

CONTRIBUTION TO THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK: TRAINING AND RESEARCH IN OCCUPATIONAL NEUROLOGY

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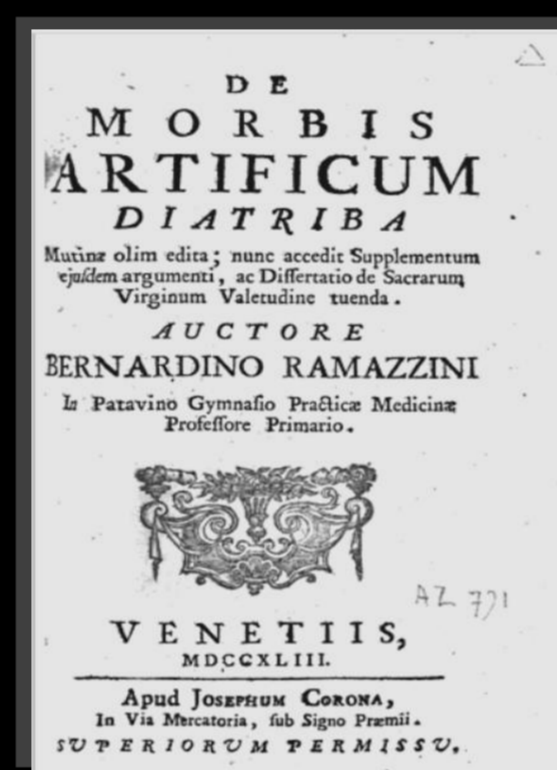
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Background and aims

Many neurological diseases related to the work remain hidden because the prevention networks are unable to detect, due to various reasons well known, especially in small businesses. For these reasons when a patient is seen by a physician and a neurologic diagnosis is to be made in the absence of a detailed work history, the possible relationship to previous or current neurological risk factors may be overlooked. (1)

The WHO recommends that national health systems, improving neurological care and the European Strategy on Health and Safety at Work (2007-2012) recommended that doctors delve into the personal history of occupational and working conditions their patients.

We want to help meet those goals, improving knowledge of this part of the Neurology and propose the establishment of similar working groups in the national Scientific Societies of Neurology.

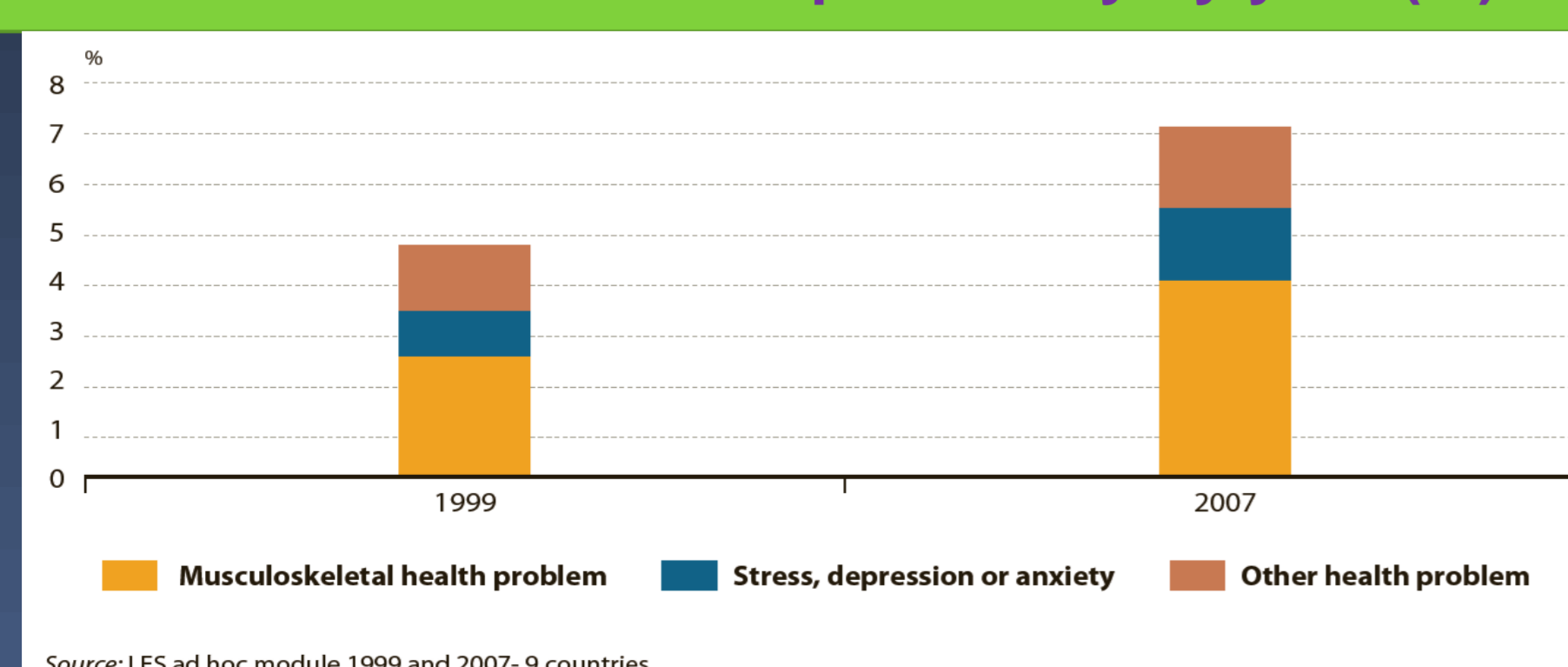


Methods

We analyzed all scientific activities conducted by the study group of Occupational Neurology of the Spanish Society of Neurology (SSN), from the beginning of his scientific activity, reviewing and evaluating, with special attention to training and clinical research, while assessing the degree of visibility and scientific quality of their contributions.



Occurrence of work-related health problems in persons that work or worked previously by year (%)

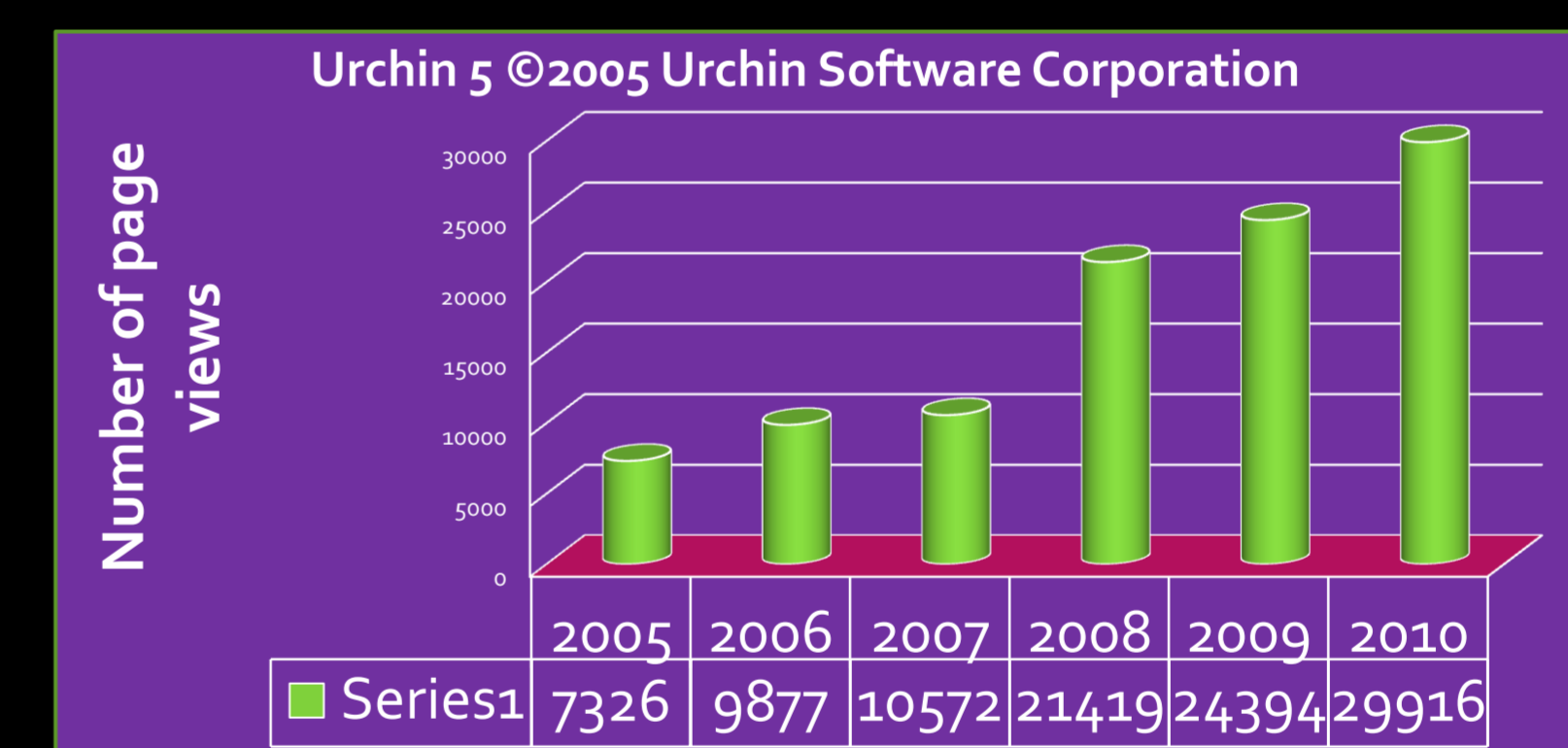


Results

Since 1998 the study group of Occupational Neurology has done:

- 1) Training courses in occupational neurology at the annual meeting of the Spanish Society of Neurology.
- 2) Presentation of scientific papers, clinical cases, clinical research results.
- 3) Collaboration in the clinical practice guidelines for periodic health surveillance of workers.
- 4) Advice to public institutions.
- 5) The website of the study group of the SSN contains most of the training activities undertaken and collaboration with other public institution. According to the assessment of Urchin Software, the number of page views and their relative percentage, published on our website in 2004 were 837 and six years later (2010) have been visited and downloaded 29.916 times.

(<http://neurologiadeltrabajo.sen.es/>)



Discussion

In the EU27, 8.6% of the persons aged 15 to 64 that work or worked previously reported a work-related health problem in the past 12 months according to the LFS ad hoc module 2007. This corresponds to approximately 23 million persons (2).

Work is a determinant of health and diseases related to it produce a social impact greater than expected. Depending on the country, the cost of workplace accidents and work-related diseases is between 1 and 3% of GDP.

Conclusions

-Occupational circumstances always must be explored when evaluating patients with neurologic disorders.

-Organize study groups for specific neurological occupational diseases agrees with international recommendations to improve safety and health at work and increase the quality and efficiency of clinical neurological care.

References

1. Feldman RG. Occupational Neurology. *Yale J Biol Med* 1987; 60: 179-186.
2. Health and safety at work in Europe (1999–2007). A statistical portrait. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>.