



Aging and Work

Allen Kraut MD, FRCPC
April 22, 2008



It Depends

- Aging
- Work
- Health
- Life Style



Aging

- Physical abilities decrease
- Mental abilities stay the same
- Judgment improves
- Experience increases

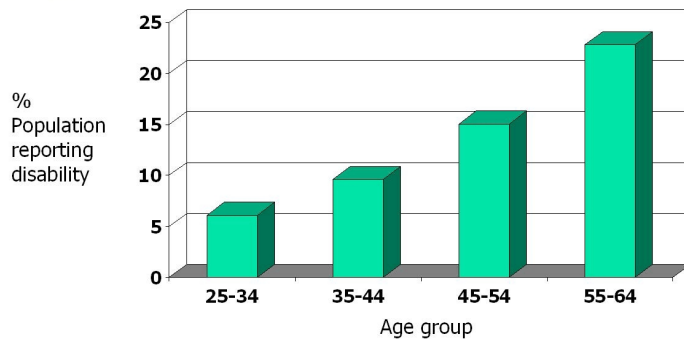
Work

- Physical work
 - Demands of work
 - Ergonomic supports
- Mental Work
- Shift work

Health

- Increasing number of medical conditions decreases ability to work

Prevalence of disability by age for Canada 2006



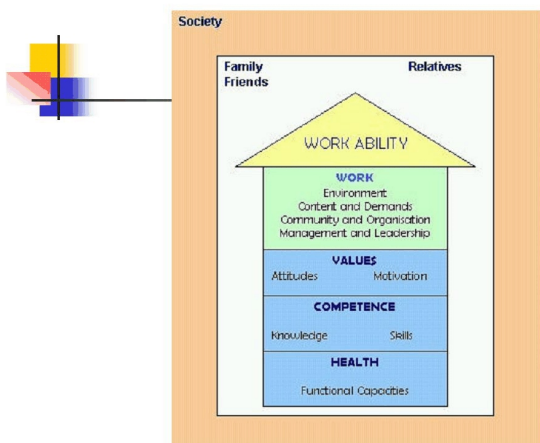
Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, SC 2006

Life Style

- Physical activity
- Hobbies
- Reading
- Subjective satisfaction with ones life

It Depends

- Work Ability
- Definition: How good are workers at present and in the near future and how able are they to do their job with respect to work demands, health and mental resources.
 - Prof. J. Ilmarinen
 - Finnish Institute of Occupational Health
 - SJWEH 1997;suppl 1:49



Prof. J. Ilmarinen



Work Ability Index

- Current subjective work ability compared to life time best (1-10)
- Subjective work ability related to physical and mental demands of the job (2-10)
- Subjective estimation of work impairment due to disease (1-6)
- Physician diagnoses illnesses (1-5)



Work Ability Index

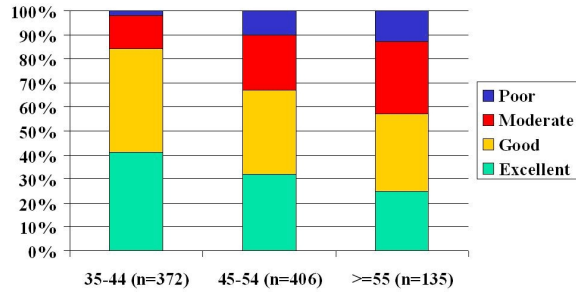
- Own prognosis of work ability after two years (1-7)
- Psychological resources (1-4)
 - Enjoy regular activities
 - Self assessment being active and alert
 - Hope for the future



Work Ability Index

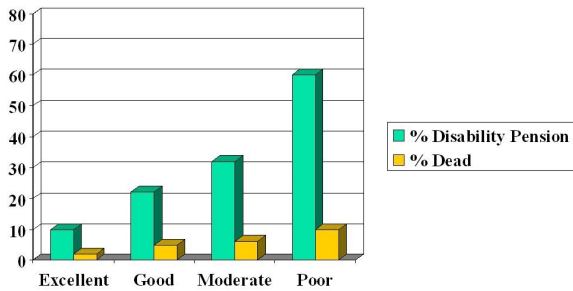
- WAI Score 7 –47
- All but 5 points subjective
- Poor 7 –27
- Moderate 28-36
- Good 37-43
- Excellent 44-49

WAI by age groups in Finnish workers



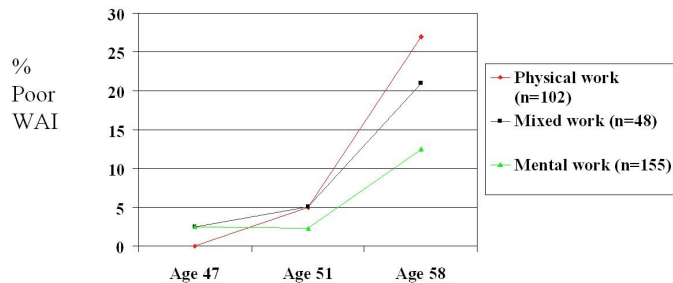
FIOH J. Ilmarinen 2003

1992 outcomes of 1981 WAI according to WAI categories



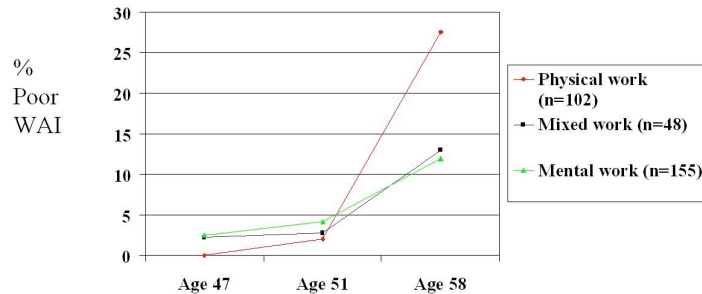
FIOH J. Ilmarinen 2003

Percentage of men with poor WAI by type of work and age



SJWEH 1997;suppl 1:49

Percentage of women with poor WAI by type of work and age



SJWEH 1997:suppl 1:49

Predictors of worsening work ability

- Decreased recognition and esteem at work
- Worsened working rooms
- Increased standing at work
- Decreased physical activity during leisure time

FIOH J. Ilmarinen 2003

Predictors of improved work ability

- Improved supervisor's attitude
- Decreased repetitive movements at work
- Increased physical activity during leisure time

FIOH J. Ilmarinen 2003

