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Quality employment outcomes throughout the work lifecycle: Application to persons with spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, and stroke



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Health, Employment and Longevity Project Employment (SCI, MS and Stroke) Study NEWS & UPDATES

Research Highlight

Job Retention Among Individuals With Multiple Sclerosis: Relationship With Pre-diagnostic Employment and Education; Demographic Characteristics; and Disease Course

Objective

Our objective is to identify how pre-diagnosis employment, education, demographic status, and disease factors relate to job retention among people with multiple sclerosis (MS).

Key Points

- Pre-diagnostic educational attainment was predictive of job retention.
- Among several pre-diagnostic employment characteristics, only working in production, transportation, and material moving was significantly related to a lower odds of job retention compared with those working in professional/managerial occupations.
- Aging factors were strongly related to job retention, with declines in job retention observed with increasing age and years since diagnosis.
- Non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic participants reported lower odds of job retention than non-Hispanic White participants, although there were no observed effects of sex.
- A significantly lower job retention rate was observed among those with progressive MS, compared with relapsing-remitting. Job retention was also less likely among people with greater MS severity and fatigue.

Conclusions

Job retention strategies and interventions should target people with greater MS complications and severity, as well as non-Hispanic, Black and Hispanic persons, because these characteristics are more highly related to job retention than our pre-diagnostic employment and vocational history.

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Employment (SCI, MS and Stroke) Study Updates

Study Update:
Quality employment outcomes throughout the work lifecycle: Application to persons with spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, and stroke

We will conduct and translate qualitative, cross-sectional, and longitudinal research into tools to promote quality employment outcomes for people with disability secondary to spinal cord injury (SCI), multiple sclerosis (MS), and stroke.

Our goal is to identify modifiable barriers and facilitators that may be targets of policy change, leading to improved quality employment outcomes, including, but not limited to earnings, benefits, promotions, and job satisfaction. The three study objectives are: (1) use *qualitative* methods to identify the primary

barriers to employment, including the impact of COVID-19, (2) develop *econometric models* to quantify employment outcomes between diagnostic groups, and (3) develop *longitudinal models* linking barriers and facilitators with quality measures of employment.

We have collected the qualitative data for this study. We have enrolled 46 participants (16 SCI, 15 MS, 19 Stroke) who completed virtual focus groups, each of which was comprised of an average of 6-8 people with SCI.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

National Disability Employment Awareness Month was created to educate the general public on the issues that workers with disabilities face and how employers can be more inclusive in their hiring practices.

Here's how you can get involved:

<https://nationaltoday.com/national-disability-employment-awareness-month/#:~:text=National%20Disability%20Employment%20Awareness%20Month%20%E2%80%93%20October%202022>



Recent Publications

The following manuscripts were recently accepted to be published in upcoming issues of *Topics in Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation* and *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*.

Krause, J. S., Dismuke-Greer, C. L., Rumrill, P., Reed, K., Jarnecke, M., & Backus, D. (2022). Job Retention Among Individuals With Multiple Sclerosis: Relationship With Pre-diagnostic Employment and Education; Demographic Characteristics; and Disease Course, Severity, and Complications. *Archives of physical medicine and rehabilitation*, S0003-9993(22)00463-4. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2022.05.013>