



This Workplace Research Monthly includes the latest peer-reviewed articles, reports and evidence on a range of workplace health and safety, prevention, recovery at work and return to work topics that were published in February 2026 only

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Methodology

Search

Open access, English language article abstracts related to the broad Work, Health and Safety and Rehabilitation/ Return To Work themes of Enabling Healthy & Safe Workplaces, Enhancing Employer Capability, Fostering Work Participation, Promoting Mental Health and Adapting to the Future of Work, published in the preceding month are sourced from PubMed© , Emcare©, Ergonomic Abstracts© and Psychinfo© databases at the start of the month. Results are screened by two reviewers, critically reviewed in terms of level of evidence and relevance to an Australian context, and collated.

Description of Evidence Levels Definitions Used in this Review

Articles are arranged from highest to lowest quality based on levels of evidence and relevance, as outlined in table 1 and 2.

1. **Level of Evidence** –Comcare does not conduct critical evaluations of the articles listed in the Workplace Research Monthly, however, certain study designs are scientifically stronger at answering a question. The scoring hierarchy used is presented below.

2.

Level of Evidence	Description
Level 1	Evidence from a systematic/scoping review or meta-analysis of relevant studies.
Level 2	Evidence from a randomised controlled trial.
Level 3	Evidence from a controlled intervention trial without randomisation (i.e. quasi-experimental).
Level 4	Evidence from a case-control or cohort study.
Level 5	Evidence from a single case study, a case series, or qualitative study.
Level 6	Evidence from opinion pieces, reports of expert committees and/or from literature reviews.

3. **Relevance** – Research carried out in Australia or similar countries is most relevant to Australian readers.

Level	Description
A	Study conducted in Australia or the study has been conducted outside Australia but confounders unlikely to affect relevance
B	Study conducted outside Australia and confounders likely to affect generalisability

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Enabling Healthy and Safe Workplaces

Health and Wellbeing

Stroke, small-vessel disease, and occupation: Systematic review and data analysis

Background: Novel risk factors for stroke, such as occupation, are increasingly under exploration. We investigate if specific occupational exposures and settings increase the risk of developing small-vessel disease (SVD), including SVD-related strokes. **Methods:** We performed a systematic review on stroke-occupation associations and then analyzed data from patients presenting to Lothian stroke services with mild ischemic stroke (modified Rankin Scale score ≤ 2). We performed magnetic resonance imaging and inquired about occupational status. We assessed relationships between high-risk occupations (per Control to Substances Hazardous to Health guidelines) and standard occupational classifications (per Standard Occupational Classifications criteria) against white matter hyperintensity volumes, SVD score, and stroke subtype. **Results:** Our systematic review identified 37 papers assessing occupations/broad occupational classifications (n=13), psychosocial work-related factors (n=11), and occupational exposure to hazardous substances (n=13). We then analyzed data from 414 participants and found, after adjustment for age, hypercholesterolemia, socioeconomic status, years of education, hypertension, diabetes, and smoking history, that high-risk occupations were associated with higher SVD scores (odds ratio, 1.64 [95% CI, 1.07-2.54]; n=357; P=0.02) but not for lacunar stroke subtype (odds ratio, 1.03 [95% CI, 0.64-1.67]; n=358; P=0.90) or white matter hyperintensity volume (% intracranial volume) ($\beta = -0.003$ [95% CI, -0.015 to 0.008]; n=357; P=0.60). Examples of high-risk occupations include drivers, engineers, and skilled trade workers. No associations were found for standard occupational classifications. **Conclusions:** This systematic review shows limited data on stroke-occupation associations. Our analysis showed that high-risk occupations are associated with higher SVD scores but not stroke subtype.

Zhang et al. 2026.

Journal of the American Heart Association, vol. 15, no. 3.

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Keywords: Cerebral small - vessel diseases; lacunar; occupational exposure; stroke.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41614311/>

Body composition and dyslipidemia in postmenopausal medical workers: A cross-sectional study

Objective: Dyslipidemia, characterized by abnormalities in lipid levels, significantly increases the risk of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD), particularly as its prevalence escalates with age, notably impacting postmenopausal women due to hormonal changes. Understanding the relationship between dyslipidemia and body composition, assessed through techniques like bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA), is crucial for developing effective prevention and management strategies for cardiovascular disease and related metabolic disorders. This study aimed to evaluate the predictive value of body composition on dyslipidemia in postmenopausal medical workers and inform prevention strategies. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study included 207 postmenopausal medical workers undergoing hospital employee physical examinations between July and October 2023. Body composition was assessed using the Inbody720 analyser, and serum triglycerides, total cholesterol, and other physical examination results were recorded. The study analyzed the relationship between body composition and blood lipid levels. **Results:** The prevalence of total dyslipidemia in postmenopausal healthcare workers was 46.4%. Participants with dyslipidemia exhibited significantly higher levels of uric acid, fasting blood glucose, glycosylated hemoglobin, BMI, body fat percentage, visceral fat area, body water, and minerals ($p < 0.05$). Conversely, skeletal muscle mass index was significantly lower in the dyslipidemia group ($p = 0.000$). Serum triglycerides (TG) showed a positive correlation with BMI ($r = 0.377, p = 0.000$), body fat percentage ($r = 0.271, p = 0.000$), skeletal muscle mass index ($r = 0.254, p = 0.000$), visceral fat area ($r = 0.340, p = 0.000$), total body water ($r = 0.249, p = 0.000$), and minerals ($r = 0.231, p = 0.001$) in postmenopausal medical workers. The binary logistic regression analysis revealed each unit increase in body fat percentage, the odds of developing dyslipidemia increase by 77.1% (OR, 1.771, 95% CI, 1.247-2.516). For each unit increase in total body water (TBW), the odds of developing dyslipidemia increase nearly sixfold (OR =

7.296,95% CI,2.068-25.740). Additionally, for each one-year increase in age, the odds of developing dyslipidemia increase by 5.8% (OR,1.058,95%CI,1.013-1.105). **Conclusion:** Skeletal muscle mass index, body fat percentage visceral fat area, minerals, and total body water are strongly correlated with dyslipidemia and can serve as predictors. Our study indicates that body composition is closely related to dyslipidemia. Accordingly, body composition assessment can be introduced in health check-ups for early screening, and interventions involving exercise and diet can be implemented for at-risk populations, providing comprehensive support for the prevention and control of dyslipidemia.

Yao et al. 2026.

BMC Women's Health, vol. 26, no. 1.

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Keywords: Body composition; dyslipidaemia; female medical workers; postmenopausal women.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12905-025-04245-6>

Sociodemographic and occupational risk factors for premenstrual mood disorders among female workers

Introduction: Premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) and premenstrual syndrome, collectively referred to as premenstrual mood disorders (PMDs), are common among working women and can significantly impact their well-being and productivity. This study investigated the prevalence of PMDs and identified sociodemographic and occupational factors that contribute to the risk of PMDs among Japanese working women. **Material and methods:** This was a cross-sectional study based on a two-wave online survey conducted between January and June 2023. The study targeted individuals who were biologically female, aged 20-44 years, and currently employed in Japan. Data were collected on sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., age, marital status, education, income), occupational factors (e.g. working hours, job type), and health-related variables. The primary outcome was the presence of premenstrual disorders (PMDs), assessed using the Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder Scale. Participants were classified as having PMDs if they met criteria for either PMDD or moderate-to-severe premenstrual syndrome (PMS). Those reporting no or only mild symptoms were categorized as not having PMDs. The secondary outcome was the identification of sociodemographic and occupational factors associated with the presence of PMDs. To examine these associations, logistic regression analysis was performed, comparing individuals with and without PMDs. **Results:** Among 908 participants (mean age = 33.48, SD = 6.20), 13.66% had PMDD, and 30.51% had moderate-to-severe premenstrual syndrome. Greater PMD risk was associated with younger age, non-regular employment, working ≥ 60 h weekly, employment in small companies, the presence of children, and lower educational attainment. In contrast, a lower PMD risk was associated with having a manufacturing job. **Conclusions:** Sociodemographic and occupational factors have a strong impact on PMDs among Japanese female workers. Promoting work-life balance and providing tailored mental health support in the workplace can help reduce PMDs. Future studies should further investigate these complex relationships.

Shimoda et al. 2026.

Acta Obstetricia et Gynecologica Scandinavica, vol. 105, no. 2.

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Keywords: Occupational health; premenstrual dysphoric disorder; premenstrual syndrome; risk factors; women; working.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://obgyn.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/aogs.70121>

Self-nudging toward physical activity: Scale development, validation, and workplace implications

This study uses nudging theory to develop and validate a measure for self-nudging toward physical activity. The research unfolds in three phases: (a) initial item development through interviews and literature review, (b) psychometric testing with Japanese employees (N = 1540), and (c) validity assessment in a longitudinal subsample (N = 716). Factor analyses confirm a reliable one-factor structure. The scale demonstrates content and predictive validity, showing positive relationships with physical activity, physical capacity (fitness and energy), well-being (workability, work engagement, and job satisfaction), and job performance; and negative

relationships with strain (psychological distress, exhaustion, and occupational depression). Structural equation analyses show that self-nudging at Time 1 is positively related to well-being and negatively related to strain at Time 2 (3 months later) through increased physical capacity, with effects remaining significant after controlling for baseline measures. The findings contribute to our understanding of the associations among self-nudging, physical activity, and occupational well-being. The results have implications for both theoretical advancement in nudging research and practical applications in workplace health promotion.

Bakker et al. 2026.

Applied Psychology Health and Wellbeing, vol. 80, no. 1.

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Keywords: Nudging theory; physical activity; self-nudging; self-regulation; work engagement.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://iaap-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/aphw.70129>

Occupational social interaction is associated with reduced dementia risk: The Trøndelag Health Study (HUNT)

Lifetime social engagement could build cognitive reserve and lower the risk of dementia through compensatory effects on brain health. We aimed to investigate whether social interaction at work is protective of later-life cognitive impairment. Data from 9,248 participants of the population-based Norwegian HUNT4 70+ Study (2017-2019), with cognitive assessments at or after age 70, were linked retrospectively to longitudinal registry-based employment information spanning ages 30-65 years. An occupational social interaction score was computed using occupational characteristics from the O*NET database. Multinomial logistic regression was used to estimate the associations between occupational social interaction and dementia and mild cognitive impairment (MCI), while linear regression was used to model the association with cognition using the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA). The models were subsequently adjusted for confounding variables age, sex, education, and apolipoprotein E-ε4 genotype, as well as for midlife family, health, and lifestyle-related variables collected from national registries and earlier Trøndelag Health Study waves. Higher occupational social interaction was associated with reduced risks of dementia and MCI, and better MoCA performance. Adjusted for confounding from age, sex, education, and apolipoprotein E-ε4, each standard deviation higher occupational social interaction score was associated with a relative risk ratio of 0.89 for dementia ($p = .003$), 0.88 for MCI ($p < .001$), and a 0.31-point higher MoCA score ($p < .001$). Our findings highlight the importance of occupational social interaction in preserving and promoting cognitive health in later life. (Psychnfo Database Record (c) 2026 APA, all rights reserved).

Bratsberg et al. 2026.

Psychology and Aging, vol. 41, no. 1.

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Keywords: Social interaction; dementia; dementia risk

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2026-70035-001.pdf>

Impact of redeployment on healthcare staff well-being and retention: A survey of staff in the UK National Health Service

Background: The redeployment of healthcare staff from their normal place of work and duties to alternative activities is not a new phenomenon and has typically been used as a temporary measure to address capacity gaps. While redeployment supports the mobilisation of a flexible healthcare workforce, it also presents as a source of tension in relation to staff well-being and retention. This paper reports findings from a survey of staff in the UK National Health Service (NHS), exploring the impact of redeployment.

Method: An online survey was administered by YouGov (2023), addressing contemporary evidence on variables impacting staff health, well-being and disposition to remain in NHS employment. The sample comprised NHS employees representing the principal healthcare job families and grades across acute hospitals, mental health, community and ambulance services. Statistical analysis (SPSS V.29.0.2.0) compared (independent samples t-test, z-test and χ^2 test for trend) redeployed and non-redeployed staff response profiles. **Results:** The staff who had experienced redeployment in the 6 months prior to spring 2023 showed higher rates of submitting applications for non-NHS jobs (22%; non-redeployed staff 12%). Redeployed staff

reported higher stress, lower morale and less ability to switch off from work than non-redeployed staff ($p < 0.01$). They also showed higher ratings of symptoms of burnout ($p < 0.0001$), higher rates of sickness presenteeism (66% redeployed; 54% non-redeployed), greater worry over current working conditions ($p < 0.05$) and lower confidence in their improvement in the near future ($p < 0.01$), than non-redeployed staff.

Conclusions: The findings highlight the negative impacts associated with staff redeployment and challenges to staff health, well-being and disposition to remain employed in healthcare. Despite a growing consensus regarding the need to support the redeployed, evidence regarding 'what works' remains under-researched. Such insight is particularly pertinent given the growing interest in technological solutions for a more agile workforce, where deployment flexibility is a key feature.

Weyman et al. 2026.

BMJ Open, vol. 16, no. 2.

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Keywords: Burnout, professional; health workforce; human resource management; occupational stress; psychosocial intervention; risk management.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/16/2/e107785.long>

Prevalence, incidence, and occupational risk markers of dyslipidemia in Peruvian workers

Introduction: Dyslipidemias are a significant risk factor for cardiovascular diseases. In Peru, nutritional transition and lifestyle changes may be contributing to an increase in the incidence of these metabolic disorders, particularly among the working population. **Objective:** To determine the incidence of dyslipidemias and evaluate associated occupational factors in Peruvian workers. **Methods:** A retrospective cohort study was conducted using electronic medical records from 4,200 workers attending an occupational health clinic between 2013 and 2022. Incidence rates of hypertriglyceridemia, hypercholesterolemia, and combined dyslipidemia were calculated. Specific occupational factors (type of work, sitting time, and night shift work) were analyzed using Cox regression models adjusted for age (with splines) and sex. **Results:** The incidence of hypercholesterolemia (87.22 cases per 1,000 person-years; 95% CI: 79.99-94.45) was significantly higher than that of hypertriglyceridemia (65.71 cases per 1,000 person-years; 95% CI: 59.71-71.72). Combined dyslipidemia showed an incidence of 48.28 cases per 1,000 person-years (95% CI: 43.60-52.97). Workers in social services had a higher risk of developing dyslipidemias (aHR: 1.78; 95% CI: 1.27-2.49) compared to office workers. Prolonged sitting time (>4 h) was significantly associated with an increased risk of hypertriglyceridemia (aHR: 1.28; 95% CI: 1.05-1.56) and combined dyslipidemia (aHR: 1.42; 95% CI: 1.15-1.76). **Conclusions:** The high incidence of dyslipidemias-particularly hypercholesterolemia-may reflect the increasing consumption of ultra-processed foods and the ongoing nutritional transition in the Peruvian population. Occupational factors play a crucial role in the development of these metabolic disorders, highlighting the need for specific preventive strategies in the workplace.

Ballena-Cacedo et al. 2026.

Endocrinología, Diabetes y Nutrición (English ed.), vol. 73, no. 2.

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Keywords: Dyslipidemias; hypertriglyceridemia; hypercholesterolemia; incidence; medical subject headings; occupational health; Peru.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2530018025001696?via%3Dihub>

Work Health and Safety

Active learning and sector-specific simulations mitigate the first-month injury risk in young workers

Introduction: Occupational health and safety education is a critical preventive strategy for mitigating workplace accidents, particularly among young workers who face disproportionate risks during their transition from school to work. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of current educational interventions and analyze sectoral accident patterns to inform curriculum development. **Methods:** A systematic review was

conducted synthesizing data from 32 international studies published between 2004 and 2025. The study employed a mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative accident statistics with qualitative assessments of pedagogical models to correlate training methods with safety outcomes.

Results: The analysis reveals that active learning methods significantly improve safety motivation and internal locus of control compared to traditional passive instruction. Crucially, accident data identifies a "first-month vulnerability," with up to 67% of injuries in vocational settings occurring within the initial weeks of employment. Furthermore, sectoral comparisons demonstrate that generic safety curricula fail to address specific lethal risks, such as falls in construction or transport-related injuries in healthcare.

Discussion: Current vocational training models are insufficient for ensuring early-career safety. Sustainable injury prevention requires a paradigm shift in curricula from generic compliance rules to sector-specific simulations and mandatory transition phases that mimic real-world workplace pressures.

Caner 2026.

Frontiers in Public Health, vol. 14.

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Keywords: Accident analysis; active learning; occupational health and safety; safety training; vocational education; young workers.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/public-health/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2026.1767451/full>

Unraveling hierarchical penetration mechanisms and coupling relationships of safety risks in major transportation infrastructure construction using text mining and complex networks

The continuous expansion and increasing complexity of major transportation infrastructure construction have led to frequent safety accidents during construction. To address the limitations of traditional methods in safety risk management and to reveal the hierarchical penetration mechanisms and coupling relationships of risk factors, this study established a new paradigm for understanding safety risks in transportation infrastructure construction by integrating text mining and complex network theory, based on 244 construction safety accidents that occurred in China between 2010 and 2023. First, text mining was used to extract 101 key features related to safety accidents in major transportation infrastructure construction from raw data, and these features were utilized to develop an improved Human Factors Analysis and Classification System (HFACS) model. Subsequently, a co-occurrence matrix was employed to quantify the frequency and strength of associations among factors, leading to the construction of a Safety Risk Network (SRN) with risk factors as nodes. By calculating the Multi-Feature Gravity Model (MCGM) value and the comprehensive degree $C(i)$ for cross-validation, the following findings were revealed: ① Inadequate safety training, though widely connected, have a weak global impact; ② Explicit factors such as equipment defects are easily identifiable and are predominantly influenced by supervisory-level factors; ③ Safety management in construction should focus on addressing systemic deficiencies at the organizational and supervisory levels rather than merely rectifying operational-level issues. Finally, a hierarchical blocking and proactive defense strategy was developed using the Bow-Tie Model, providing a quantitative decision-making basis for enhancing the intelligence of safety management in major transportation engineering projects.

Liu et al. 2026.

Scientific Reports, vol. 16, no. 1.

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Keywords: Complex network; construction safety; HFACS model; major transportation infrastructure; text mining.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-026-37778-3>

General and toxicologic aspects of occupational fatalities in the metropolitan area of Lyon from 2000 to 2020: A retrospective study

Over the past two decades, fatal workplace accidents have accounted for between 300,000 and 400,000 deaths a year worldwide. The aim of this study was to investigate the general characteristics and the toxicological profile of work-related deaths. A descriptive retrospective study was carried out on occupational-related deaths occurred in the Lyon metropolitan area from 2000 to 2020 from the autopsy reports of the

University Institute of Legal Medicine. A total of 476 cases of work-related deaths were identified, of which 91% were men. The median age was 48 years, 44% of the deaths were due to cardiac origin, 34% to mechanical accidents and 18% to suicide. 16 homicides were also recorded. The cause of death differed significantly between socio-professional categories: suicide was the main cause of death among managers & intellectual occupations (50%), cardiovascular death among non-manual elementary workers (53%), manual elementary workers (49%) and craftsmen, shop keepers & business owners (33%), and physical accidents among farmers (50%) and manual elementary workers (48%). The main cause of death varied by sector: physical accidents in construction (61%), cardiovascular events in transportation and storage (67%) and manufacturing (51%). 27% (n = 130) tested positive for at least one psychoactive substance, including 75 for alcohol, 43 for sedative anxiolytics and 33 for cannabis. These results may help occupational health professionals to design policies and campaigns to prevent deaths among the workers concerned. Specific studies to assess the proportion of fatal accidents attributable to the use of alcohol, cannabis or benzodiazepines could contribute to reducing work-related deaths.

Lamouroux et al. 2026.

La Medicina del Lavoro, vol. 117, no. 1.

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(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

Keywords: Toxicology; occupational facilities; metropolitan area.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://mattioli1885journals.com/index.php/lamedicinadellavoro/article/view/17546>

Chronic Health Issues

Employment status in people with multiple sclerosis: Profile, dynamic changes and determinants over time

Aim: In a large UK multiple sclerosis (MS) cohort, we examined work status and how it changed over follow-up, identifying demographic, clinical and other factors associated with these transitions. **Methods:** Participants of the Trajectories of Outcome in Neurological Conditions-MS study completed questionnaires on demographics, work instability, disability, fatigue, mood and quality of life at baseline and follow-up to explore work disability (stopping), discontinuity (retiring early) and drift (downgrading). Regression and Classification and Regression Tree (CART) analysis examined predictive factors. **Results:** Among 1035 subjects aged 20-60 years in paid work at baseline with mean follow-up 22.7 months, net annual increases were 4.0 % for work disability, 3.1 % for discontinuity and 1.8 % for drift. Risk of work disability was increased by age, work instability and for part-time work, female sex. The risk of drift was 3.9 times higher for females; work instability increased drift for all subjects. Reverse work disability and drift were also observed, i.e. returning to employment or upgrading work. Discontinuity was influenced by secondary progressive subtype, impaired cognition, more comorbidities, and reduced by disease modifying therapy use. CART analysis showed that risk of job loss could be predicted using age, EDSS and sickness absence information, and of medical retirement using the above three factors and MS subtype.

Conclusions: Screening for people with MS at greater risk of losing employment could be readily done in clinical practice, facilitating further discussion with the multidisciplinary team and referral to support services as appropriate.

Young et al. 2026.

Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders, vol. 106.

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Keywords: Employment re-entry; longitudinal; retirement; trajectories of outcome in neurological conditions; work instability; work retention.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: [https://www.msard-journal.com/article/S2211-0348\(25\)00649-2/fulltext](https://www.msard-journal.com/article/S2211-0348(25)00649-2/fulltext)

Physical work demands and risk of rheumatoid arthritis, systemic sclerosis, and systemic lupus erythematosus. A Danish longitudinal cohort study

Objectives: This study assesses the association between physical work demands and rheumatoid arthritis (RA), systemic sclerosis (SSc), and systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) among men and women. **Methods:** This nationwide, register-based study included more than 1.0 million women and 1.1 million men with employment born between 1960 and 1999 from the Danish Occupational Cohort with Exposure data (DOC*X). Information on physical work demands was obtained from a job exposure matrix (JEM) and measured as recent physical work demands, accumulated physical work demands, and years with high physical work demands since workforce entry. The populations were followed from 1997 to 2018. Poisson regression models were used to estimate the IRRs for developing RA, SSc, and SLE, identified in the Danish National Patient Registry. **Results:** Men in occupations with high recent physical work demands (4th quartile vs. 1st quartile: 1.36, 95% CI 1.31-1.42), higher accumulated physical work demands, and more years with high physical work demands, had a higher risk of diagnosis of RA, while this was not the case for women. Accumulated physical work demands and more years with high physical work demands were associated with a small increased risk of diagnosis of SSc and SLE among men. In women, high physical work demands were associated with a reduced risk of diagnosis of SLE, while the results on SSc were inconsistent. **Conclusion:** These findings support an association between higher physical work demands and diagnosis of RA and possibly, albeit to a lesser extent, SLE and SSc in men, but not in women.

Nielsen et al. 2026.

Journal of Autoimmunity, vol. 158.

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Keywords: Autoimmune rheumatic diseases; job; occupation; systemic autoimmune rheumatic diseases; work environment.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0896841125001593?via%3Dihub>

Five-year follow-up of work disability after traumatic brain injury: A nationwide Swedish matched cohort study of 98,000 individuals

Background and objectives: Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a leading cause of long-term disability in working-age populations. Return to work is a key marker of recovery, yet most studies assess it as binary at fixed time points. We aimed to estimate transition probabilities to and from work disability during 5 years after TBI and how injury severity and preinjury sociodemographic and medical factors influence these probabilities.

Methods: We conducted a nationwide matched cohort study in Sweden using linked registers. Individuals aged 21-60 years with a TBI diagnosis between 2005 and 2016 were compared with up to 10 matched non-TBI individuals. TBI severity was proxied by care characteristics: TBI A (emergency visit or ≤ 2 days), TBI B (≥ 3 days), and TBI C (neurosurgery). Transition probabilities to and from work disability (>14 days sickness absence) were estimated with multistate models. Sociodemographic and medical factors were assessed with Cox regression.

Results: The cohort included 98,256 individuals with TBI and 981,191 matched non-TBI individuals (median age 39 years; 43% women). Transition probabilities to work disability were higher in all TBI groups: at 30 days, 5.5% (95% CI 5.4-5.7) for TBI A, 29% (28.0-30.7) for TBI B, and 43% (38.2-47.3) for TBI C, vs 0.5% (0.5-0.6) in non-TBI; at 5 years, 7.1% (7.0-7.3), 10.9% (10.2-11.7), and 12.9% (10.7-15.7), vs 4.0% (4.0-4.1). In TBI A and B, higher probability was predicted by older age (TBI A hazard ratio 1.23, 95% CI 1.20-1.26; TBI B 1.34, 1.21-1.48), female sex (TBI A 1.59, 1.56-1.62; TBI B 1.35, 1.26-1.44), and psychiatric disorders (TBI A 1.34, 1.30-1.39; TBI B 1.28, 1.11-1.48), while higher education (TBI A 0.83, 0.81-0.86) and city residence (TBI A 0.92, 0.90-0.95; TBI B 0.88, 0.80-0.95) were protective. In TBI C, only older age remained significant (1.59, 1.17-2.14). **Discussion:** TBI was associated with persistently elevated transition probabilities to work disability across all severity groups, with early peaks in TBI B and C and a delayed increase in TBI A, influenced by sociodemographic and medical factors. However, the lack of standardized severity grading limits comparison with other studies. Still, these results suggest TBI increases long-term risk of work disability, supporting sustained individualized rehabilitation.

Klang et al. 2026.

Neurology, vol. 106, no. 5.

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Keywords: TBI; traumatic brain injury; work disability.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41671521/>

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease among former United States Department of Energy workers: Comorbidities and lung function changes

Background: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in the United States and is frequently associated with multiple comorbidities which lead to poor COPD outcomes in the general population. However, little is known regarding COPD comorbidities in occupational cohorts whose exposure experiences could result in differences in comorbidities compared to the general population. These differences may also be important for assessing COPD outcomes such as lung function changes or decline. Therefore, the objectives of this study were to: (1) identify and describe clusters of COPD comorbidities among Department of Energy (DOE) former workers; (2) assess if the attributes of the identified clusters differ from those identified among the general population based on the published literature, and (3) identify predictors of lung function changes and decline among DOE former workers.

Methods: Clinical, occupational, and sociodemographic data were obtained from the National Supplemental Screening Program. Imputation for missing values was performed using multiple imputation by chained equation. Comorbidity clusters were identified using hierarchical clustering. Regression and classification random forest models were used to identify predictors of changes in forced expiratory volume in one second (FEV1) and FEV1 decline. Variable importance scores were used to assess the predictive importance of the predictors. **Results:** A total of 17,448 DOE former workers were included in this study, 20.9% of whom had COPD at their initial exam. Four comorbidity clusters were identified among those with COPD. Cluster 1 was composed of individuals with low prevalence of comorbidities, cluster 2 contained individuals with high prevalence of cardiovascular diseases, cluster 3 had those with high lung cancer prevalence, while cluster 4 had individuals with high prevalence of multiple comorbidities. There was no significant association between the clusters and either FEV1 change or decline. Age at hire, welding fume exposure, and silica exposure were significant predictors of both FEV1 changes and decline. Age at initial exam and baseline FEV1, which have been identified as significant predictors of these outcomes in the general population, were also significantly associated with the outcomes in the current study. By contrast, smoking, which is a common risk factor in the general population, was a weak predictor of FEV1 change and decline in this cohort. **Conclusion:** Clusters of COPD related comorbidities were identified. The most important predictors of lung function changes and decline were FEV1, age, age at hire, and sex. The findings suggest that the important predictors of lung function changes and decline in this occupational cohort are different from those reported in the general population. Study findings may be useful for guiding enhanced monitoring efforts and control programs.

Howard et al. 2026.

PeerJ, vol. 14.

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Keywords: COPD; chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; comorbidity; hierarchical clustering; lung function changes; NSSP; national supplemental screening program; occupational exposure; random forest model; United States Department Of Energy.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://peerj.com/articles/20696/>

Occupational Exposure

The impact of high temperatures and heatwaves on health outcomes among working-age adults (15-64 years): A systematic review and meta-analysis

Background: High temperature is a well-documented public health threat affecting people of all age groups. While occupational studies have assessed heat impacts on workers, the broader health effects on the working-age population remain underexplored. This study systematically reviewed and quantified the health effects of high temperatures and heatwaves among working-age adults. **Method:** Systematic searches were conducted in PubMed, Scopus, and Embase for peer-reviewed epidemiological studies published up to January 2025.

Eligible studies examined the effects of high temperatures and heatwaves on all-cause and cause-specific morbidity and mortality in individuals aged 15-64 years. A random-effects meta-analysis was performed to pool relative risks (RRs) per 1°C increase in temperature and across heatwave intensities. The study protocol was registered with PROSPERO (CRD42024528637). **Findings:** Of 4,755 identified studies, 165 met the inclusion criteria, with 138 eligible for meta-analysis. A 1°C increase in heat exposure was associated with a 2.3% increase in morbidity (RR 1.023 [95% CI 1.019-1.027], I² = 99.7%) and a 1.6% increase in mortality (RR 1.016 [95% CI 1.013-1.018], I² = 78.9%) among working-age adults. The risk of morbidity and mortality associated with rising temperatures was greater in lower-income countries. Heatwaves also significantly affected health among working-age adults, with a 5.3% increase in morbidity (RR 1.053 [95% CI 1.042-1.064], I² = 90.7%) and a 3.8% increase in mortality (RR 1.038 [95% CI 1.020-1.057], I² = 57.7%). The greatest risk of morbidity was observed during middle-intensity heatwaves, while the highest risk of mortality was found during high-intensity heatwaves. The risk of morbidity from heat-related illnesses and genitourinary disorders showed the strongest associations with rising temperatures and heatwaves. **Interpretation:** High temperatures and heatwaves significantly increase morbidity and mortality among working-age adults (15-64 years), particularly due to occupational and environmental factors. Greater risks were observed in humid subtropical and Mediterranean climates, with notable increases in heat-related illnesses and genitourinary disorders. These findings highlight the need for broader heat vulnerability assessments and inclusive prevention strategies beyond workplace settings.

Li et al. 2026.

Environment International, vol. 208.

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Keywords: Climate change; health risk assessment; heatwaves; hot temperatures; meta-analysis; working-age population.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412026001005?via%3Dihub>

Occupational exposure to inhalation anesthetics in operating room and adverse health outcomes: A Systematic Review

Volatile anesthetics (VA) are essential agents for inducing and maintaining unconsciousness during specific surgical procedures, but they pose several health risks for exposed workers. The aim of the systematic review was to assess the effects of long-term VA occupational exposure in operating rooms. The review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA Statement, and the search was conducted in PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science to identify articles published between January 1, 1994, and December 31, 2024, that reported data from observational, quasi-experimental, and experimental studies. The protocol was registered in PROSPERO (ID: CRD42024500838). The quality of the studies was assessed using the standard Newcastle-Ottawa Scale versions for cohort and case-control studies, and an adapted version for cross-sectional studies. A total of 65 studies were included. Adverse effects were categorized into four groups: reproductive and Adverse pregnancy or offspring outcomes, neurotoxic alterations, laboratory parameter changes, and cyto- and genotoxicity. Overall, no significant associations were found between VA exposure and reproductive or pregnancy outcomes. One study reported neurological alterations (prolonged reaction times). Additionally, some studies have documented impairments in immune function and minor alterations in renal and hepatic function parameters. Finally, several studies indicated an increased risk of genotoxicity and oxidative stress. Given this evidence, protective measures and health surveillance for exposed workers remain crucial preventive measures.

Caronna et al. 2026.

La Medicina del Lavoro, vol. 17, no. 1.

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Keywords: Occupational exposure; inhalation anesthetics; operating room; adverse.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://www.mattioli1885journals.com/index.php/lamedicinadelavoro/article/view/17428>

Exploring the effects of occupational noise on cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases: A Mendelian randomization study

Existing observational studies have demonstrated a potential association between exposure to noisy workplaces and the occurrence of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases. However, current research is still inconclusive and inconsistent. Therefore, we attempted to delineate the causal correlation between noisy workplace exposure and both cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases in the European population by using Mendelian randomization analysis. The necessary data on cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, as well as noisy workplaces, were all accessible from the genome-wide association studies database. The inverse variance weighted analysis served as the primary method, supplemented by a few sensitivity analysis methods to evaluate the robustness of our findings. Genetically inverse variance weighted methods revealed that suffering from occupational noise may be linked to a significantly increased incidence of hypertension ($P = .005$; odds ratio (OR): 1.049; 95% CI: 1.015-1.084), heart failure ($P = .014$; OR: 1.325; 95% CI: 1.058-1.660), and stroke ($P = .019$; OR: 1.010; 95% CI: 1.002-1.018). However, there was no causal relation between occupational noise and angina pectoris ($P = .249$; OR: 1.006; 95% CI: 0.996-1.017), acute myocardial infarction ($P = .112$; OR: 1.008; 95% CI: 0.998-1.018) as well as atrial fibrillation and flutter ($P = .560$; OR: 1.002; 95% CI: 0.995-1.009). In addition, sensitivity analysis techniques, including Cochran's Q test, leave-one-out analysis, as well as MR-Egger intercept, were employed to guarantee that our findings were more reliable and robust. The Mendelian randomization study suggested a genetically predicted causal involvement of working noise in the increased pathogenesis of hypertension, heart failure, and stroke, instead of acute myocardial infarction, angina pectoris, atrial fibrillation, and flutter.

Peng et al. 2026.

Medicine, vol. 105, no. 8.

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Keywords: Mendelian randomization (MR); cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases; occupational noise.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: [https://journals.lww.com/md-](https://journals.lww.com/md-journal/fulltext/2026/02200/exploring_the_effects_of_occupational_noise_on.2.aspx)

[journal/fulltext/2026/02200/exploring_the_effects_of_occupational_noise_on.2.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/md-journal/fulltext/2026/02200/exploring_the_effects_of_occupational_noise_on.2.aspx)

The risk of basal and squamous cell carcinomas of the skin cancer incidence and external radiation in the updated National Registry for Radiation Workers Cohort In The UK

This study presents the most comprehensive evaluation to date of non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC) risk in the UK National Registry for Radiation Workers, examining separately both basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC). The cohort includes 172,452 workers with over 5.3 million person-years of follow-up (1955-2011) and a mean cumulative dose of 24.9 mSv. Cumulative external radiation was assessed using the personal dose equivalent $H_p(10)$, and Poisson regression estimates the excess relative risk per Sievert (ERR/Sv) of skin cancer incidence. A total of 5748 NMSC cases were identified (4288 BCC, 818 SCC). BCC showed good evidence of a linear dose-response (ERR/Sv = 0.85, 95% CI: 0.39-1.39; $p < .001$), but this weakened after adjusting for anatomical location as a proxy for ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure (ERR/Sv = 0.15; 95% CI: -0.17-0.54; $p = 0.28$). However, BCC risk remained elevated among workers who were monitored for internal exposure and those workers first employed before 1960, both of whom experienced higher doses and longer follow-up. SCC showed only limited evidence of a radiation dose-response (ERR/Sv = 0.87; 95% CI: 0.03-2.05; $p = 0.04$), driven largely by a small number of cases at high dose, and lost significance after adjustment for anatomical location. Most BCC and SCC tumors occurred on sun-exposed areas, with notably higher BCC risks on the upper limbs. These findings highlight the importance of accounting for UVR exposure in occupational radiation studies of skin cancer and support further research with individual UVR exposure data and skin dose data to better quantify these risks.

Hunter et al. 2026.

International Journal of Cancer, vol. 158, no. 3.

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Keywords: Basal cell carcinoma; cohort study; non - melanoma skin cancer; occupational radiation exposure; squamous cell carcinoma.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ijc.70096>

Occurrence and human exposure assessment of bisphenol analogues in various paper products from Korea

Bisphenol A (BPA) has been widely used in various paper products, particularly as a color developer in thermal receipts. Growing concerns about its toxicity have prompted the introduction of other bisphenols as alternatives. This study investigated the occurrence and residue levels of BPA and its analogues in thermal paper receipts (n = 120) and other paper products (n = 32) collected in Korea in 2015, with a particular focus on business-type-specific differences during an early phase of BPA substitution. BPA was the dominant compound in most receipts, while bisphenol S (BPS) was the most common substitute in "BPA-free" labeled receipts. Total concentrations of bisphenol analogues in thermal receipts were 2-4 orders of magnitude higher than those in other paper products. Multivariate analysis identified distinct compositional clusters associated with different color developers. Large retail chains showed a higher prevalence of BPS-based receipts, whereas small local stores predominantly relied on BPA-based thermal papers, indicating business-type-specific differences in substitution timing. Dermal exposure estimates indicated that occupational groups, particularly workers in small local stores, experienced substantially higher exposure than the general population. Estimated BPA intakes via paper handling exceeded the revised tolerable daily intake proposed by the European Food Safety Authority, highlighting the need for comprehensive exposure assessments of bisphenol analogues, especially in occupational settings.

Shin et al. 2026.

Frontiers in Public Health, vol. 14.

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Keywords: BPA; bisphenol S; business-type differences; dermal exposure; thermal receipt.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/public-health/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2026.1748104/full>

Physical Activity

Changes in leisure time physical activity, obesity-related morbidities, fatal and non-fatal CVD events and total mortality: Over 20-year follow-up in the opera study

Background: The impact of changes in leisure time physical activity (LTPA) is not well-documented, especially when considering occupational physical activity (OPA). This study examines the effects of LTPA changes in workers with varying physical activity demands. **Methods:** Part of the OPERA study, we tracked morbidities for over 20 years (P1, from 1993 to 2014) and mortality for over 8 years (P2, from 2014 to 2021-2022) with 599 participants. They were categorized into four LTPA groups ("sedentary," "started," "quit," "active") and two OPA groups ("office workers" and "occupationally physically active"). **Results:** Maintaining regular LTPA was associated with lower incidence of hypertension, diabetes and metabolic syndrome (p-values 0.007, < 0.001 and <0.001 respectively). Non-fatal cardiovascular disease (CVD) events were more common (p = 0.006, HR 1.99, CI95% 1.22-3.26) in the "quit" group during P1, especially among "occupationally physically active" (p < 0.001, HR 2.29, CI95% 1.23-4.29). During P2, fatal CVD events were associated with being in the "sedentary" group (p = 0.042, HR 2.67, CI95% 1.04-7.03). This association was particularly evident among "office workers," where belonging to the "sedentary" and "quit" groups was associated with a higher risk of fatal CVD events (p = 0.017, HR 5.45, CI95% 1.36-21.91, and p = 0.025, HR 4.55, CI95% 1.21-17.19, respectively). Furthermore, total mortality was associated with being in the "sedentary" or "quit" groups (p = 0.029, HR 3.69, CI95% 1.14-11.93, and p = 0.009, HR 4.61, CI95% 1.47-14.49, respectively). **Conclusions:** Stopping LTPA in middle age was associated to higher risk for non-fatal CVD events in "occupationally physically active" individuals. Fatal CVD events were associated with a sedentary lifestyle in whole study population. Among "office workers," both a sedentary lifestyle and stopping regular LTPA were associated with higher risks of fatal CVD events and all-cause mortality.

Suutari-Jääskö et al. 2026.

PLoS One, vol. 21, no. 2.

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Keywords: Leisure time; physical activity; obesity; morbidities.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0342429>

Occupational physical activity and blood pressure: The role of leisure time physical activity and sex differences

Background: This study examined the association between occupational physical activity (OPA) and blood pressure (BP), with particular emphasis on sex differences and the moderating role of leisure-time physical activity (LTPA). Elucidating these relationships may support the development of tailored BP management strategies within occupational health contexts. **Methods:** A total of 3,909 adults from the Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey were included in the analysis. Propensity score matching was employed to balance covariates between groups. Linear regression analyses were conducted to examine interactions between OPA and both systolic and diastolic BP, accounting for sex differences and LTPA levels.

Results: Among males with insufficient LTPA, OPA was significantly associated with higher systolic BP ($\beta = 1.944$, $P = 0.004$). In contrast, no significant association was observed in males with sufficient LTPA. Among females, OPA was significantly associated with lower systolic BP ($\beta = -1.133$, $P = 0.048$), regardless of LTPA status. No significant associations were found between OPA and diastolic BP in either sex.

Conclusion: The findings reveal sex-specific associations between OPA and BP. In males, OPA was linked to elevated systolic BP in the absence of sufficient LTPA, whereas in females, OPA was associated with lower systolic BP irrespective of LTPA levels. These results suggest a potential protective effect of OPA on systolic BP in females and underscore the need to consider sex, OPA, and LTPA collectively when developing BP management strategies.

Kim et al. 2026.

Journal of Korean Medical Science, vol. 41, no. 7.

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Keywords: Exercise; hypertension; sedentary behavior; sex characteristics; work.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://jkms.org/DOIx.php?id=10.3346/jkms.2026.41.e94>

Musculoskeletal Health

Global prevalence and associated risk factors of work-related musculoskeletal disorders among steelworkers: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Background: The prevalence of work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs) among steelworkers is high due to occupational exposures including high temperatures, vibrating tools, and intense physical loads. Given the varying prevalence estimates and associated risk factors of WMSDs among existing studies and the lack of a meta-analysis dedicated specifically to steelworkers, this meta-analysis aimed to comprehensively evaluate the prevalence of and risk factors associated with WMSDs among steelworkers. **Methods:** A systematic literature search of the PubMed, Web of Science, Embase, Scopus, Ovid Medline, Wanfang Data, VIP Database, China National Knowledge Infrastructure, and China Biomedical Literature Service System (SinoMed) databases for published studies reporting the prevalence of and factors associated with WMSDs among steelworkers was performed. Two reviewers independently screened citations, extracted information, and performed quality assessment of the included studies. **Results:** Analysis of 35 studies comprising 38,774 participants revealed an annual prevalence of WMSDs of 69.2% (95% CI 56.7%-81.7%) among steelworkers. Subgroup analysis revealed a yearly prevalence rate of WMSDs in Asian nations of 72.1% (95% CI 53.3%-91.0%), which was greater than that for non-Asian countries. The annual prevalence rates reported for 2011-2025 differed significantly from those for 2000-2010 [78.0% (95% CI 67.1%-88.8%) vs. 55.5% (95% CI 40.3%-70.7%), respectively], with lower back injury accounting for the highest annual prevalence [57.2% (95% CI 50.0%-64.5%)], followed by the shoulders and neck [44.7% (95% CI 29.4%-60.0%) and 42.1% (95% CI 27.8%-56.4%), respectively]. At most anatomical sites, except the elbow and hip/leg, the 12-month prevalence was higher than the 7-day prevalence. Risk factors for WMSDs among steelworkers included age ≥ 30 years,

smoking, psychosocial vulnerability, night-shift work, prolonged working hours, use of vibrating tools, lifting heavy loads, low education, high-risk jobs, and poor posture. Scheduled rest breaks were a protective factor. **Conclusion:** Steelworkers exhibited a substantial annual prevalence of WMSDs (69.2%), predominantly affecting the lower back, neck, shoulders, and knees. Prioritized implementation of integrated interventions is critical for ergonomic tool optimization, mechanical lifting assistance, targeted health training programs, and systematic high-risk group surveillance to reduce disease burden and safeguard worker wellbeing.

Lan et al. 2026.

Frontiers in Public Health, vol. 14.

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Keywords: Global prevalence; meta-analysis; risk factors; steelworkers; work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/public-health/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2026.1718101/full>

Do fixed or personalised sit-stand desk ratios improve lower back pain? A randomised trial

Alternating posture between sitting and standing with sit-stand desks may improve lower back pain (LBP). This study explored the effectiveness, acceptability and adherence of two sit-stand desk recommendations on LBP (measured via App) and secondary health and work outcomes. Fifty-six desk-based workers with LBP (age = 37.7 [SD = 10.0] years, 75 % women) were randomised to either a fixed ratio (30 min sitting:15 min standing); or a personalised ratio (self-selected or pre-emptive to discomfort). After 3 months, fixed ratio participants experienced reduced worst (-1.33 points/10) and average LBP (-0.83 points/10); personalised ratio participants experienced reduced worst LBP only (-0.69 points/10). Fixed ratio participants improved in their job-related stress, concentration and presenteeism; whereas, personalised ratio participants reduced their sitting time. Both recommendations were acceptable, while adherence was higher in the fixed ratio group. In conclusion, a 30:15 sit-stand ratio was acceptable and effective at improving LBP in the short term compared to a personalised ratio.

Brakenridge et al. 2026.

Applied Ergonomics, vol. 131.

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Keywords: Activity pacing; lower back pain; sit-stand desk.

Evidence Level: 2A

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0003687025002066?via%3Dihub>

Lower extremity bilateral explosive strength asymmetry predicts non-contact low back injuries in mine rescue workers: A prospective cohort study

Objective: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between bilateral lower extremity explosive strength asymmetry and non-contact low back injuries in mine rescue workers, a specialized occupational group. **Methods:** A single-leg countermovement jump (SLCMJ) test was performed on 101 rescue members who had participated in frontline rescue missions, using a force platform. The collected force platform data were used to calculate lower limb asymmetry. Injury incidence was measured by recording all non-contact low back injuries occurring during routine training or rescue operations over a 12-month follow-up period. Jump metrics (including eccentric peak force, vertical velocity at takeoff, peak takeoff acceleration, and takeoff peak force) associated with non-contact low back injuries were identified through Poisson regression analysis, and the optimal threshold for predicting injuries was determined using the receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve. **Results:** Bilateral takeoff peak force asymmetry significantly increased the risk of non-contact low back injury. Each 1% increase in asymmetry raised the injury risk by 18.5% (RR = 1.185, 95% CI: 1.091-1.288, $p < 0.001$), equivalent to an absolute increase of 3.2% (RD = 0.032, 95% CI: 0.009-0.056). Using the optimal threshold of 7.05% for risk stratification, rescue workers in the high-risk group had a 3.6 times higher injury risk than the low-risk group (RR = 3.64, 95% CI: 1.353-9.832, $p = 0.011$), corresponding to an absolute risk difference of 24.1% (RD = 0.241, 95% CI: 0.073-0.409). **Conclusion:** The interlimb asymmetry measured during the single-leg countermovement jump can be used to predict the risk of non-

contact low back injuries in mine rescue workers over a 12-month follow-up period. Particular emphasis should be placed on the interlimb asymmetry of takeoff peak force.

Li et al. 2026.

Frontiers in Public Health, vol. 14.

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Keywords: Bilateral asymmetry; explosive strength; low back injury; mine rescue work; single-leg countermovement jump.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/public-health/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2026.1740041/full>

Caregiving activities causing occupational low back pain in Japanese social welfare facilities and hospitals

Background: Occupational low back pain (LBP) has increased in Japanese social welfare facilities and hospitals. Understanding its occurrence is the first step in addressing this issue. **Aim:** This study investigated the caregiving activities that cause occupational LBP incidents in these contexts. **Methods:** The study analyzed 2,722 incidents of occupational LBP among staff in social welfare facilities and hospitals resulting in four or more days absent from work. Data were extracted from accident occurrences and causes in the 2018-2019 Reports of Worker Casualties. The caregiving situations related to the occupational LBP incidents at each facility were then analyzed. **Results:** Approximately half of the occupational LBP incidents surveyed occurred during transfer assistance. This assistance was mainly associated with eating, bathing, and toileting in both facilities and frequently occurred during patient transfers between a bed and a wheelchair. In social welfare facilities, nontransfer assistance also contributed significantly, which included bathing, toileting, childcare, diaper changing, lying, standing, sitting, walking, and car transportation. In hospitals, nontransfer assistance such as providing support for lying, diaper changing, medical care, and sitting were occupational LBP risk factors. Furthermore, most incidents of occupational LBP occurred among staff who worked alone during day shifts. **Conclusion:** Caregiving activities involving transfer assistance, such as bathing, toileting, and eating, were common risk factors in social welfare facilities and hospitals. However, the specific nontransfer assistance activities contributing to occupational LBP varied by facility. To effectively reduce the incidence of occupational LBP, prevention strategies should focus on these high-risk activities according to facility type and the types of caregiving required.

Iwakiri et al. 2026.

PLoS One, vol. 21, no. 2.

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Keywords: Caregiving; low back pain; social welfare; hospitals.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0342979>

Prevalence and multivariate impact of musculoskeletal disorders on general health, occupational fatigue, and productivity in an industrial workforce

Background: Musculoskeletal disorders represent a leading occupational health challenge in heavy-industry settings, yet their combined impact on workers' general health, fatigue, and productivity remains underexplored. This study aims to quantify the relationship between multisite musculoskeletal symptom burden and key health and performance outcomes among copper-industry employees. **Methods:** A cross-sectional survey of 585 workers used the Standardized Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire, the 28-item General Health Questionnaire, the SOFI-20 fatigue inventory, and the HPQ-26 productivity survey. Spearman's rank correlation was used to examine bivariate relationships, and multivariable linear regression models adjusting generally for demographic, work-related, and psychosocial factors were employed to estimate the independent effect of the number of painful sites on health, fatigue, and productivity outcomes. **Results:** Fifty-seven percent of workers reported pain in at least one region during the preceding 12 months, with an average of 2.6 painful sites per person (standard deviation 2.4). The number of painful sites showed a moderate positive correlation with poorer general health scores ($p = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$) and higher fatigue scores ($p = 0.53$, $p < 0.001$), and a moderate negative correlation with productivity ratings ($p = -0.30$, $p < 0.001$). In adjusted regression analyses, each additional painful site was associated with a 1.9-point worsening in general

health score (95% CI 1.5 to 2.2), an 8.4-point increase in fatigue score (95% CI 7.3 to 9.6), and a 1.6-point decrease in productivity score (95% CI -2.0 to -1.2), all with p-values < 0.001. **Conclusions:** There is a clear dose-response relationship between the number of painful anatomical sites and declines in health, increases in fatigue, and reductions in productivity among copper-industry workers. To address this multifaceted impact, interventions should integrate ergonomic workstation design, task rotation, optimized break schedules, and comprehensive health-promotion services targeting both physical and psychosocial risk factors.

Choobineh et al. 2026.

La Medicina del Lavoro, vol. 17, no. 1.

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Keywords: Musculoskeletal disorders; general health; productivity; occupational fatigue.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.mattioli1885journals.com/index.php/lamedicinadellavoro/article/view/18043>

Guiding and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental Health

Efficacy of a smartphone app to improve mental health among emergency service workers: A randomised controlled trial

Background: Emergency service workers (ESWs) are routinely exposed to highly stressful and potentially traumatic events leading to high rates of psychological distress. Early intervention is vital to prevent chronic impairment and/or psychiatric disorders, with digital health innovations (e.g., smartphone apps) offering a potential means of scaling such intervention while overcoming barriers to help-seeking in this population. This study aims to evaluate the efficacy of an app designed to reduce psychological distress and related outcomes in ESWs. **Methods:** We conducted a randomised controlled trial with ESWs experiencing psychological distress (Kessler Psychological Distress Scale; K10) score >15. Participants were assigned to the intervention group, a full version of the Build Back Better app (including mindfulness, behavioural activation, trauma-focused cognitive therapy skills, activity and mood monitoring, and healthy coping strategies) or a mood/activity tracking-only version of the same app. Assessment occurred via online self-report questionnaires at baseline (T0) and at 1- and 3-month post-baseline (T1, T2) timepoints. The primary outcome was the K10 score at T2. Linear mixed model analyses were conducted based on the intention-to-treat principle. **Results:** N = 880 ESWs were randomized to the full (n = 440) or tracking-only (n = 440) condition. There was no Time x Condition effect for K10 scores, with both conditions showing similar improvements from baseline to 1-month (all ps < .001), and 3-month follow-up (all ps < .001). Exploratory analyses of moderators (engagement; baseline severity) found generally no significant differences in K10 score decreases across different levels of engagement in the full-app condition, however, app use was markedly low overall. At higher baseline psychological distress levels, there was a significant decrease in posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms from baseline to 1-month for the full-app group but not the tracking-only group (p = .002, d = -1.43). **Conclusion:** Despite consistent improvement across both app conditions, the minimal between group differences found here highlight the difficulties in developing effective, scalable resources for ESWs and the limitations of unguided digital programs more broadly.

Deady et al. 2026.

PLoS One, vol. 21, no. 2.

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Keywords: Smartphone app; mental health; emergency service workers.

Evidence Level: 2A

Link: <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0342419>

Effects of an 8-week app-based mindfulness intervention on mental health in working women: Randomized controlled trial

Background: Although working women experience increased work-related stress, preventive interventions to reduce its negative effects on their mental health are insufficient. **Objective:** This study evaluated the effectiveness of an 8-week mindfulness-based self-help intervention via a smartphone app across 4 domains (general psychological, work-related, family-related, and work-to-conflict) among working women.

Methods: This study recruited women workers via various media sources, such as crowdsourcing sites and social networking services. Participants were randomly assigned to the intervention (n=106) or waitlist control groups (n=107). Participants in the intervention group practiced guided mindfulness meditation every day at their convenience via an app on their cell phones for 8 weeks. The app provides an 8-week program with 4 meditation contents per 2 weeks. Participants in the waitlist control group lived as usual for 8 weeks. We conducted web-based questionnaires to assess participants' general psychological (life satisfaction, perceived stress, depressive and anxiety symptoms, trait anger, and mindfulness), work-related (work performance, job satisfaction, quantitative job overload, and job control), family-related (family satisfaction and partner satisfaction), and work-to-family conflict indicators. **Results:** An analysis of covariance, controlled for preintervention scores, revealed that the intervention significantly increased life satisfaction ($b=1.47$, $\beta=0.11$; $P=.005$) and decreased perceived stress ($b=-2.00$, $\beta=-0.17$; $P=.01$), depressive and anxiety symptoms ($b=-1.24$, $\beta=-0.15$; $P=.02$), and trait anger (reaction; $b=-0.59$, $\beta=-0.11$; $P=.04$). The intervention group demonstrated significantly increased life satisfaction ($t_{93}=-3.36$; $P=.001$) and decreased depressive and anxiety symptoms ($t_{93}=2.35$; $P=.02$). **Conclusions:** The app was effective in reducing perceived stress, depressive and anxiety symptoms, and trait anger (reaction), and in improving life satisfaction among working women. However, to improve work- and family-related indicators, higher-intensity interventions may be required, such as modifying the intervention content or extending its duration.

Uwagawa et al. 2026.

Journal of Medical Internet Research, vol. 28.

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Keywords: Application; applications; health promotion; intervention; interventions; mHealth; mental health; mindfulness; mobile apps; mobile phone; randomized controlled trial; stress; subjective well-being; women; women's health; work-related stress.

Evidence Level: 2B

Link: <https://www.jmir.org/2026/1/e62814>

Physiological assessment of mental stress in construction workers under high-risk working conditions: ECG-based field measurements on inexperienced scaffolders

High-risk working conditions in construction, such as working at height, may elicit elevated mental stress in workers and pose significant safety challenges. This study aims to physiologically assess construction workers' mental stress under high-risk working conditions using heart rate variability (HRV) features derived from electrocardiograph (ECG) signals. An experimental study in the field was conducted, where inexperienced scaffolding workers' (n = 20) ECG signals were collected when working at three different heights corresponding to low, medium, and high levels of mental stress. Supervised machine learning algorithms, including Support Vector Machine (SVM), KNearest Neighbor (KNN), Linear Discriminant Analysis (LDA), and Random Forest (RF), were applied for model development. The results show that the HRV features obtained good prediction accuracy. The classification accuracy is up to 85.00% between low and medium stress levels, 92.50% for differentiating low and high stress levels, and 87.50% for classifying medium and high stress levels. These findings demonstrate the potential of ECG-derived HRV features for differentiating the mental stress responses of construction workers under high-risk working conditions and provide empirical evidence supporting the feasibility of physiological monitoring of workers' mental stress in real construction environments.

Lei et al. 2026.

Sensors, vol. 26, no. 3.

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Keywords: HRV; inexperienced scaffolders; mental stress; working at height.

Evidence Level: 3B

Link: <https://www.mdpi.com/1424-8220/26/3/949>

Emergency medical personnel perspectives on value and use of tailored discussion forum for mental health support. A qualitative longitudinal study

Background: Emergency medical personnel experience high job-related strain elevating their risk for mental ill-health and depressive symptoms. This study explored emergency medical personnel user-perspectives in terms of added value of the anonymous online discussion forum RUPERT dedicated to rescue and emergency workers mental health support. **Methods:** Using a survey as a qualitative longitudinal tool, we explored emergency medical personnel perceptions, experiences, and expectations in terms of support needs, information and knowledge sought, perceived benefits of RUPERT, interests expressed, as well as perceived value and advantages of RUPERT. **Results:** A total of 37 participants joined the qualitative survey in time-point 1 (T1), 17 in time-point 2 (T2), and four in time-point 3 (T3). The thematic analysis generated 34 dominant subthemes within seven a priori domains and six overarching themes across domains. The overarching themes showed present concepts in the context of the discussion forum and emergency medical personnel, including Shared experiences and mutual understanding, Support networks and Social connection, Access to Information and Practical tools, Barriers to Participation and Usability, Mental health and Work-related challenges, and Curiosity and Passive participation.

Conclusion: The current findings have an important role for enhancing forums as an online tool for supporting rescue workers and emergency medical personnel. The overarching themes can support the future user-centered design principles in terms of functionality, usability, accessibility and more importantly serve as a guideline for practitioners who work on the content development via online tools for this population.

Petrovic et al. 2026.

Comprehensive Psychiatry, vol. 145.

User License:

Keywords: First responder; mental wellbeing; online communities; qualitative longitudinal study; support programs; survey as a qualitative tool.

Evidence Level: 5A

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0010440X25000835?via%3Dihub>

Swedish private-sector employees' experiences of promoting and hindering factors for working while having mental health problems: A qualitative study

Objectives: The workplace is an important arena for identifying and managing early symptoms of mental health problems. This study aimed to explore how private sector employees at risk of sickness absence due to mental health problems experienced promoting and hindering factors for working. **Methods:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 employees with mental health problems (≥ 3 on the General Health Questionnaire or who answered yes to a question on self-predicted sickness absence in the coming year due to common mental disorders). Reflexive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. **Results:** The analysis resulted in three themes: influence of life stage on working while having mental health problems; managing mental health problems in the social and organizational context; and preserving one's identity and agency when working while having mental health problems. Promoting and hindering factors occurred at the individual, group, leader and organizational levels. Promoting factors included social support from colleagues, a trusting relationship with the first-line manager, and engaging in leisure-time physical activity. Hindering factors included perceiving the cause of symptoms to be primarily outside work leading to delayed access to help, a cold or noisy work environment, and schedule mismatch.

Conclusion: Promoting and hindering factors occurred at multiple levels. Fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment where there is space for enjoyment can help employees manage mental health problems at work. Other promoting factors include having an active and present manager, reasonable production goals, and leisure-time physical activity. Employees who perceive the cause of their symptoms to be related to their private life tend not to seek help from the workplace, despite the impact on their work. This should be considered in the development of future interventions. Our study supports a life-course perspective on the understanding of how employees experience promoting and hindering factors for working while having mental health problems.

Frantz et al. 2026.

PLoS One, vol. 21, no. 2.

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Keywords: Mental health; employees; mental problems.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0342773>

Paramedic powers in mental health crises: A comparative legal analysis

Introduction: Effective management of mental health crises is a growing global concern, significantly impacting emergency services. In New Zealand the New Zealand Police have begun reducing their involvement in mental health emergencies. This shift positions paramedics as primary responders in pre-hospital mental health crisis management. This current study conducts a comparative analysis of mental health legislation in New Zealand, Australian jurisdictions and the United Kingdom to assess how laws empower paramedics in mental health crises. **Methods:** A structured framework was employed to evaluate 12 key domains relevant to pre-hospital mental health interventions. These domains include criteria for involuntary detention, emergency detention and transportation powers, integration of services and legal protections for paramedics. **Results:** The analysis reveals that New Zealand's Mental Health Bill (as introduced in 2024) emphasises reducing coercion and promoting culturally appropriate care but lacks provisions granting paramedics the authority to manage crises in isolation. In contrast, jurisdictions like the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland empower paramedics with greater legal authority and more integrated roles in mental health emergencies. **Discussion:** The absence of health-based legal tools and insufficient integration with mental health services in New Zealand may limit paramedics' effectiveness in crisis management, potentially increasing reliance on police and delaying interventions. Recommendations include expanding paramedic authority in line with other jurisdictions and improving integration with mental health services. By adopting models from leading Australian jurisdictions, New Zealand paramedics will be better placed to manage mental health responses and support a reduction in police involvement.

Mordaunt et al. 2026.

Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, vol. 60, no. 2.

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Keywords: Mental health law; comparative policy analysis; emergency medical services; health policy; interagency collaboration; paramedics; police withdrawal; pre-hospital care; suicide prevention.

Evidence Level: 6A

Link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41355235/>

Bullying, Harassment and Occupational Violence

Workplace violence towards healthcare workers in Norwegian psychiatric inpatient units: A cross-sectional study

Background: Workplace violence towards healthcare workers is increasing worldwide, with significant consequences for the healthcare worker, healthcare organization, and the quality of care. Healthcare workers in psychiatric inpatient units are particularly exposed, as the frequency and severity of violence is high. This study aimed to examine the prevalence of workplace violence towards healthcare workers in psychiatric inpatient units in Norway and the rate of formal reporting of such incidents. **Materials and methods:** A cross-sectional, questionnaire-based survey was conducted among healthcare workers across ten psychiatric inpatient units in Norway. The survey investigated the 12-month prevalence of workplace violence towards healthcare workers and the extent of formal reporting by type and severity. **Results:** A total of 237 (36%) healthcare workers completed the questionnaire. The overall 12-month prevalence of workplace violence from patients was 93%, with 91% of respondents reported being exposed to threats and 80% to violence. The median formal reporting rate was 7% (IQR 0-50) for threats, 40% (IQR 1-69) for violence without injury, and 70% (IQR 20-100) for violence resulting in injury. Formal reporting was generally regarded as important and not perceived as a professional defeat, but it was not seen as leading to change. **Conclusions:** This study confirmed a high prevalence of workplace violence in Norwegian psychiatric inpatient units, with the majority of incidents not formally reported.

Askeli et al. 2026.

Nordic Journal of Psychiatry, vol. 80, no. 2.

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Keywords: Workplace violence; healthcare workers; inpatient units; psychiatry; reporting.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08039488.2025.2599798>

The mental states of aggressors: a biopsychosocial analysis of workplace violence reports in hospitals

Background: Workplace violence (WPV) in hospitals worldwide has been on the rise for the last decade, marked by increased verbal and physical aggression. From a biopsychosocial perspective, we conceptualize aggressors' mental states as their control (or lack of) of an impulse across their life course. To contribute to violence prevention, our study synthesizes theoretical assumptions and organizational analysis. **Methods:** An exploratory sequential mixed-methods design analyzed 2634 WPV narratives from two hospitals in a large city in the Northeastern United States of America (2019-2023). Narratives were coded for "involuntary mental states" (e.g., dementia, delirium, lack of inhibition) and "unremorseful attitudes" (denial, minimization, justification without medical causation). Quantitative analysis identified patterns within these categories, types of violence, and safety responses. **Results:** WPV incidents increased by 212.4% from 2020 to 2021 and did not decrease in incidence in subsequent years. Patient/visitor workplace violence (Type 2) accounted for 93%. Physical violence was most prevalent (76%), followed by verbal (48%) and sexual (6%). "Involuntary mental states" comprised 28% of narratives, while "unremorseful attitudes" represented 29%. Workers often showed compassion, omitting emotional details for involuntary aggression, but reported significant distress from unremorseful acts. **Conclusion:** Our novel middle-range theory and mixed-methods approach reveal the complexity of WPV beyond simple dichotomies. Differentiating between involuntary and unremorseful aggression provides actionable insights for tailoring prevention strategies, de-escalation training, and aftermath support. Integrating mental health professionals and addressing the profound impact of remorseless acts is crucial for worker morale and retention.

Suárez Rojas et al. 2026.

American Journal of Industrial Medicine, vol. 69, no. 2.

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Keywords: Aggression; biopsychosocial model; hospitals; management; occupational health; violence prevention.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ajim.70047>

Psychosocial Issues

Self-determination theory and workplace outcomes: A meta-analysis

Applications of self-determination theory (SDT) in workplace contexts have demonstrable utility in identifying motivational determinants of adaptive workplace outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, work engagement) implicated in employee well-being and work productivity and effective stress management. Studies have found consistent SDT-stipulated associations between theory constructs (e.g., psychological need satisfaction, autonomous motivation) and adaptive workplace outcomes, although with substantive between-study variability. The current meta-analysis synthesised research reporting relations among SDT constructs and workplace outcomes and tested a novel model specifying SDT-stipulated predictions. In the proposed model, associations between employees' perceived need support from workplace leaders and adaptive and maladaptive workplace outcomes were mediated by autonomy, competence, and relatedness need satisfaction and autonomous and controlled motivation forms. Multilevel meta-analysis of data from studies identified in a systematic database search (k = 192) confirmed SDT-consistent patterns of averaged correlations among theory constructs and outcomes. Meta-analytic structural equation modelling analysis of the proposed model indicated positive direct perceived need support-need satisfaction, need satisfaction-

autonomous motivation forms, and autonomous motivation forms-adaptive outcome effects consistent with theory. Most salient, indirect effects of need support on adaptive workplace outcomes, and negative indirect effects on maladaptive outcomes, mediated by need satisfaction and autonomous motivation forms were observed. Moderation analyses indicated that model varied effects by work type, employee type, and country cultural orientation and GDP ranking. The analysis updates and advances prior research syntheses of SDT in workplace contexts providing robust support for the model including mechanism-related effects and identification of key moderators on which model effects are conditional.

Hagger et al. 2026.

Stress and Health, vol. 42, no. 1.

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Keywords: Health behaviour; job stress; meta-analysis; motivation; psychological well-being; theoretical models of stress and coping.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/smi.70151>

The antecedents and outcomes of teachers' autonomy satisfaction: A meta-analytic investigation

According to the self-determination theory, autonomy is a fundamental psychosocial need of individuals, and its fulfilment can lead to positive teacher outcomes, including increased motivation, well-being, and instructional effectiveness. Recent research has indicated that factors such as job demands, job resources, and personal resources are associated with teachers' autonomy satisfaction. This review aims to adopt a meta-analytic approach to exploring the relationships between teachers' job and personal characteristics (job demands, job resources, and personal resources), autonomy satisfaction, and teacher outcomes (work motivation, occupational well-being, and instructional effectiveness) using the random-effects model. A total of 82 studies were analyzed in this review. The results demonstrated that lower job demands, higher job resources, and greater personal resources are linked to increased autonomy satisfaction among teachers, subsequently enhancing their work motivation, occupational well-being, and instructional effectiveness. Moreover, the study also revealed that factors, including theoretical frameworks and publication types, can significantly influence the relationships between teachers' autonomy satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes.

Chen et al. 2026.

Applied Psychology Health and Wellbeing, vol. 18, no. 1.

User License: *Creative Commons Attribution -NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)* (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

Keywords: Instructional effectiveness; job demands - resources model; occupational well - being; self - determination theory; teachers' autonomy satisfaction; work motivation.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://iaap-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/aphw.70109>

Perceived organizational support and job burnout among government-funded preservice teachers: Basic psychological needs and educational policy satisfaction

Grounded in Self-Determination Theory and Conservation of Resources Theory, this study examines how perceived organizational support (POS) relates to job burnout among government-funded preservice teachers (GFPTs) in China. Using survey data from 937 GFPTs, we tested a model in which work autonomy, teacher self-efficacy, and occupational belongingness fully mediate the effect of POS on burnout (the POS → burnout direct path became nonsignificant). We further show that educational policy satisfaction moderates these mediation pathways by weakening the POS → basic psychological needs links, with the strongest moderation on the self-efficacy pathway. These findings clarify how organizational and policy environments jointly shape teachers' motivation and well-being, supporting a cross-level account of resource substitution and diminishing returns. Practically, combining robust institutional safeguards with school-based supports that enhance autonomy, strengthen competence, and build belongingness can lower burnout risk and promote sustainable teacher development.

Kong et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: Basic psychological needs; Educational policy satisfaction; Government-funded preservice teachers (GFPTs); job burnout; Perceived organizational support (POS).

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691825013472?via%3Dihub>

Psychosocial and occupational predictors of health among Spanish University Employees: The role of job type, contract status, and seniority

The digital transformation of work environments, particularly in academia, has introduced new psychosocial risks, including technostress. This cross-sectional study analyses the relationship between technostress and general health among university employees at the University of Zaragoza, examining the moderating effects of job type, contract status, and seniority. A total of 458 staff members, including academic and research staff and administrative and service staff, completed an online survey assessing general health, technostress, perceived stress, burnout, job satisfaction, resilience, social support, and other occupational variables. The results revealed that perceived stress was the most consistent predictor of emotional symptomatology across all subgroups. Technostress also emerged as a significant predictor, especially among permanent employees and those with longer tenure. Conversely, resilience and job satisfaction functioned as protective factors. Differences in health outcomes were observed depending on employment conditions, highlighting the importance of organizational context. These findings underscore the need for tailored interventions to mitigate psychosocial risks associated with information and communication technologies use and to enhance well-being in academic institutions. This study contributes to the growing evidence base on the health implications of digital work environments in the higher education sector.

Asensio-Martínez et al. 2026.

PLoS One, vol. 21, no. 2.

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Keywords: Psychosocial; occupational predictors; work environments; job type; contract status; technostress; university.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0339726>

Predicting employees' organizational citizenship behavior: A comparative study using artificial intelligence techniques

With the prevalent use of artificial intelligence (AI) in human resource (HR) activities, the ability to forecast employee behavior is an asset to firms and researchers. This study develops and tests a predictive model of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) using Sustainable Training Practices (STP), Psychological Contract Fulfillment (PCF), Job Satisfaction (JS), and demographic factors (i.e., age, gender, current organization experience, industry experience) as predictors. We employ a sample of 224 employees of Indian firms and conduct a comparative study of seven machine learning models: Support Vector Machine (SVM), Linear Discriminant Analysis (LDA), Random Forest, XGBoost, K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN), Naïve Bayes (NB), and an Artificial Neural Network (ANN). Results indicate that AI is a good predictor of OCB, with the ANN model boasting the highest accuracy rate of 93.33 %. The study reveals that the enactment of STPs perceived by the employee as assisting personal growth is a robust predictor of OCB. This paper offers a robust, tested model that can be used by HR managers to actively induce desired employee behavior through data-driven suggestions.

Gupta et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: Artificial intelligence; organizational citizenship behavior; sustainable HRM; sustainable training practices.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691825013460?via%3Dihub>

Illegitimate tasks and work motivation: Examining the full continuum of self-determination

Illegitimate tasks are tasks that are perceived as unnecessary or unreasonable. They act as stressors and are expected to induce various strains on employees, including motivational strains. In previous studies, only the association between illegitimate tasks and intrinsic motivation was examined. In the present three-wave longitudinal study, the examination was expanded to include the full motivational continuum described in self-determination theory. Structural equation modeling was used to examine both cross-sectional and longitudinal associations between illegitimate tasks and behavioral regulations among Finnish working adults. In addition to intrinsic motivation, illegitimate tasks were observed to also be strongly associated with amotivation and more moderately associated with external regulation, introjected regulation, and identified regulation in the expected directions. In longitudinal analyses, illegitimate tasks were observed to predict an increase in amotivation and a decrease in autonomous motivation; introjected regulation was observed to predict an increase in illegitimate tasks; and autonomous motivation was observed to predict a decrease in illegitimate tasks. Illegitimate tasks and motivation described in self-determination theory may have reciprocal associations over time. Examining other behavioral regulatory styles in addition to intrinsic motivation is recommended.

Karkkola 2026.

Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, vol. 67, no. 1.

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Keywords: Amotivation; illegitimate tasks; intrinsic motivation; self - determination; work motivation.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/sjop.70025>

Nurturing creative involvement at work: Role of psychological safety and happiness at work

There is a dearth of studies on psychological safety and how it affects employee attitudes and creativity. The study seeks to fill the research gap by demonstrating how psychological safety can be a valuable factor in influencing happiness at work and enhancing creative work involvement. Data was gathered from journalists in the publishing industry and was analysed using SmartPLS4. The results indicated psychological safety had positive effects on creative work involvement, and that happiness at work acted as a mediating factor in the relationship. The findings draw support from Job Demands-Resources model underscoring the importance of job resources in the work environment for fostering involvement in creative work. The study findings emphasize that organizations should create a psychologically secure work atmosphere where employees feel valued, respected, and supported to foster employee happiness and creative work involvement. This research broadens the scope of creativity theories by integrating psychological safety and positive psychology perspectives, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the elements that enhance creativity. These findings provide practical guidance for leaders and managers aiming to foster creativity.

Ciby et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: Psychological safety; happiness; work.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691825014192?via%3Dihub>

The association between videoconference fatigue and psychophysical strain over time: Are age and remote work risk factors?

Building on the Conservation of Resources theory, in this study we investigated the longitudinal relationship between videoconference fatigue (VF)-also known as Zoom fatigue-and psychophysical strain, defined as psychophysical symptoms associated with work-related stress. We also investigated the role of age and flexible work arrangement (i.e., remote vs in-person working) as individual and occupational factors that may affect the association between VF and psychophysical strain. A total of 155 workers from different organizations completed two self-report questionnaires, administered at Time 1 (T1) and two months later at Time 2 (T2). Results from moderated multiple regression analysis indicate that VF at T1 positively predicted physical strain at T2. However, it was not associated with psychological strain at T2. Additionally, a positive

association was observed between VF at T1 and psychological strain at T2 in remote workers aged 55 or older. Our results suggest that VF may be associated with poorer physical health over time, and that it appears to be linked to poorer mental health among remote workers aged 55 or older. By identifying a particularly vulnerable group of workers, the study provides managerial insights into the use of virtual communication platforms at work. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Girardi et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: Age; conservation of resources theory; psychophysical strain; remote workers; technostress; videoconference fatigue; work-related stress.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691825013344?via%3Dihub>

Fostering Work Participation

Return to Work

Return to work following traumatic fractures of the thoracolumbar spine without spinal cord injury: A scoping review

Background and purpose: Traumatic fractures of the thoracolumbar spine happen in the younger, working-age population and often compromise return to work (RTW), a key factor in functional recovery and overall quality of life. Our review summarizes the current evidence on RTW following traumatic thoracolumbar fractures without spinal cord injury. **Methods:** A comprehensive literature search was conducted in Embase, Medline (OvidSP), Web of Science, CINAHL and Cochrane through July 2025. Studies were included if they met the following criteria: (i) traumatic thoracolumbar spine fracture without spinal cord injury, (ii) RTW reported as an outcome measure, (iii) prospective or retrospective cohort study or case-control design, and (iv) availability of a full-text article. Risk of bias was assessed for each included study. **Results:** 31 studies met the inclusion criteria. Follow-up ranged from 3 to 226 months. Only 8 out of 31 studies were rated as low risk of bias. Reported RTW rates varied widely: 25% to 100% after surgical treatment (n = 19 studies) and 38% to 100% after non-surgical treatment (n = 19 studies). Pooled estimates showed that the mean RTW is between 76% and 84% in patients with a thoracolumbar spine fracture, irrespective of treatment modality. **Conclusion:** Estimated RTW rates range between 76% and 84%.

Suijkerbuijk et al. 2026.

Acta Orthopaedica, vol. 97.

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Keywords: Return to work; traumatic fracture; thoracolumbar spine; spinal cord injury.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://actaorthop.org/actao/article/view/45364>

Return to work after primary total knee replacement in patients under 55 years of age: A retrospective study of 129 cases

Introduction: Primary total knee arthroplasty (TKA) has shown excellent results in the treatment of osteoarthritis, and its indications have now been extended to younger patients of working age. Few articles in the literature have studied the return to work of young subjects, and no specific studies have been conducted in France. Therefore, we carried out a retrospective study to 1) investigate the rate and delay of return to work after primary TKA in a population under 55 years of age and 2) identify factors influencing early return to work before 3 months, the period usually used as the duration of initial work stoppage (TS). **Hypothesis:** The hypothesis of this study was that the rate and time to return to work were similar to those of other Western studies. **Materials and methods:** This was a single-center retrospective study including all patients under 55 years of age who underwent primary TKA between 2010 and 2019, regardless of their professional status. A questionnaire collected all socioeconomic and medical information, time to return to work, and factors

influencing it. Our population consisted of 223 TKAs (201 patients), with a participation rate of 64%. Among 129 patients, with a mean age of 50.3 ± 4.6 years [29-55], 109 were working (84%). **Results:** Ninety-four of 109 patients (86.2%) returned to work after surgery at a mean time of 17.3 ± 10.6 weeks [12-24]. Previous hip or knee prosthetic surgery had a significant negative influence on the rate of return to work (OR 0.08; 95% CI [0.008; 0.7] [$p = 0.027$]). Manual workers returned to work significantly earlier (OR 8.2; 95% CI [1.6; 51.4] [$p = 0.017$]). A total of 56 patients (43.4%) were off work preoperatively, for a mean time of 16.7 ± 17.8 weeks [4,13-24], and 49 of these patients returned to work (87.5%) at a mean time of 18.7 ± 11 weeks [12-24] compared with patients who did not receive a preoperative work stoppage (WK) ($p = 0.7$). **Conclusion:** The hypothesis was only partially confirmed. Compared with patients in other Western countries, French patients under 55 years of age who underwent primary TKA surgery appeared to return to work at the same rate but with a longer delay. Patients on WT prior to surgery were more likely to return to work after the operation, although this difference did not reach the significance threshold.

Couraudon et al. 2026.

Orthopaedics & Traumatology: Surgery & Research, vol. 112, no. 1.

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Keywords: Return to work; Total knee replacement.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877056825000088?via%3Dihub>

The relationship between cognitive reserve, cognitive performance, and outcomes of return to work and life satisfaction after brain injury: A retrospective cohort study

Purpose: Cognitive reserve and neuropsychological test results are linked to outcomes after acquired brain injury (ABI), but their interaction and their impact on different types of outcomes remains to be explored. This study aimed to explore how cognitive reserve, measured by education, is related to neuropsychological outcomes, return-to-work and life satisfaction after ABI. **Methods:** Long term follow-up of 83 patients with ABI, 5-15 years after specialized brain injury rehabilitation. Logistic regression was used to analyze the relationship between independent variables and outcomes (return-to-work and life satisfaction). **Results:** Return-to-work was associated with cognitive reserve (OR = 1.31, $p = 0.024$), age (OR = 0.95, $p = 0.042$), general fatigue (OR = 0.77, $p = 0.034$), and Cognitive Proficiency Index (measures of working memory and processing speed, OR = 1.06, $p = 0.037$). Verbal and spatial abilities were related to education, but not to return-to-work. General fatigue was related to satisfaction with mental health in both univariate (OR = 0.78, $p = 0.008$) and multivariate analyses (OR = 0.8, $p = 0.037$), but no other variables were significantly associated with life satisfaction in multivariate analyses. **Conclusion:** Patients with lower cognitive reserve paired with slower processing speed and poor working memory may need additional support for successful return-to-work, while life satisfaction appears to depend more on other factors.

Ekdahl et al. 2026.

Disability and Rehabilitation, vol. 48, no. 3.

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Keywords: Brain injuries; educational status; neuropsychological tests; return-to-work; stroke.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40521721/>

Presenteeism and Absenteeism

Gender differences in the duration of sick leave: Economics or biology?

This study addresses the gender gap in workplace sick leave duration, focusing on the underlying economic and biological factors that contribute to this disparity. Using a novel methodological approach, we combine the stochastic frontier technique with an Oaxaca-Blinder-type decomposition to separate sick leave into medically justified and "opportunistic" days. Our analysis, based on detailed administrative data of workplace accidents in Spain, reveals that men and women recover at different rates for the same injuries, with biological differences explaining the majority of the observed gender gap. Additionally, we identify that men tend to use

more sick leave days for reasons unrelated to health recovery. The findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and employers, providing an empirical foundation for targeted policies that reduce gender-based discrimination in the workplace and ensure fairer resource allocation. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the gender gap in occupational health and offers implications for improving workplace equality.

Martín-Román et al. 2026.

Economics and Human Biology, vol. 60.

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Keywords: Gender gap; occupational health; sick leave duration; stochastic frontier analysis; workplace accidents.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1570677X26000031?via%3Dihub>

Workers Compensation

A systematic-narrative review of goal-setting guidelines in workers' compensation rehabilitation in Australia

Background: Goal setting is a core component of return-to-work rehabilitation in Australia. Various treatment guidelines have been developed and are regulated independently by each jurisdiction's workers' compensation authority. However, the extent to which these guidelines are consistent from a goal-setting perspective is unclear. Therefore, this study aimed to review all goal-setting guidelines for health professionals delivering services within workers' compensation schemes in Australia. **Methods:** A systematic-narrative review was conducted that searched academic and grey literature databases, web search engines, and workers' compensation authorities' websites, identifying 26 goal-setting guidelines across all Australian states/territories. **Results:** The analysis indicated that 58% of guidelines involved specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed (SMART) goal principles to some extent. Specifically, 35% of guidelines expected health professionals to only set SMART goals, 19% expected goals to include one or more of the SMART principles and 4% included guidance for multiple goal types. The SMART acronym was inconsistently conceptualised in 22% of guidelines that included this approach. Additionally, 42% of guidelines did not specify any goal type. There were also inconsistencies in the extent to which health professionals were expected to adhere to guidelines; recommendations regarding patient involvement in the goal-setting process; the required focus of rehabilitation goals; and their basis in goal-setting research. **Conclusions:** This study suggests that goal-setting guidelines for return-to-work rehabilitation in Australia are inconsistent and primarily based on SMART goal principles. These findings highlight potential issues for health professionals supporting injured workers, and indicate that more evidence-based and consistent goal-setting guidance may achieve better outcomes in workers' compensation.

Sargeant et al. 2026.

Australian Journal of Primary Health, vol. 32, no. 1.

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Keywords: SMART; compensation; goal; health professionals; occupational injury; policymakers; rehabilitation; return-to-work.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://connectsci.au/py/article/32/1/PY25160/267586/A-systematic-narrative-review-of-goal-setting>

Working hours

Fatigue in the ferry industry and its relation to roster patterns, schedules, and job roles

Fatigue is a known contributor to maritime accidents, with roster patterns, shift schedules, and job roles identified as key risk factors in long-distance shipping. This exploratory study investigates whether similar patterns exist in ferry operations. Sixty-three UK ferry workers participated in a field study involving at least 2 weeks of on-duty data collection. Participants wore activity monitors and completed sleep diaries and 9-point

scale ratings of sleepiness (KSS), stress, and workload. The sample included four roster types, three work schedules, and six job roles; 52% slept onboard, while others returned home between shifts. Sleepiness on duty (KSS \geq 7) was reported in 27% of shifts. The shortest sleep was observed in participants working 12-h split shifts and 8 weeks on/4 weeks off rosters. However, the greatest number of shifts with KSS \geq 7 were found in workers on 2 weeks on/2 weeks off and 1 week on/1 week off rosters. Bridge crew reported the most stress, and service crew the highest workload. Sleep location (onboard vs. home) did not significantly affect outcomes. Fatigue was widespread across roles and schedules, suggesting that mitigation strategies should target the entire workforce. Split shifts should be avoided, and current regulations are insufficient to manage fatigue effectively.

Sjörs Dahlman et al. 2026.

Chronobiology International, vol. 43, no. 2.

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Keywords: Fatigue; maritime; seafarers; shiftwork; sleepiness; work schedules.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07420528.2025.2599353>

Organisational Issues

How organizational justice shapes innovative work behavior: Work engagement as mediator and authentic leadership as moderator in China's ICT sector

The significance of innovative work behavior has been well established in the literature on human resources and organizational management, particularly within the Chinese information and communication technology sector. However, limited research has simultaneously examined how organizational justice, work engagement, and authentic leadership interact to drive innovation in this fast-paced, high-pressure industry. Grounded in Social Exchange Theory, this study developed a research model to examine the effects of distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice on work engagement, which was conceptualized as a mediating variable. Furthermore, authentic leadership was incorporated as a moderating variable due to its potential to enhance the relationship between work engagement and innovative work behavior. A total of 364 managers and engineers from information and communication technology companies in Guangdong Province, China, participated in this study. The results of the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling analysis indicated that distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice were all significantly related to work engagement. Moreover, work engagement was found to mediate the relationships between the justice dimensions and innovative work behavior, while authentic leadership strengthened the impact of work engagement on innovative work behavior. These findings highlight how fairness-driven engagement, reinforced by authentic leadership, can foster employee innovation within China's rapidly evolving ICT sector. Finally, the limitations of the study and directions for future research are discussed.

Zhou et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: Authentic leadership; distributive justice; innovative work behavior; interactional justice; procedural justice; work engagement

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691825014817?via%3Dihub>

Understanding how organizational socialization shapes organizational commitment: A qualitative study in the aviation industry

This study examines the relationship between organizational socialization and organizational commitment within the aviation industry. Focus group interviews were conducted with mid-level and senior aviation professionals as part of the research. Data was obtained from participants who provided written consent. Written documents were reviewed to identify usable content. Conceptual coding was then performed by the lead author of the study using the MAXQDA program. Theme analysis was used in the study. The sample of the

study consisted of 30 managers in middle and upper management in the aviation field, whose demographic variables were recorded. The findings reveal that an effective organizational socialization process positively affects employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. In particular, it was determined that the strong relationship between job satisfaction and motivation reinforces employees' intention to remain in the organization. As a result of the analyses, a conceptual model explaining how organizational socialization contributes to organizational commitment in the aviation sector was proposed.

Türk et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: Aviation management; Organizational behavior; Organizational commitment; Organizational socialization.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691825014295?via%3Dihub>

Health workforce resilience in the age of polycrisis: A framework to support health workforce policy and planning

Background: Many countries face prolonged health workforce crises, marked by shortages, maldistribution, skills mix imbalances and attrition. When workforces are overstretched, they become more vulnerable to external shocks and chronic strains, including infectious disease outbreaks, climate-related effects and political instability. This is particularly concerning as an emerging global "polycrisis" means such external pressures increasingly interact and amplify one another in unpredictable ways. Strengthening health workforce resilience must therefore become a priority for policy and planning. **Objective:** To introduce a resilience lens for health workforce policy and planning. **Methods:** This conceptual paper synthesises literature from health workforce and systems research, resilience, and complex adaptive systems theory, complemented by practical insights from workforce planning and governance. **Results:** The paper introduces the Health Workforce Resilience framework, which illustrates how the multilevel nature of health workforce resilience connects individual health workers, teams and organisations, and the national health workforce level. It shows how shocks and long-term pressures ripple through these interconnected levels, affecting the capacity, composition, and performance of the workforce. Impacts and responses at one level can amplify or dampen effects at others. The framework highlights two critical interfaces: the workforce-community interface, capturing how societal, economic, and security conditions shape workforce motivation, performance, and retention, and the workforce-governance interface, reflecting how institutional arrangements, policies, and decision-making processes enable or constrain workforce system responses. **Conclusions:** Adopting a resilience lens underscores the need to view workforce planning as a systems approach that emphasises anticipatory, needs-based planning and integrates political, social, and contextual realities to strengthen workforce resilience under pressure.

Onvlee et al. 2026.

Health Policy, vol. 164,

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Keywords: Health workforce; health workforce governance; health workforce planning; health worker; polycrisis; resilience; universal health coverage.

Evidence Level: 6A

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0168851025002544?via%3Dihub>

Job Design

Does job crafting lead to improved quality of life among Indian employees? Establishing a mediation model

Positive Organizational Psychology (POP) focuses on studying the positive emotional states that employees experience at work. The measurement of positive subjective experiences includes authentic happiness and

quality of life assessments. The development of POP requires researchers to identify essential factors that influence outcome variables. Employees use job crafting as an active behaviour to discover purpose in their assigned work tasks. Our work aims to explore whether job crafting can predict quality of life among employees. We hypothesize that when employees craft their jobs, it improves their quality of life. We herein explore the serial mediation effects of futuristic time perspective and authentic happiness in the relationship between job crafting and quality of life. We collected data from 320 employees working across various multinational companies in India and found that job crafting enhances quality of life among employees vis-à-vis authentic happiness. Our results suggest that job crafting leads to a better quality of life through increased authentic happiness among employees. The mediation analysis revealed that job crafting leads to quality of life improvement through authentic happiness, which then affects the futuristic time perspective. Our findings demonstrate how proactive work behaviors such as job crafting foster positive psychological outcomes, thereby enriching POP literature. Practically speaking, workers who experience positive subjective experiences will naturally become more productive while achieving their best performance levels.

Ruparel et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: Authentic happiness; future time perspective; India; job crafting; quality of life.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S000169182501488X?via%3Dihub>

Shift Work

Exercise interventions for sleep and cognitive dysfunction in shift workers: A systematic review of randomized trials

Background and objectives: Shift work disrupts circadian rhythms and contributes to poor sleep, cardiometabolic risk, and cognitive impairment, which is especially concerning in safety-critical professions. While exercise improves sleep and cognition in the general population, its effects in shift-working adults remain unclear. This review synthesizes randomized controlled trials (RCT) evidence on structured exercise training to determine its impact on sleep and cognitive outcomes in shift workers, and examines intervention characteristics, mechanistic pathways, and barriers to clinical translation. **Materials and methods:** Following PRISMA and Cochrane recommendations, six databases were searched from inception to January 2025 for RCTs involving adult shift workers and structured exercise (aerobic, resistance, combined, HIIT, or in-shift activity breaks). Primary outcomes were sleep quality, quantity, and continuity assessed using the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), actigraphy or polysomnography, and the Karolinska Sleepiness Scale (KSS), as well as cognitive performance and alertness measured by the Psychomotor Vigilance Task (PVT). Risk of bias (RoB 2.0) and methodological quality (PEDro) were assessed. Due to heterogeneity in interventions and outcome measures, results were narratively synthesized. **Results:** Ten RCTs (n = 420; 60% healthcare settings) predominantly evaluated aerobic or mixed modalities. Eight studies reported significant improvements in PSQI, total sleep time, sleep efficiency, or wake after sleep onset, although effect sizes and clinical relevance were inconsistent. Three RCTs demonstrated improvements in alertness, reaction time, and short-term memory, particularly when interventions were timed post-shift or delivered as supervised workplace sessions. Mechanistic evidence from six studies indicated circadian phase shifting, improved autonomic balance assessed by heart rate variability (HRV), and reduced inflammatory markers. However, 80% had "some concerns" or "high" risk of bias, and adherence barriers such as fatigue and irregular schedules were common. **Conclusion:** Structured exercise programs, tailored to shift pattern and individual chronotype, show promise for enhancing sleep and cognitive function in shift workers. Workplace-based, supervised interventions maximize adherence and real-world applicability. Future adequately powered RCTs with standardized outcomes, mechanistic markers, and sector-diverse samples are needed before guideline-level recommendations can be established.

Algharbi et al. 2026.

Frontiers in Public Health, vol. 14.

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Keywords: Circadian rhythms; cognitive function; exercise; night shift; shift work; sleep quality.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/public-health/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2026.1762359/full>

A participatory artificial intelligence driven shift-scheduling application for improving sleep among shift-working caregivers: A 4-month non-randomised controlled study with cross-over design

Here, we examine the effectiveness of a participatory artificial intelligence (AI)-driven shift-scheduling mobile application (which reflects the local improvement needs in shift scheduling) in improving the sleep quality of shift-working geriatric caregivers. Thirty-five shift-working geriatric caregivers participated in this 4-month cross-over interventional study. Half of the participants in the first 2 months followed the intervention schedule created by the AI-driven shift-scheduling mobile application, while the remaining participants followed the manually created control schedule. The improvement needs in shift scheduling, derived from occupational-fatigue counselling, were as follows: avoiding backward rotating shifts, reducing consecutive shifts, extending shift intervals and ensuring a day-off after a night shift. Sleep phases were evaluated using a ring-type sleep tracker. The effectiveness of the intervention was examined using three-way multilevel analyses (condition × shift × time). Deep sleep (N3) and rapid eye movement sleep were significantly more pronounced in the intervention condition compared with the control condition ($p = 0.016$, $p = 0.046$, respectively). However, no significant differences were detected for other outcomes. Moreover, we examined how shift combinations affected sleep outcomes. As a result, two consecutive late shifts and backward rotating shifts significantly deteriorated sleep quality and length (all $p < 0.05$). Our findings suggest that the shift-scheduling app reduced the backward shift rotations, resulting in significantly better sleep outcomes than from manual schedule creation. However, the magnitude of reduction in backward rotating shifts was not so remarkable. Therefore, the positive outcomes can also be attributed to enhanced employees' working time control by reflecting the local improvement needs. Trial Registration UMIN Clinical Trials Registry: UMIN000048495.:

Kubo et al. 2026.

Journal of Sleep Research, vol. 35, no. 1.

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Keywords: Artificial intelligence; caregiver; occupational - fatigue counselling approach; shift work; wearable device; worktime control.

Evidence Level: 3B

Link: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jsr.70144>

Associations between late-night shift work and perinatal outcomes: A nationwide cross-sectional study using JACSIS and JASTIS Data

Aim: This study investigated associations between late-night shift work and perinatal outcomes. **Methods:** Participants were pregnant women with recorded perinatal outcomes (late-night shift group, 626 cases; non-late-night shift group, 6633 cases) identified from two Japanese Internet surveys. We analyzed the association between late-night shift work and adverse perinatal outcomes. Furthermore, we examined factors associated with the use of Maternal Health Management and Guidance Cards. **Results:** The late-night shift group had significantly higher rates of threatened miscarriage, premature rupture of membranes (PROM), use of the Maternal Health Management and Guidance Card, health problems requiring hospitalization, fetal health problems, and infectious diseases compared with the non-late-night shift group. However, other perinatal outcomes, including preterm birth, gestational age at delivery, mode of delivery, and birth weight, did not differ significantly between groups. Among late-night shift-working mothers, those who used the Maternal Health Management and Guidance Card had a higher incidence of hyperemesis gravidarum, threatened miscarriage, and preterm labor than those who did not. **Conclusions:** Late-night shift work during pregnancy may be associated with an increased risk of perinatal complications. The Maternal Health Management and Guidance Card may provide support for pregnant women engaged in late-night shift work.

Tanaka et al. 2026.

The Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Research, vol. 52, no. 2.

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Keywords: Late-night shift; nationwide cross-sectional study; perinatal outcome; pregnancy; work.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://obgyn.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jog.70205>

Management and Leadership

An assessment of mental health challenges and occupational stressors among public safety personnel senior leadership

Substantial evidence indicates frontline public safety personnel (PSP), including, but not limited to firefighters, paramedics, and police, report significantly more occupational stressors, mental health challenges, and suicidal behaviours than the general population, largely attributed to their public service. In contrast, there is a paucity of research assessing the mental health of PSP serving in senior leadership roles (i.e., Chiefs, Directors, or Deputy Chiefs). The current study assessed prevalence proportions of occupational stressors, mental health challenges, and suicidal behaviours among paramedics and police serving in senior leadership relative to PSP in other roles within the organization. Participants included Canadian paramedics and police officers (n = 3717). Independent samples t-tests were conducted to assess for differences in mean mental health disorder symptom and occupational stressor scores between professional roles (i.e., PSP senior leadership vs other serving PSP) within PSP sectors. Bootstrapped logistic regression models tested for differences in relative risk for screening positive for mental health disorders and suicidal behaviours, and a series of bootstrapped partial point biserial correlations tested for associations between individual occupational stressors and screening positive for any mental health disorder. Despite differences in occupational demands, responsibilities, individual organizational, and operational stressors between the roles, there were very few statistically significant differences between serving PSP and their senior leadership. PSP senior leadership may face specific barriers to accessing care as a function of their highly visible positions and relatively limited options for peer support. Additional research is needed to understand the contemporary mental health and wellbeing needs of PSP senior leadership.

Carleton et al. 2026.

Journal of Psychiatric Research, vol. 193.

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Keywords: Mental health; occupational stressors; public safety; senior leadership.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022395625007654?via%3Dihub>

When and how supervisor's negative gossip influence target's proactive and withdrawal behavior: A perspective of self-regulation at work

The literature presents contradictory evidence regarding the influence of supervisor negative gossip on work behaviors of targeted employees. By regarding supervisor negative gossip as a stressor that triggers targeted employees' self-regulatory processes, this study investigates the roles of targeted employees' cognitive appraisal and regulatory focus in the relationship between supervisor negative gossip and their proactive/withdrawal behavior. Results from a scenario-based experiment and a time-lagged field study showed that: (1) supervisor negative gossip elicits both challenge and hindrance appraisals among targeted employees; (2) supervisor negative gossip has an indirect positive effect on targeted employees' proactive behavior and an indirect negative effect on their withdrawal behavior via challenge appraisal, and this indirect effect is significantly strengthened by promotion focus; (3) supervisor negative gossip also has an indirect negative effect on targeted employees' proactive behavior and an indirect positive effect on their withdrawal behavior via hindrance appraisal, and this indirect effect is significantly weakened by prevention focus. This study highlights that the impact of supervisor negative gossip on targeted employees' proactive/withdrawal behaviors depends on their cognitive appraisal and regulatory focus. It also clarifies the self-regulatory mechanism underlying targets' behavioral responses to supervisor negative gossip.

Geng et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 263.

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Keywords: Cognitive appraisal; proactive behavior; regulatory focus; withdrawal behavior; workplace gossip.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: [https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0001-6918\(26\)00168-X](https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0001-6918(26)00168-X)

Psychological foundations of ambiguity in the hybrid workplace: The role of managerial risk-taking and AI-induced job insecurity

In the modern ever-changing organizational environment, where hybrid workplace arrangement is becoming increasingly common, and artificial intelligence (AI) technology has been used widely, employees tend to face a situation characterized by ambiguity of work and it is difficult to perceive an understanding of role, expectations, and employment. The paper explores the interrelationship between task ambiguity, risk-taking by managers, AI-induced job insecurity, and employee outcomes in a hybrid working environment. This is based on Social Information Processing Theory where we advance a theoretical model that explores how workforce members actively learn and process information in their social context to get through ambiguity and foster resilience. The evidence of the proposed relationships is substantiated by three studies. Study 1 focuses on the way task ambiguity influences active lurking and also job engagement. Study 2 explores with the moderating factor on the relationship among the variables of task ambiguity, active lurking, and job engagement on managerial risk-taking. Study 3 examines how AI-induced job insecurity can moderate the link between task ambiguity and active lurking and job engagement. The results emphasize the need to ensure clear task specification, active lurking, management risk-taking and proactive efforts to reduce the issue of AI-induced job insecurity as factors that enhance employee engagement. The implications of the study are given and recommendations to conduct further research are outlined.

Nguyen et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: AI; active lurking; hybrid workplace; job insecurity; managerial risk-taking; task ambiguity.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691825014969?via%3Dihub>

Work Ability

Experiences of occupational engagement in young & middle-aged women post-stroke: A qualitative systematic review

Purpose: Young and middle-aged women engage in distinct occupations, facing unique post-stroke challenges that complicate their recovery. However, little is known about their experiences with occupational engagement following a stroke. This qualitative systematic review aimed to explore the post-stroke experiences of women aged 18-65 from an occupational perspective of health. **Methods:** A comprehensive search of five databases identified qualitative studies on post-stroke experiences of women aged 18-65. Two reviewers independently appraised the methodological quality of eligible studies. Data were extracted and synthesised using the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) method of meta-aggregation. **Results:** Seven studies were included. From 103 extracted findings, 18 aggregated categories and six synthesised findings emerged, relating to impacts on (1) daily life, domestic roles, self-efficacy and identity (2) work (3) relationships (4) health and recovery (5) adjustment and coping, and (6) experiences with healthcare. **Conclusion:** Post-stroke occupational engagement in young and middle-aged women was disrupted across various life domains, reflecting its dynamic and intersectional nature with individual experiences of doing, being, belonging and becoming. Systematic barriers and societal attitudes posed additional challenges to recovery. These findings underscore the need for equitable, person-centred interventions to facilitate occupational engagement for health and well-being in this population.

Toh et al. 2026.

Disability and Rehabilitation, vol. 48, no. 3.

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Keywords: Stroke; experiences; meta-aggregation; occupational engagement; qualitative; women.

Evidence Level: 1A

Link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40528350/>

Medico-social predictors of low work ability: A cross-sectional study of 2104 workers in southern France

Objectives: This study aims to determine the medico-social factors that predicted workers' low work ability (LWA) leading to long-term absenteeism and permanent medical unfitness for work. **Design,** setting and participants: This was a cross-sectional analysis based on a cohort of workers followed up by an occupational health service in the south of France. **Outcome measures:** Employees visited by the service completed the Work Ability Index (WAI), a self-administered questionnaire. A score of 26 points or more defines high work ability while a score of 25 points or less defines LWA (scoring from 6 to 50 points). Occupational and medico-social data were obtained from computerised medical records. Logistic regression models were applied. **Results:** Of the 2104 WAIs completed the baseline questionnaire, the factors most associated with LWA were mental disorders (OR: 3.46), adaptation of the workstation (OR: 2.88) and long/iterative stoppages (OR: 2.87). Blue collar (OR: 2.50), white collar (OR: 2.34), permanent contracts (OR: 1.79), disability (OR: 2.63), recognition as a disabled worker (OR: 2.37), musculoskeletal disorders of the neck (OR: 2.52) and back (OR: 1.69) also appear to be associated with a risk of LWA.

Conclusions: White-collar and blue collar workers affected by mental disorders and musculoskeletal disorders of the neck and back appear to be significantly associated with a risk of LWA. To adjust LWA preventive measures, future studies are needed to discuss further these risk factors.

Bellagamba et al. 2026.

BMJ Open, vol. 16, no. 2.

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Keywords: Occupational & industrial medicine; occupational health services; preventive medicine; primary prevention.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/16/2/e106703.long>

Adapting to the Future of Work

Aging Workforce

Hand eczema and self-reported work ability in middle-aged cohort: A Northern Finland Birth Cohort 1966 Study

Background: Hand eczema (HE) can cause itching, fissures and pain, and reduce overall functioning, including the ability to work. However, few studies have examined self-rated work ability in individuals with HE.

Objectives: To investigate self-reported work ability in individuals with and without HE in a middle-aged cohort in the north of Finland. **Methods:** As part of the 46-year follow-up visit of a large birth cohort study program, participants were invited to complete an extensive questionnaire, which included questions about their education level, health status and health-related lifestyle. The presence of clinician -diagnosed HE was also reported as part of the questionnaire, as was participants' work capability, measured with the Work Ability Score. **Results:** HE was reported by 853/6643 (12.8%) participants, more commonly by females (15.6%) than males (9.5%; $p < 0.001$). Poor work ability was more frequent in participants with HE (23.9%) than those without (17.8%; $p < 0.001$). After adjusting for confounding factors (sex, education level, smoking status, physical activity, body mass index, symptoms of depression and musculoskeletal disorders) individuals with HE had a higher risk than those without of reporting poor work ability (adjusted odds ratio 1.33, 95% confidence interval, 1.09-1.62). **Conclusions:** HE is associated with poor self-assessed work ability.

Huhtanen et al. 2026.

Contact Dermatitis, vol. 94, no. 2.

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Keywords: Birth cohort; hand eczema; work ability.

Evidence Level: 4B

Link: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cod.70056>

Technology

Evaluation of a markerless motion capture to measure 3D joint kinematics during occupational lifting tasks using mobile devices

Recent advances in human pose estimation (HPE) have enabled markerless motion capture (MoCap) techniques as a promising alternative to traditional marker-based MoCap systems. However, most HPE algorithms only provide sparse video key points, which are insufficient to estimate joint angles in all anatomical planes according to biomechanical guidelines. OpenCap, an open-source smartphone-based markerless MoCap platform, addresses this limitation using a deep learning model (named the marker augmentor) that predicts dense anatomical markers from sparse video key points. However, it has shown lower performance for activities not included in its training dataset, such as occupational lifting tasks. In this study, we adapted the original marker augmentation model of OpenCap and proposed a task-specific model for occupational lifting, trained on a large and diverse dataset of manual lifting tasks. The proposed model reduced both kinematic errors (mean RMSE = 9.45° vs. 15.04°) and error variability (SD = 7.26° vs. 16.13°) compared to the original model. These findings suggest that OpenCap can be adapted for occupational lifting tasks, offering a low-cost, easy-to-use, and field-viable solution to collect 3D lifting kinematics for ergonomics applications.

Salehi et al. 2026.

Applied Ergonomics, vol. 134.

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Keywords: Inverse kinematics; joint angle; low back injury; OpenCap.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0003687026000219?via%3Dihub>

Psychological drivers of employee-ai collaboration and career sustainability: The role of trust, threat, and protean orientation

This study examines how employees' perceptions of AI trust and AI threat shape their collaboration with AI and subsequent career sustainability, grounded in Protection Motivation Theory and Person-Environment Fit Theory. Using data collected from 532 employees through an online survey, the relationships among constructs were analyzed using PLS-SEM. Results reveal that trust in AI exerts a positive and significant influence on employee-AI collaboration, while threat perception indirectly affects collaboration through motivational pathways. Furthermore, protean career orientation positively moderates the link between AI trust and collaboration, indicating that self-directed career attitudes strengthen adaptive engagement with AI systems. These findings underscore that approach and avoidance motivation play distinct roles in shaping collaboration outcomes, which in turn enhance various facets of career sustainability. The study contributes to theory by integrating cognitive appraisal and motivation perspectives to explain human-AI dynamics and provides managerial implications for fostering effective AI integration and sustainable career development in the digital workplace.

Duong et al. 2026.

Acta Psychologica, vol. 262.

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Keywords: AI trust; Career sustainability; employee-AI collaboration; protean career orientation.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691825013885?via%3Dihub>

Work Environment

Making sense of activity-based workplaces: Perspectives from staff in a municipal setting

Purpose: This study explores how leaders and employees make sense of working conditions in a recently introduced activity-based workplace (ABW) in a municipal setting in Sweden. The analysis draws on Weick (1995) concept of sensemaking. **Methods:** Transcripts from focus group interviews were analysed using qualitative content analysis to examine how different staff groups experienced the transition from traditional cellular offices to ABW, and how these experiences framed their sense-making of ABW within the organisational context. **Results:** The analysis shows that ABW create working conditions marked by both increased interaction and persistent challenges related to privacy, confidentiality, noise, leadership, and ergonomics. Sensemaking was structured around five themes: Contrasting; Rationality; Collective process; Working from home; and Focusing on the ideal. **Conclusion:** Sensemaking of ABW is closely tied to how well concrete working conditions support core work tasks. Acceptance of ABW depends less on the concept itself and more on its ability to accommodate sector-specific demands, particularly confidentiality and focused work. The findings underscore the importance of aligning ABW design and implementation with everyday work practices in the public sector.

Wall et al. 2026.

International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being, vol. 21, no. 1.

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Keywords: Occupational wellbeing; organisational change; psychosocial work environment; sense-making; working conditions.

Evidence Level: 5B

Link: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17482631.2026.2631081>