



Unveiling the JDAPT

A new interactive tool to identify work-related support strategies for workers with chronic conditions and disability

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A research partnership to support the sustained employment of people with intermittent, chronic health conditions

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Partners:

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Arthritis Society Canada
Canada Life Workplace
Strategies for Mental Health
Canadian Mental Health
Association

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Takeaway Messages

- People living with chronic disabling conditions are often unsure whether or how to communicate workplace support needs.
- Workplace representatives and workers are often unaware of types of support that may help meet needs and sustain employment.
- The Job Demands and Accommodations Planning Tool (JDAPT) focuses on work demands (not medical diagnoses and symptoms) and provides concrete support and accommodation ideas
- Early evaluation of the JDAPT is positive in terms of useability, comprehensiveness, relevance, and outcomes examining the provision and uptake of support



What is meant by a Disability?

- 6.2 million Canadians aged ≥ 15 years live with a disability
- A disability is not a character trait or state of being of a person
- A disability reflects a limitation in an activity that arises as a result of the interaction between a health condition **AND** personal and environmental factors (e.g., negative attitudes, public policies and practices, inaccessible physical environments, and limited social support)

Morris et al., 2019, The dynamics of disability. Statistics Canada
World Health Organization (WHO), <https://www.who.int/health-topics/disability>

What is meant by an Episodic or Dynamic Disability?

Over 60% of disabilities are episodic or dynamic in nature: they are recurrent, progressive, fluctuating

Many episodic conditions are unpredictable and invisible to others

Examples include depression, anxiety disorders, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, irritable bowel syndrome, migraine, some types of cancer, epilepsy, HIV, Long COVID

Morris et al., 2019, The dynamics of disability. Statistics Canada

Episodic Disability

The **changing**, **unpredictable**, and **invisible** nature of many disabilities creates challenges in:

- Workplace disability communication, disclosure, and the protection of privacy
- Providing support or accommodations to maintain productivity



Episodic Disability

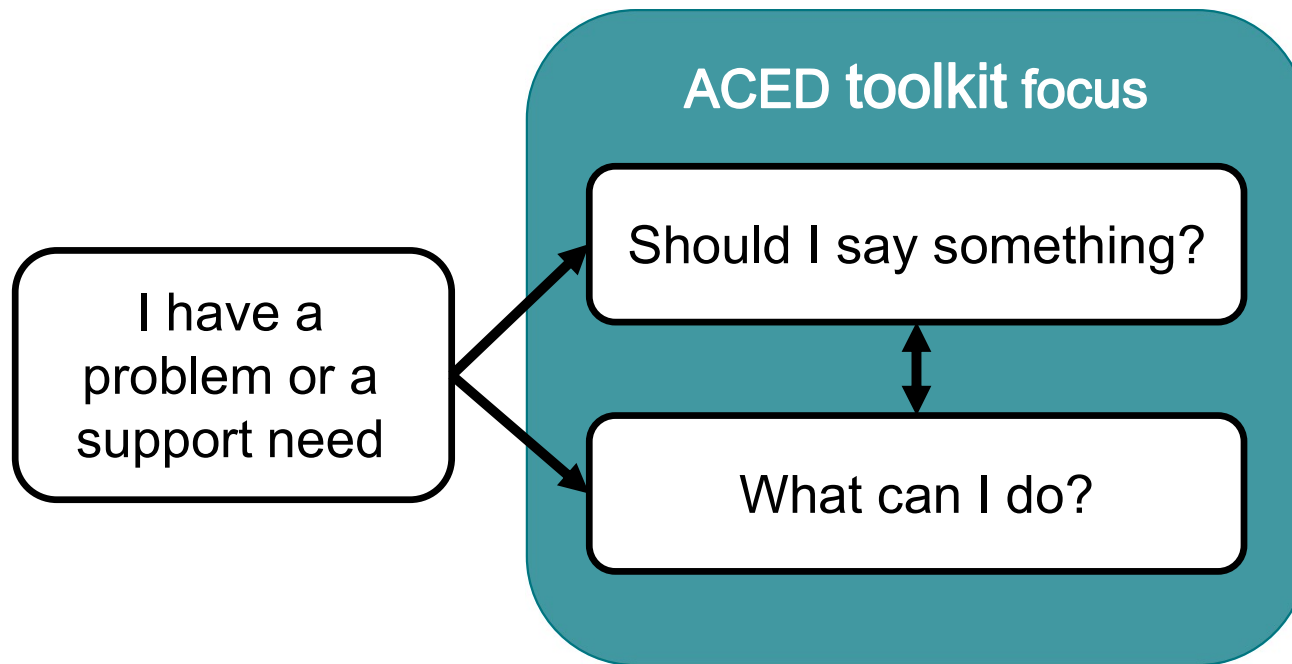
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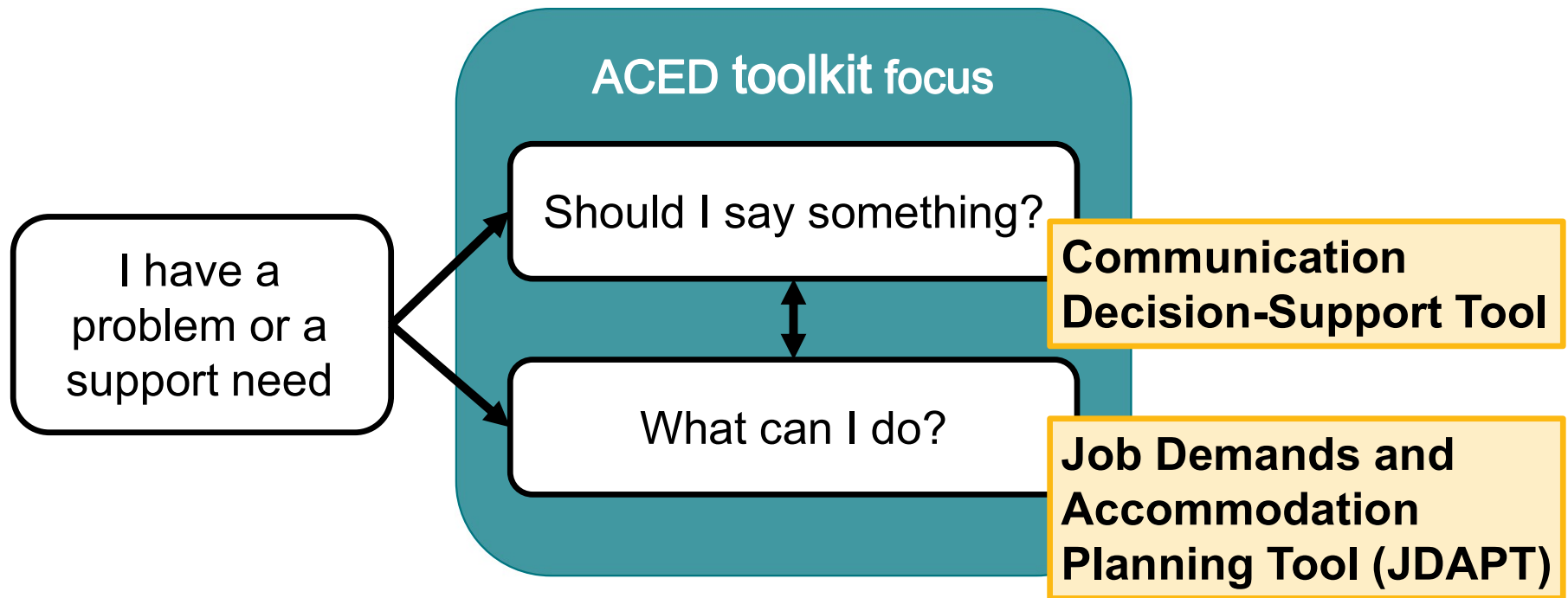
Goal of ACED: To improve the communication-support process for people living with episodic disabilities and enhance people's ability to gain and sustain employment.



ACED Toolkit



ACED Toolkit



Should I say something?

- Across 5 Canadian surveys (n = 3387), 25%-49% of participants **had not shared** information about their health limitations at work with their supervisor
- There is no single correct communication decision

	<i>Positive outcomes include:</i>	<i>Negative outcomes include:</i>
Disclose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support • greater understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must prove oneself • stigma, gossip, loss of reputation as a good worker
Do not disclose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less stress • less concern about how others view you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • absence of support • misperceptions about reasons for any job difficulties

Communication Decision Survey (n = 737 workers)

Need for Support	Disclosure Preferences	Organizational Information	Organizational Culture
56% of respondents reported considerable needs for support	30% of respondents were willing to share & thought sharing was important 36% were reluctant to share 34% were unsure about sharing	70% had supports available (e.g., paid sick days, benefits, accommodation policies and practices)	20% reported a positive culture 23% were unsure/ambivalent 57% reported a culture not conducive to sharing

Bottom Lines



Workers want guidance on whether to communicate, how to get support if they don't want to share information, and what to share.



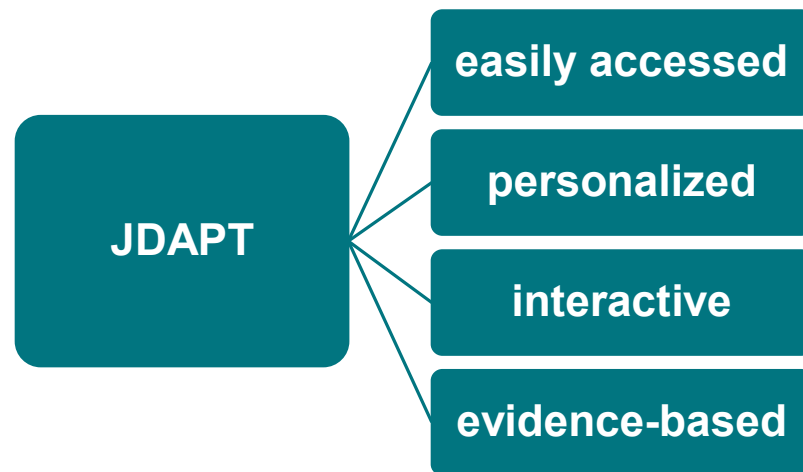
Workplaces want a transparent, consistent, and comprehensive approach to assessing individualized worker job needs.



Workers and workplaces want support and accommodation ideas.

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

Enhance work sustainability for people with episodic disabilities



Goals:

- Adopts a disability prevention and support framework
- Promotes discussion and brainstorming
- Emphasizes skills and abilities
- Improves process outcomes
- Protects a user's privacy

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

Needs assessment

1. Reviewed existing research and publicly available tools
2. Conducted new research with workers and workplace representatives to discuss communication and support processes
3. Held ongoing consultations with ACED partners, people with lived experience, and other groups
4. Developed a prototype

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

- Focuses on work demands that may be challenging at times or regularly. Does not focus on a health or disability diagnosis
- Guides a user through a series of simple questions about their job tasks and working conditions
- Provides a personalized list of support ideas relevant to an individual's job demands. The ideas can help generate solutions that work for a person's needs
- Can be used to discuss support needs with others and focus on work solutions



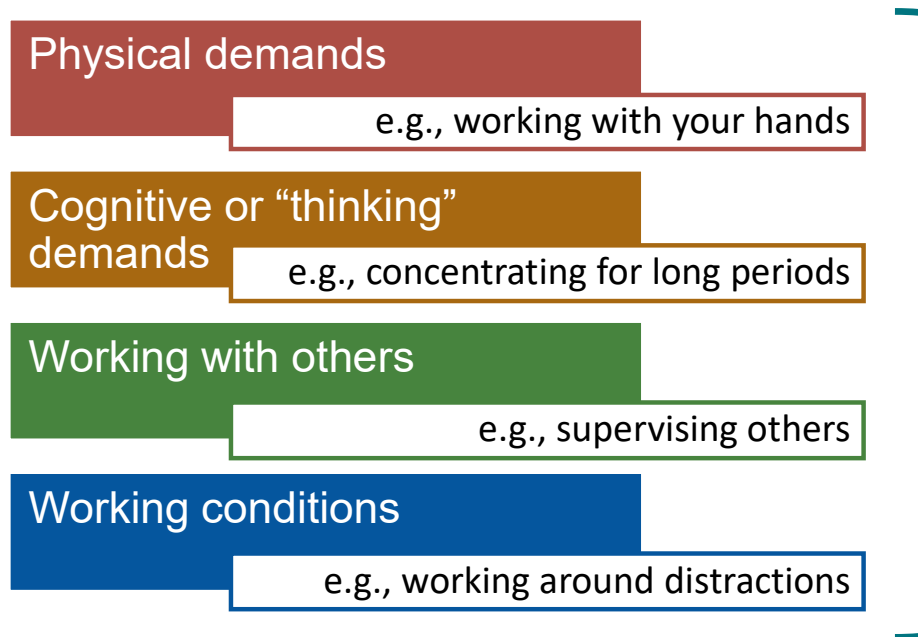
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- Can be used to discuss support needs with others and focus on work solutions
- The JDAPT prototype was the grand prize winner in the MaRS-CIBC Inclusive Design Challenge: Support at Work



Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

24 types of job demands and working conditions organized in four domains



- **Worker version:** self-assessment of job demands & challenges
- **Organizational version:** can be completed by workplace staff & employee for planning

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

Physical demands

Cognitive or “thinking” demands

Working with others

Working conditions

For each demand, user rates
a) **Importance** to the job
b) **Difficulty** due to health
c) **Change in ability** over time



Personalized Report



Linked Support Strategies & Accommodation List

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

JDAPT

Introduction

Instructions

Physical demands

Cognitive demands

Working with others

Working conditions

Job demands summary

Strategies list

Results

How to complete the JDAPT

The JDAPT begins by asking you to think about the demands of your job as they relate to your health condition in four key areas.



Physical Demands



Cognitive Demands



Working with Others



Working Conditions

In each section, you are given a list of five to eight related job demands. For each job demand, you will be asked:

1

To indicate if the demand is an important part of your job or not

Do you do this task or activity frequently or is it critical to doing your job successfully?

Then, if the job demand is an important part of your job, you will be asked:

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

Introduction	Instructions	Physical demands	Cognitive demands	Working with others	Working conditions	Job demands summary	Strategies list	Results
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Job demands summary

Thank you for completing the first part of JDAPT, the Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool.

Below is a summary of your responses, indicating:

- the number of job demands that are critical to you doing your job successfully
- among these, the number that are causing you some or a lot of difficulty because of your health condition

The summary can be used:

- for your own use, as a snapshot of the types of job demands causing you the most concern
- to share with your supervisor, human resources department or others to help introduce a discussion about areas where you feel you are working well and areas where support may be helpful
- to compare your results with responses to your previous and future uses of JDAPT

You will be able to save a PDF version of this summary after you have completed the tool.

Job demands that are an important part of your work



Of these 16 demands, you have some or a lot of difficulty with



Of these 16 demands, abilities change over time with



Your ability to perform important job demands

- No difficulty with 8 activities
- Some difficulty with 8 activities
- A lot of difficulty with 0 activities

Your ability changes over time because of your health

- No change for 9 activities
- Changed sometimes for 5 activities
- Changed often for 2 activities

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

Physical endurance or stamina

Things you might try on your own

- Try to maintain a good posture to reduce pain and/or fatigue when working
- Wear comfortable shoes with a good grip and support

Adjustments you could try at work *(you may or may not need to request permission to do these)*

- Use a stool or footrest to help you change positions while working
- Pace your work to avoid becoming tired
- Take the time you need to follow workplace safety guidelines and keep your attention up to avoid injuries
- Plan your more difficult tasks for when you are feeling better
- Switch between tasks to vary your position and reduce strain
- When doing the same task, take the time to change your position to reduce strain
- Adjust your breaks to help maintain your energy – this could mean either taking regular or more frequent breaks, or fewer but longer breaks, depending on your needs
- Ask others for assistance
- Ask your supervisor for adjustments for work meetings or events

Formal accommodations to consider requesting

- Furniture or equipment that can help reduce strain
- Request a flexible or alternative work schedule which allows you to work when feeling better and have more energy
- Permission to work at home on some days if this is possible in your job
- Temporary or permanent job modification, which means re-assigning or reducing time spent on less important or less essential tasks

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

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Use a stool or footrest to help you change positions while working

- high stool for alternative sitting and standing at a counter
- low stool or rail to rest feet on one at a time when standing
- footrest to raise feet while sitting

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

Concentrating for Long Periods

Things you might try on your own

- Do calming or refreshing activities during breaks to bring back focus or to "reset"

Adjustments you could try at work
(you may or may not need to request permission to do these)

- Turn off phone or computer notifications while working on a specific task
- Use a timer to set working times and mini breaks which can help with concentration
- Use applications to reduce distractions
- If there are no safety or interpersonal concerns, wear headphones or ear plugs to exclude other sounds
- Introduce background noise if that helps you focus
- Adjust light and/or heat to enhance concentration
- Plan your more difficult tasks for when you are feeling better
- Schedule blocks of time to concentrate on one task without distractions or interruptions
- Adjust your breaks to help maintain your energy, either regular or more frequent breaks, or fewer but longer breaks
- Move your work temporarily to a less distracting location and/or new surroundings which may help with focus

Formal accommodations to consider requesting

- Changes to your workstation to reduce distractions
- Request a flexible or alternative work schedule which allows you to work when feeling better and have more energy
- Temporary or permanent job modification, which means re-assigning or reducing time spent on less important or less essential tasks

Use a timer to set working times and mini breaks which can help with concentration

- work at one task for 30 minutes, then take a mini break to stretch or walk around before working for another 30-minute session

Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT)

Working with Others

Things you might try on your own

- Do calming or refreshing activities during breaks to bring back focus
- Understand your limits and potential challenges and triggers

Adjustments you could try at work *(you may or may not need to request permission to do these)*

- Discuss with others that you are interested in working as a team and value the input from others
- Be open with your recognition and praise of your co-workers' skills and work and give positive feedback
- Try to build connections rapport with others by talking what you can do for each other
- If possible, increase the time you have available to meet with others to promote open communication
- Clarify job tasks and responsibilities as a team and with supervisor(s)
- Check in with others to assess work outcomes
- Check that you have the same information and understanding of discussions that others do
- Ask a co-worker or friend for advice or strategies for handling interpersonal situations
- Identify an informal or formal mentor(s) who can provide support and problem-solving ideas

Formal accommodations to consider requesting

- Request a flexible or alternative work schedule which allows you to work when feeling better and have more energy
- Permission to work at home on some days, if this is possible in your job
- Professional advice or training to build skills to improve communication and interpersonal skills
- Request mediation to resolve interpersonal conflict

- Check that you have the same information and understanding of discussions that others do
- repeat back instructions in your own words
 - send a summary after a meeting to confirm decisions

JDAPT: Real World Outcome Evaluation

- Theory driven (e.g., communication, goal-setting, behaviour change)
- Includes researchers, people with lived experience, partners and others in the development and evaluation process
- Recognizes that the JDAPT will be part of an existing organizational/social system over which researchers have limited control
- Is holistic and includes contextual information to understand what works for who and in what situations
- Does not use a randomized-control trial methodology (RCT)
 - Not able to blind respondents to intervention groups
 - Hard to randomize participants to groups
 - Artificial to control for or limit contextual factors



JDAPT: Real World Outcome Evaluation

Assessment was undertaken in several stages:

1. Needs Assessments (identified gaps in existing resources, reviewed existing studies, conducted new research to explore gaps and causes)
2. Formative Evaluation (sensitivity testing)
3. Preliminary Outcome/Effectiveness Evaluation (perceived quality of tool, use, uptake)
4. Implementation Evaluation (adoption of the tool more broadly)

Methods Used:

In-depth interviews, focus groups, environmental scan and literature reviews, surveys (e.g., pre-post-follow-up testing)



JDAPT Sensibility Testing

- Sensibility testing assesses:
 - Comprehensiveness
 - Understandability
 - Relevance
 - Feasibility
 - Length
 - Overall impressions
- Participants were interviewed about each JDAPT question
- A 70% endorsement rate was the minimum level of acceptability for each sensibility concept

A Sensibility Assessment of the Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT): A Tool to Help Workers with an Episodic Disability Plan Workplace Support

[Monique A. M. Gignac](#) , [Julie Bowring](#), [Sabrina Tonima](#), [Renee-Louise Franche](#), [Aaron Thompson](#), [Arif Jetha](#), [Peter M. Smith](#), [Joy C. Macdermid](#), [William S. Shaw](#), [Dwayne Van Eerd](#), [Dorcas E. Beaton](#), [Emma Irvin](#), [Emile Tompa](#) & [Ron Saunders](#)

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Abstract

Purpose Sensibility refers to a tool's comprehensiveness, understandability, relevance, feasibility, and length. It is used in the early development phase to begin assessing a new tool or intervention. This study examined the sensibility of the job demands and accommodation planning tool (JDAPT). The JDAPT identifies job demands related to physical, cognitive, interpersonal, and working conditions to better target strategies for workplace supports and

JDAPT Sensibility Testing

Sample:

- 46 workers living with diverse physical and mental health conditions
- 23 organizational representatives (e.g., supervisors, HR, disability managers)
- Diverse organizations and job types (e.g., sales/service, education, manufacturing, health, government, transportation, financial, hospitality)

Overall findings:

Sensibility assessments far exceeded 70% for most questions/categories.

Three new items added (working in locations with no easy access to facilities for personal needs; work requiring participation in social activities or with social expectations; work that relies heavily on one or more sense (e.g., touch smell, taste)).

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-022-10057-4>

JDAPT Sensibility Testing

Springer Link

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“It seemed like you covered every piece, whether it was the physical piece, tedious work that’s happening over and over again, or working long hours, travelling – so you have covered everything.” (Baker living with ADHD and a skin condition)

“There were basically all of them that I go through in my job. It’s basically everything I do at work.” (Truck driver living with Crohn’s disease)

“I go in and just say, ‘I’m dealing with a mental illness’ and my boss says, ‘what do you need?’ And I say, ‘I don’t know’... I think the JDAPT might be better to help me understand actually, these three aspects of the job are what actually are difficult for me, so let’s think about what we do with those.” (Government worker living with depression and PTSD)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-022-10057-4>

JDAPT Evaluation Study

- Preliminary outcome/effectiveness testing
- 3 waves of data
 - Time 1: health, job context & perceptions, demographics, JDAPT, JDAPT perceptions
 - Time 2 (3-month post-T1): JDAPT use/perceptions; re-assessment of some job context and job perceptions
 - Time 3 (9-month post-T1): JDAPT use/perceptions; re-assessment of some job context and job perceptions
- Convenience/Purposive sample of individuals with physical or mental health/cognitive conditions
- Time 1- 279 participants; Time 2 – 211 participants (75.6% return rate)

JDAPT Evaluation Study: Sample Characteristics

Characteristic	Time 1: Baseline
Gender (n,% women)	184 (66.0%)
Age (mean, SD)	40.6 (10.6)
Condition type (n, %):	
Physical	92 (33.0%)
Mental/Cognitive	27 (9.7%)
Both	160 (57.3%)
Dynamic disability type (n, %):	
Continuous	59 (21.1%)
Recurrent	123 (44.1%)
Progressive	47 (16.9%)
Fluctuating	50 (17.9%)

JDAPT Evaluation Study: Sample Characteristics cont'd

Characteristic	Time 1: Baseline
Working full-time (n, %)	272 (97.5%)
Working on contract (n, %)	51 (18.3%)
Years with employer (mean, SD)	2.7 (1.3)
Job sector (n, %)	
Financial, business, technology, gov't	91 (32.6%)
Education, health, sciences, arts, professions	107 (38.3%)
Sales, services, hospitality	17 (6.1%)
Construction, utilities, manufacturing, agriculture	44 (15.8%)
Other	20 (7.2%)

JDAPT Evaluation Study Time 2

Made changes to manage work and health outside of work **72.5%**

“It was empowering to see how much one can do on one’s own, especially when I’m hesitant about being supported by HR”

Made changes to manage work and health at work **58.7%**

“I used both the full and my personalized list of strategies and accommodations when I was informed that I would need to return to working in the office some days a week...The suggestions in the materials were very helpful!”

Shared the JDAPT with others at their workplace **21.3%**

“I used the list of strategies and accommodations plans, plus the language of the job demands summary, to help me request a workplace accommodations plan. These tools were critical in helping me explain how my disability impacts my work and allowed me to think about possible solutions...The plan is still being finalized...Without the JDAPT I wouldn’t have had the confidence to go through this (intimidating) process and advocate for myself in such an effective way!”

JDAPT Evaluation Study: T1 and T2 (3-month follow-up)

Measure	Time 1 to T2 change	Effect Size
Self-Efficacy: Problem Solving	↑	.83
Self-Efficacy: Meeting Job Demands	↑	.60
Self-Efficacy: Emotional Needs	↑	.63
Difficulty getting as much work done as others expect you to	↓	.59
Work productivity problems	↓	.39

Note: all T1 to T2 differences are statistically significant at $p < .001$

JDAPT Evaluation



- 9-items measured **positive perceptions** (e.g., helped me to think about my health and job in new ways, provided new strategies and ideas).
- Positive perception scores were high overall with *no differences* by gender, age, type of health condition, job sector, permanent/contract work, union membership.
- 5-items measured **negative perceptions** (e.g., missing important accommodations, will not make a difference, does not provide ideas relevant to my job).
- Negative perception scores were low (41% of participants disagreed with all items).
- Younger workers, those with both a physical/mental health condition, a progressive disability, contract workers, and non-union workers had *fewer negative perceptions*.

JDAPT Launch: The end of the beginning...



- Continue analyses at Time 2 (3-month follow-up) and Time 3 (9-month follow-up) (e.g., absenteeism, short-term disability, productivity, changed jobs).
- Examine similarities and differences related to disability type and work contexts.
- Conduct additional research to examine adoption, reach, acceptability with organizations (e.g., disseminate to organizations, physicians).
- Continue to enhance the support/accommodation list and tailor the JDAPT to different work contexts.

JDAPT Launch: The end of the beginning...



- English & French JDAPT for workers are available on ACED website: <https://aced.iwh.on.ca/jdapt>
- Data are not saved to protect the privacy of the user
- JDAPT for organizational representatives will be uploaded early summer

Thank you!

Questions? Comments?

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ACED website with JDAPT: <https://aced.iwh.on.ca/jdapt/>

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