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**Blevens MS, Brazile WJ, Tsai CS, Autenrieth DA, Van Dyke M, and Lipsey T. Occupational noise exposure and hearing assessment of hydraulic fracturing employees. *Annals of Work Exposures and Health*. 2026; 70(3):wxag022.**

<https://doi.org/10.1093/annweh/wxag022> [open access]

**Abstract:** Oil and gas extraction companies are exempt from implementing hearing conservation programs for their employees according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) noise standard. The occupational noise exposure and hearing status of these employees has not been published in scientific literature before the present study, presumably due to this exemption. In this study, area and personal noise exposures and employee hearing acuity were measured at both conventional and quiet hydraulic fracturing fleets, allowing a comparison between the fleets. Quiet fleets refer to the use of engineering controls to decrease noise levels of the pumps while conventional fleets do not employ these measures. In both fleets, the authors performed personal noise dosimetry, equipment noise measurements, and pure tone audiometry pre- and post-work shift to determine if there were temporary threshold shifts (TTS) in hearing. Based on the personal noise dosimetry results, 42/50 (84%) of the quiet fleet employees and 34/34 (100%) of the conventional fleet employees sampled were at or over 100% noise dose according to the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists' (ACGIH) noise Threshold Limit Value (TLV®). Based on the OSHA permissible exposure limit (PEL) noise criteria, 9/50 (18%) of the quiet fleet employees and 15/34 (44.1%) of the conventional fleet employees were at or over 100% noise dose. Employees in both fleets experienced TTS, but no significant difference was observed between the types of fleets in relation to TTS. Most equipment of both fleets exceeded 85 decibels, but the pumps of the quiet fleet were approximately 14 dB lower than those of the conventional fleet. Although the quiet fleet noise controls reduced personal noise exposure, a portion of the quiet fleet employees sampled still

experienced noise levels that could increase the risk of hearing loss. The researchers suggest the initiation of a hearing conservation program despite OSHA exemption to safeguard employee health and recommend employees involved in certain job tasks employ dual hearing protection based on the exposure monitoring results.

**Campbell M, Melendez-Torres GJ, Welch V, Petkovic J, Curtis F, and Katikireddi SV. Incorporating an equity perspective in systematic reviews of interventions: potential methodological approaches. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*. 2026; 80(5):357-364.**

<https://doi.org/10.1136/jech-2025-224306> [open access]

Abstract: Health inequities are unnecessary, avoidable and unjust differences in health across social groups. Addressing them is a priority for governments and health systems worldwide, requiring not only specific interventions targeting inequity but also embedding equity across all decision-making. Systematic reviews of interventions underpin health decision-making and could, therefore, be a key mechanism to address inequities, but most reviews are limited in their approach to considering equity and often only conclude data for subgroup analyses are unavailable. While some guidance is available, it largely focuses on reviews of interventions specifically seeking to reduce inequities and is published in disparate literature. We describe approaches to incorporate an equity perspective relevant to all systematic reviews of interventions, even when equity is not the primary review focus. Consideration of equity may be needed at all stages of the review process. Planning the review involves examining theory, using logic models, involving relevant people and organisations, and considering if additional sources of evidence are needed. Investigating the data requires examining the external validity of primary studies, including who was involved in the primary studies, and the reach of interventions. The synthesis process includes selecting appropriate analysis, considering the implications of reporting absolute or relative equity effects of the intervention, exploring and understanding mechanisms and assessing certainty of the evidence in relation to equity. Interpreting results involves linking theory with evidence and discussing implications and limitations. We hope this article helps review authors make best use of the available evidence to incorporate equity into systematic reviews

**Drolet AA, Lecours A, and Bellehumeur-Bechamp L. Assessing integrative prevention at work: a scoping review. *Work*. 2026; 83(4):931-947.**

<https://doi.org/10.1177/10519815251383525> [open access]

Abstract: Background Integrative prevention at work is a promising avenue to better prevent occupational injuries and manage prolonged incapacity in a changing world of work. Integrative prevention at work can be operationalized using its five defining attributes: (1) holistic vision of health, (2) common understanding of the purpose of integrative prevention, (3) communication among stakeholders, (4) collaboration among stakeholders, and (5) coordination of preventive action. An assessment tool for these characteristics would be a valuable resource for organizations seeking to improve their approach to prevention. Namely, it would allow organizations to assess the presence of integrative prevention at work in their environment and enhance their ability to implement it. Objective This study aimed to describe the evaluation tools assessing attributes of integrative prevention at work. Methods This scoping review followed a five-step process: 1) identifying the research question, 2) identifying relevant documents, 3) selecting documents, 4) extracting the data, and 5) examining, synthesizing, and reporting the results. Results Twelve evaluation tools were identified assessing one or more attributes of integrative prevention at work. Descriptive elements

are provided for each tool (e.g., its purpose, the attribute(s) it assesses, and its metrological properties). Our study suggests that communication among stakeholders and collaboration among stakeholders are the attributes that are the most assessed by the evaluation tools. Conclusions This study provides the first comprehensive and detailed overview of the extant tools currently being used to assess the attributes of integrative prevention at work. None can assess all five attributes on a unified scale

**Frangione B, Jiang Y, de Groh M, Fuller-Thomson E, Colman I, and Villeneuve PJ. Longitudinal associations between changes in employment status and depressive symptoms during the early COVID-19 pandemic: evidence from the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA). *Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention in Canada*. 2026; 46(4):155-166.**

<https://doi.org/10.24095/hpcdp.46.4.03> [open access]

Abstract: Introduction: The COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented and inequitably distributed adverse health impacts, which varied across socioeconomic circumstances. We investigated differences in incident depression among individuals aged 50 years and older according to various employment factors during the early stages of the pandemic. Methods: We included 16 719 Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging participants who provided data at Follow-up one (2015-2018) (FUP1) and twice during the pandemic (Spring and Autumn 2020). The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CESD-10) was used to classify individuals with depression (CESD-10 score = 10). Logistic regression, adjusted for possible confounders, estimated the odds of incident depression in Autumn 2020. Results: We found depression scores worsened from pre-pandemic (FUP1) to Autumn 2020; this pattern was evident across different employment features. Individuals who were newly unemployed in Spring 2020 had over double the odds of depression in Autumn 2020 (odds ratio [OR] = 2.22; 95% confidence interval [CI]: 1.51-3.28) compared to those who remained retired. Higher odds of depression were also observed among those with employment disruptions in Spring 2020 relative to those who did not (OR = 1.65; 95% CI: 1.28-2.12), and individuals primarily working in non-home-based settings in Autumn 2020 had 21% lower odds of depression (OR = 0.79; 95% CI: 0.63-0.98) than those who worked remotely. Conclusion: Our findings suggest that employment status was an important predictor of depression among Canadians during the early phases of the pandemic.

**Gomez JC, Torero JL, and Lange D. Enablers of quantitative risk assessments in major hazard facilities versus those in fire safety engineering. *Safety Science*. 2026; 199:107165.**

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2026.107165> [open access]

Abstract: Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) is a tool which has a long history of development in safety related disciplines, and which is seen as a potential means of both regulating and demonstrating required building performance in fire safety engineering. Whilst application of QRA in other fields has arguably been successful in enabling operators of infrastructure to successfully manage risks, this has been achieved in a regulatory and engineering environment which is significantly different to the one in which fire safety engineering is conducted. Key differences include tractability of the solutions, availability of data, design philosophy and approach, risk ownership and acceptance criteria. Through a comparison of the enablers of QRAs in Major Hazard Facilities in many countries against the current environment for practice for fire safety engineering this article explores these key differences and discusses the suitability of QRAs as a means of evidencing the satisfactory performance of a particular fire safety strategy at a given building or infrastructure. A number of key

issues are highlighted which suggest that QRAs cannot be the only means of regulating or demonstrating performance. The paper concludes by proposing that: 1. QRAs should be part of a multitude of methods by which fire safety engineers can evidence performance in a performance or risk based regulatory environment; that 2. QRAs may be better suited as one means of demonstrating optimisation of a fire safety strategy through reduction of residual risk after having demonstrated the achievement of overall fire safety objectives based on the consequences of occurrence of a fire; and that 3) The role of professional judgement and responsibility need to be fully revisited for an approach of this nature is to be implemented adequately

**Hammarstrom A, Albin M, Alfredsson L, Hernnas S, Kjellberg K, and Virtanen P. Unemployment during life can lead to metabolic syndrome in adult age. A 40-year follow-up of the Northern Swedish Cohort. *European Journal of Public Health*. 2026; 36(2):ckaf166.**

<https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckaf166> [open access]

Abstract: Little is known about the physiological outcomes of unemployment during life. The aim of this study is to analyse if exposure to unemployment during different age periods can lead to metabolic syndrome (MetS) in middle-aged men and women. Can sensitive periods be identified? Data from the Northern Swedish Cohort was used, a longitudinal study of school leavers from 1981. Over the 40-year period, the retention rate was 90%. MetS at age 56 was measured with clinical examinations, while the exposure was measured with retrospective matrices between follow-ups. Exposure was cut into tertiles in each age group, the contribution to risk from each month of exposure was also analysed, using logistic regression. Short-term exposure to unemployment in early teens (<12 weeks) as well as long-term exposure to unemployment during life (>24 months) was related to MetS among women. In addition, exposure to unemployment >24 months during age 22-30 was related to MetS in adult life among both men and women. A significant dose-response was found among men and women in the ages 22-30 and among women in the whole age period. All results were controlled for socioeconomic status, obesity and drinking, used as time-dependent confounders. Our study showed that long-term exposure to unemployment during life can lead to MetS in adult age among women. Sensitive periods were identified in young age among both men and women. Our findings can be understood as a maladaptive response to chronic stress over life becoming embodied as MetS in adult life and calls for offensive, age-adjusted gender-sensitive interventions on the labour market.

**Jahel F and Phillips KP. Policy analysis of Canadian occupational health and safety legislation and regulations: workplace protections for reproductive health and fetal development. *New Solutions*. 2026; 36(1):94-112.**

<https://doi.org/10.1177/10482911261423973> [open access]

Abstract: Canada's occupational health and safety (OHS) legislative frameworks describe the general rights and responsibilities of employers and employees to ensure safe workplaces. However, the extent to which these OHS frameworks recognize and safeguard reproductive health and fetal development remains understudied. Protections for reproductive health and fetal development were evaluated in OHS legislation, employment standards, and associated regulations across Canada's federal and 13 provincial/territorial jurisdictions by a policy analysis, supported by a sex and gender-based thematic and content analysis. OHS and reproductive health keyword frequencies were also determined. Three major themes were identified: (1) inconsistent recognition of workplace risks to

reproductive health, (2) job modification, and (3) employer-mandated pregnancy leave. Our review found that workplace protections were generally limited to pregnancy, with little recognition of workplace risks to fertility, suggesting gaps in workplace protections for reproductive health and fetal development. We recommend contemporary reform of Canada's OHS legislation and regulations to support universal, comprehensive, and inclusive protections for reproductive health and fetal development for all workers, regardless of sex and pregnancy status

**Krebs BK, Brehon K, Miciak M, Dick BD, Bremault-Phillips SC, Straube S, et al. Evaluating effectiveness of telerehabilitation among workers admitted to a posttraumatic stress injury rehabilitation program . *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2026; 36(2):470-479.**

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-025-10285-4>

Abstract: Purpose: Telerehabilitation or hybrid delivery (i.e., a mixture of telerehabilitation and in-person care) was increasingly used to deliver posttraumatic stress injury (PTSI) rehabilitation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Limited research, however, has evaluated the use of telerehabilitation to deliver PTSI interventions, including exposure-based therapies, and some service providers concerned about the potential adverse effects of delivery over telerehabilitation continue to advocate for in-person delivery. We evaluated the effectiveness of telerehabilitation versus hybrid delivery in promoting return-to-work (RTW) among workers with PTSI. Methods: We conducted a pragmatic, quasi-experimental study using archived data from workers undergoing PTSI rehabilitation programs offered by the Workers' Compensation Board of Alberta. The RTW outcomes of workers treated solely using telerehabilitation between November 6, 2020, and September 30, 2021, were compared to outcomes of workers treated using a hybrid model of delivery. A logistic regression analysis was used to examine if the method of treatment delivery was associated with RTW outcomes while controlling for a variety of potential confounders. Results: The study cohort included 222 workers with ongoing workers' compensation claims for PTSI. The majority were middle-aged (mean 42 years) men (61%) working as public safety personnel (35.9%) or in transport occupations (25.2%). The adjusted regression model showed no statistically significant differences in RTW outcomes between workers receiving telerehabilitation or hybrid treatment (Adjusted Odds Ratio 1.7; 95% CI 0.8-3.6). Conclusion: PTSI rehabilitation programs delivered exclusively via virtual means appear to produce RTW outcomes that are equally effective to delivery using a hybrid model.

**Longtin C, Hong QN, Coutu MF, Alpdogan NY, Singer L, Cooper L, et al. Are newly graduated physiotherapists in Quebec prepared for work rehabilitation practice? A mixed method study. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2026; [epub ahead of print].**

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-026-10404-9>

Abstract: PURPOSE: Physiotherapists are frontline providers in supporting the return-to-work process of individuals with musculoskeletal disorders. However, many report feeling unprepared for work rehabilitation following entry-level training. This study explored recent physiotherapy graduates in Quebec, Canada, perceived preparedness to practice in work rehabilitation and its influencing factors. MATERIALS AND METHODS: A convergent mixed methods design grounded in a competency-based framework was used. Recent graduates from physiotherapy programs completed a cross-sectional survey rating their perceived preparedness across seven work rehabilitation competencies. Semi-structured individual interviews explored how their training prepared them for work rehabilitation practice. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively, and interviews were thematically analyzed.

Findings were integrated through a joint display to contextualize preparedness ratings with qualitative insights. RESULTS: Twenty-five recent graduates from five physiotherapy programs across the province of Quebec completed both the survey and the interview. Perceived preparedness was highest for competencies on person-centered care and collaborative treatment planning, and lowest for psychosocial factors management, collaboration with involved actors, compensation system navigation, and return-to-work support. Three overarching themes influenced perceived preparedness: (1) role perceptions in work rehabilitation, (2) enablers such as supportive curriculum elements, and (3) challenges including stigma toward injured workers and limited work rehabilitation-specific training. A fourth theme described strategies to improve work rehabilitation training. CONCLUSIONS: Recent physiotherapy graduates reported varying levels of perceived preparedness for work rehabilitation, with the lowest ratings associated with managing psychosocial factors, collaborating with involved actors, navigating compensation systems, and supporting return to work. These gaps were linked to limited work rehabilitation training, perceived role ambiguity, and exposure to stigma. Future research should develop strategies to improve work rehabilitation training in physiotherapy programs

**Nascimento A, Khemiri E, and Boudra L. Challenges of work in agriculture: a gender-informed analysis through the narratives of new entrants into organic farming. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*. 2026; 113:103936.**

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ergon.2026.103936> [open access]

Abstract: This article examines work in agriculture by a gender-informed perspective through the narratives of new entrants in organic farming outside the family farming succession. It aims to understand lived work experiences by considering both the daily constraints of the labour and the meanings and values invested in the work. The analysis focuses on the early years of organic farming operations. The research was carried out in Ardèche territory, a département in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, in southeastern France. We conducted a qualitative study based on semi-structured interviews with 15 new entrants who have established non-family farms and obtained organic certification. After transcription, the interviews were reviewed by using a triple-blind process. Edited transcripts were then uploaded to MaxQDA™ for inductive coding based on emerging themes and contextual analysis. Through the narratives of farmers regarding the constraints of work, we identified gendered effects in the responses concerning the available tools and equipment for agricultural work, the physical strain, strategies for prevention and self-care, balancing personal vs. professional life, and the social division of labor within couples. Unlike other studies, our analysis revealed no essentialist justifications for women's roles on farming. Moreover, our results show that the challenges of work are different for men and women. Men expressed concerns directly linked to working conditions, while women added work-life balance issues, notably linked to motherhood. A gendered perspective helped us to identify emerging work-related challenges faced by new entrants in organic farming, aiming to promote attractiveness and sustainable and inclusive working conditions for all.

**O'Keefe B, Yuen E, Perlen S, and Hutchinson AM. Strategies and supports to improve retention of personal care workers in residential aged care: insights from a qualitative study. *Research on Aging*. 2026; 48(5-6):335-347.**

<https://doi.org/10.1177/01640275251383540> [open access]

Abstract: To identify strategies and supports to enhance retention and reduce turnover of personal

care workers in residential aged care. Interviews were conducted from August 2023 to September 2024 with 20 former personal care workers who had worked in residential aged care. Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Five major themes were identified: (1) managers who engage with residents, (2) managers who value, recognize and support personal support workers, (3) comprehensive onboarding and continuing training programs, (4) strengthening the workforce and working arrangements, and (5) inclusive, collaborative and respectful work culture. Persistent workforce shortages in residential aged care underscore the need for targeted strategies and supports to retain staff. The findings of this study illustrate strategies and supports to promote personal care worker retention, offering practical guidance for further consideration by residential aged care operators, policymakers, and researchers

**Puyat JH, Banal MA, Vigo D, and McLeod CB. Impact of COVID-19 on mental disorder claims among healthcare workers. *Occupational Medicine*. 2026; 76(2):150-153.**

<https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqag002> [open access]

Abstract: BACKGROUND: Healthcare workers (HCWs) face ongoing mental health challenges, which were aggravated during the COVID-19 pandemic due to increased workloads, exposure to trauma and heightened infection risks. Although self-reported data have indicated elevated mental health symptoms among HCWs, there is limited evidence based on official workers' compensation claims to assess the true extent of work-related mental disorders in this group. AIMS: To examine changes in workers' compensation claims for mental disorders among HCWs and other workers before and throughout the first 2 years of the pandemic. METHODS: Mental disorder compensation claims data from January 2019 to December 2021 among HCWs and other workers were obtained from the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia. Monthly claim rates were calculated using denominator data derived from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey. Changes in claim rates among HCWs were assessed through interrupted time series analysis using other workers as control and the onset of the pandemic as the event. RESULTS: The analysis found no significant shifts in the incidence of mental disorder claims among HCWs during the pandemic. In contrast, a marginal increase in claim rates during the same period was observed in other workers. CONCLUSIONS: Unlike prior research based on self-reported data, this study found no evidence of an increase in mental disorder claims among HCWs during the pandemic. These results suggest that workers' compensation claims data may not fully capture the broader mental health challenges experienced by HCWs, potentially due to underreporting or barriers to accessing claims

**Schlenke J, Nazzal Y, Dogru F, Holzgreve F, Golbach R, Karrasavidis I, et al. Prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders among police officers from an organizational unit of a German federal state police force. *Journal of Occupational Medicine and Toxicology*. 2026; 21(1):17.**

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12995-026-00511-x> [open access]

Abstract: Background: Occupational activities involving prolonged postures, restricted movements, and wearing heavy protective equipment contribute significantly to work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) in police officers. Therefore, this study aims to assess the prevalence of MSDs at an organizational unit of a German federal state police force in relation to self-reported causes of MSD. Methods: 255 (211 m/44 f) participants within the age from 21 to 57 years ( $28.29 \pm 6.57$  years) answered a modified version of the Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire (NMQ) in nine different body areas (cervical spine/neck, thoracic spine, lower back/lumbar spine, shoulder, elbow, hand and

wrists, hip, knee, foot and ankles). For statistical analyses descriptive analyses, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient and the Rasch model analyses were applied. Significance level was set at 5%. Results: Of the 255 participants 95.7% engage in physical activity during their leisure time, with the vast majority (78.1%) also involved in occupational sports activities. The overall 12-month prevalence of MSD was 92.9%, while the most affected areas were the lower back (64%), followed by the neck/cervical spine (57.8%), shoulder (48.6%) and the thoracic spine (33%). The 7-day prevalence stands at 56.1%. The regions most commonly affected are similar to the 12-month prevalence: the neck/cervical spine with 25.1%, followed by the lower back (20.4%), the shoulder (13.7%), and the thoracic spine (11.8%). Only 7.1% reported no symptoms at all. 1.6% indicated experiencing discomfort in all body regions. The Rasch-derived musculoskeletal symptom score showed significant positive correlations with age ( $r = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), BMI ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $\rho = 0.19$ ), and years of service ( $r = 0.20$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Participants most frequently attributed their musculoskeletal complaints to carrying heavy equipment, prolonged sitting, and awkward postures, followed by stress and insufficient recovery. Only a minority associated their symptoms with sports or physical training, suggesting that ergonomic and organizational factors are perceived as the primary contributors to MSDs. Conclusion: Musculoskeletal disorders are highly prevalent among German police officers, affecting nearly all participants despite a young mean age and high physical activity levels. The predominance of multi-site pain, particularly in the lower back, neck, and shoulders, highlights the cumulative impact of occupational load rather than isolated risk factors. Equipment-related load carriage, prolonged static postures, and organizational demands appear to be key drivers, while age, BMI, and years of service exert additional but modest influence. These findings underscore the need for early, occupation-specific preventive strategies that integrate ergonomic optimization, task organization, and targeted physical training to preserve work ability and operational readiness over the course of a policing career.

**Tapper R, Zimmerman E, Pettersson H, Ikaheimo TM, Wahlstrom J, and Stjernbrandt A. Thermal comfort, health, and performance effects among outdoor workers in northern Sweden. *Annals of Work Exposures and Health*. 2026; 70(3):wxag02.**

<https://doi.org/10.1093/annweh/wxag025> [open access]

Abstract: OBJECTIVES: To investigate subjective differences in thermal comfort, health, and performance outcomes between different outdoor professions and the sexes. The current study also aimed to explore whether thermal comfort affected health and performance outcomes. METHOD: A questionnaire was used to collect data from three different professions: preschool ( $n = 65$ ), park and maintenance ( $n = 36$ ), and power grid workers ( $n = 31$ ). The questionnaire contained items related to background variables (sex, age, body mass index, tobacco use, pre-existing diseases, and clothes provided by the employer), thermal comfort, self-assessed health, and performance outcomes. RESULTS: The findings show that women, to a greater extent than men, experience cold-related discomfort while working in cold environments. Cold sensitivity was most common among park and maintenance workers (57%) and power grid workers (47%). Raynaud's phenomenon and abnormal cold sensitivity were most common among park and maintenance workers, with a prevalence of 31% and 56%, respectively. Statistically significant differences were also found in all reported performance outcomes (concentration, endurance, mobility, strength, and speed) between the different professions. Associations between cold-related discomfort and an increased reporting of health symptoms and a decrease in performance outcomes were found. CONCLUSION: There were

differences in perceived thermal comfort, health, and performance outcomes between different outdoor professions and sexes. The associations between cold-related discomfort, cold-related symptoms, and decreased performance indicate a need to implement cold risk management to ensure a safe work environment

**Zhou H, Yan Z, Chan APC, Yang Y, and Yi W. Influence of inadequate safety leadership on unsafe behavior: evidence from fatal construction accidents. *Safety Science*. 2026; 200:107226.**

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2026.107226>

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