

## **HSE for fisheries**

Compilation of interviews with fishers who have joined the OHS services

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## **Fishers' experiences and thoughts of Occupational Health Services**

### ***Why did you join the OH services?***

- "The physicians at the local public health center are constantly changing, and we wanted to have a more lasting relationship with the health care personnel. The possibility to combine both OH services and other family health care services into one coming from the same service provider and persons there was the reason."
- "We were worried about our capability to continue as fishers despite getting old. We also want to be in good shape after retirement. It would be stupid to afterwards blame oneself for being ignorant about own health in due time."

### ***Have the OH services been appropriate and well suited for the fishing occupation?***

- "We have been satisfied. We have used the clinical services of both the OH physician and the OH nurse. Our work place has been checked. We also applied for rehabilitation, and it was granted."
- "Sometimes the services are barely adequate, but it is so easy to criticize. How one feels about the service and the contacts and actions involved, is in relation to expectations. These expectations are sometimes unrealistic, like *'so come and make everything smooth and good for me'*."
- "The work place check didn't result in any changes at the work, all the improvements have been made during the years past. It would be good to get some equipment, which would make the working tasks physically easier."
- "The advice given by the OH services can seem to be something of a mockery to some fishers, who have been active for many years and who certainly has tested all possible ways to work and pieces of equipment to make it easier and safer for himself. But then, one or two outside pairs of eyes might catch something, that has been overseen by the fisher himself."
- "We really needed some kind of mental and physical rehabilitation, and that we got with help of the OH care. The professionalism of the rehab course tutors was a positive surprise. Some kind of training to understand the changes in mind and body, when ageing, is important."
- In the OH "relationship" both the OH personnel and the client share and acquire knowledge for mutual benefit. This goes both for health and safety, as well as for finding out about facts about fishing as an occupation and insights of the fishermen. This kind of relation can really lead to significant improvements. It is this kind of partnership that should be promoted, rather than a one-way paid service.

### ***Why have so few fishermen joined the OH services?***

- "On the countryside you are accustomed to think, that the public health care center does everything you need for your health. People do not even come to think or ask for other services. Of course the costs associated to the OH services may affect willingness to join, but in fact, the sum is not significant."
- "The farmers' wives make the farmers to join the OH services, but fishermen are mostly "lone wolves". There is also much more promotion targeted at farmers, so a sheer knowledge gap can also exist. After all, it's up to oneself to make the first move to join the service."
- One of the interviewed fishermen has been giving talks at the fishermen's gatherings, but hasn't, according to himself, succeeded to convince his audience. The reason for not joining the OH services is primarily not a fault of the OH system.