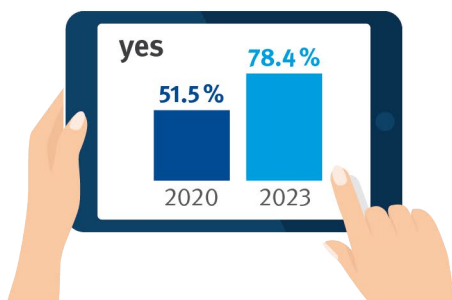
All too often, volunteer firefighters experience violence while on the job. This is shown by a follow-up survey conducted by the German Social Accident Insurance Institution for the Fire Services in Lower Saxony. Just like previously in 2020, around a third of respondents in the 2023 survey confirmed that they had experienced violence while carrying out their duties over the last two years. Verbal abuse is increasing: The percentage of firefighters that experienced insults increased from around 70 percent to 88 percent. The percentage of firefight-

ers that had been threatened with words or gestures increased by almost 10 percent. However, the results also showed changes in reporting behaviour. While in 2020, only 51.5 percent of respondents stated that they had reported the worst incident, this figure rose to 78.4 percent in 2023. This shows that firefighters are becoming increasingly aware that they do not have to simply put up with such unpleasant incidents.



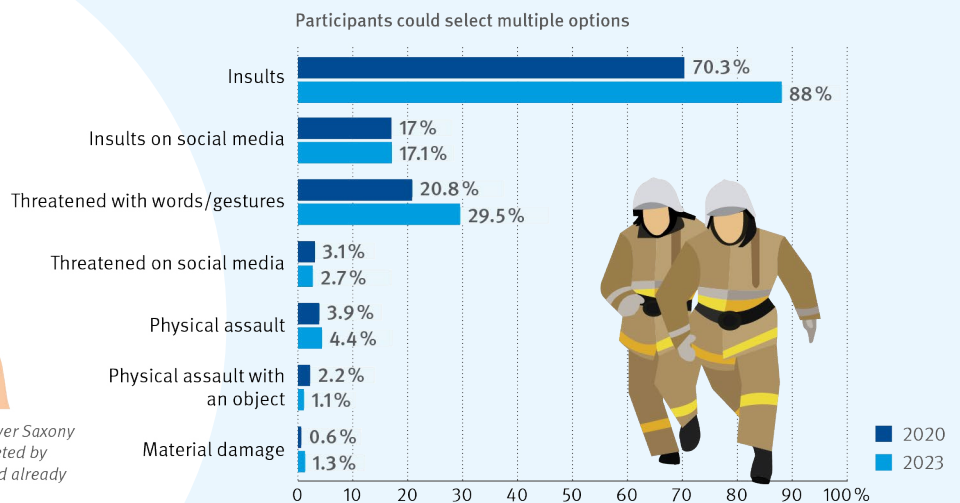
→ www.fuk.de > Keine Gewalt gegen Einsatzkräfte! (German only)

DID YOU REPORT THE WORST INCIDENT?



In 2020, 2,668 members of the voluntary fire services in Lower Saxony completed an online survey. In 2023, the survey was completed by 1,324 members. 18.5 percent of the respondents in 2023 had already completed the survey in 2020.

WHICH FORMS OF VIOLENCE HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED?



Source: Graphic elements: shutterstock.com

For better OSH worldwide – successful cooperation with China

After more than two years, the DGUV has successfully concluded an EU-funded OSH project with China. The project involved working with Chinese authorities to develop methods based on European approaches for collecting and analysing data on occupational accidents and work-related health hazards. The project was supported politically and technically by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL).

The aim of the project was, on the one hand, to expand cooperation between the EU and China in the area of labour and so-

cial affairs and to contribute to harmonised social and occupational safety and health standards at a European level and worldwide. On the other hand, the Chinese government is being supported in its strategic shift towards proactive protection and prevention in order to maintain the safety and health of employees. Improved prevention measures in China will benefit European companies both in terms of their competitiveness and in terms of sustainable supply chains.

→ www.dguv.de > Webcode: e1179403



The project involved workshops on data collection. The image above is from a workshop in 2022 for 52 safety managers from 26 companies.

Source: © DGUV

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