



Influence of Employment and Job Security on Physical and Mental Health in Adults Living with HIV: Cross-Sectional Analysis

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What research question is addressed by 'Influence of Employment and Job Security on Physical and Mental Health in Adults Living with HIV: Cross-sectional Analysis'?

This study analysed the relationship between employment and health-related quality of life in men and women with HIV, with a special focus on whether job security offered additional quality of life benefits over and above employment alone. This study examined the contribution of other demographic variables, socioeconomic factors, HIV-disease markers and substance use indicators on health-related quality of life.

What was the study conclusion?

The study found that employment was connected with better physical and mental quality of life for both men and women with HIV, and that job security offered additional mental health benefits for men. The results suggest that employment policies that promote job security may not only offer income stability but also significant health benefits, particularly for men living with HIV.

Why is this question important?

Although there is lots of evidence linking employment and job security with mental and physical health benefits in the general population, there is a lack of evidence among people living with HIV (PHAs). Given the unique nature and episodic course of HIV disease, it is important to evaluate the associations between employment, job security and mental and physical health among PHAs.

How was the study conducted?

The study included 1,930 participants (1,660 men and 270 women) from the OHTN Cohort Study (OCS), with baseline data collected between October 2007 and July 2009. Participants were interviewed to collect data on a wide range of socioeconomic and demographic variables, including age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, ethnicity, country of birth, education, personal income, time since HIV diagnosis, non-medicinal drug use, employment status and job security. Clinical data was collected through medical records and chart abstractions, supplemented by viral load data from Ontario Public Health Laboratories.



What were the main results of the study?

For men living with HIV, being employed (regardless of job security) was connected with physical health quality of life and job security was associated with mental health quality of life, over and above the quality of life associated with employment alone. This finding suggests that employment may offer a mental health benefit (to men) only if the job is perceived to be secure.

In women, being employed was connected with both physical and mental health quality of life, but there was no connection between job security and additional mental or physical health benefits, suggesting that job security plays less of a role among women living with HIV than it does among men. The study authors note the need for caution in interpreting gender-based differences given other major socioeconomic and demographic differences between the male and female participants, with the study sample largely divided between white gay men and black heterosexual women.

The study also found a relationship between physical and mental health quality of life and other socioeconomic and demographic variables, including sexual orientation, level of education and income.

What do the study results mean for the treatment and care of people living with HIV?

The study results confirm the strong association between employment and physical and mental health benefits among PHAs. The association between job security and additional mental health benefits for men living with HIV is consistent with some (but not all) studies in non-HIV populations. The study results suggest that return to work programs and employment policies that promote job security may not only offer important financial benefits, but also physical and mental health benefits for PHAs.

Where can I find the full-length publication of this study?

This study was published in Open Medicine. The full text version is available at:

<http://www.openmedicine.ca/article/view/486>.

The **Ontario HIV Treatment Network Cohort Study (OCS)** is an ongoing research study that collects clinical, social and behavioural information about people living with HIV (PHA) in Ontario. Participation in the study is voluntary, and all personally identifying information of study participants is removed to ensure confidentiality. The OCS was established to improve our understanding of HIV and to inform HIV prevention, care and treatment strategies for people living with HIV and groups at increased risk of HIV infection. For more information about the OCS, please contact the OCS Research Coordinator, Brooke Ellis at: bellis@ohln.on.ca.