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A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE PREDICTORS OF JOB LOSS IN ADULTS WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

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Background:

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a long-term condition and a common cause of physical disability in adults of working age. Approximately 80% of people with MS retire from work within 15 years of their diagnosis, which impacts their wellbeing, income, and societal productivity.

Aim:

To identify risk factors which predict job loss in adults with a diagnosis of MS and to critically analyse the evidence base to identify gaps for future research.

Method:

A search was conducted on Medline, PsycINFO, Embase and CINAHL using terms related to multiple sclerosis, job loss, risk factors, and adults. Articles retrieved were screened and duplicates removed. Data was extracted from the final studies on risk factors for job loss. Quality was assessed using the CASP checklist for cohort studies and a narrative synthesis to present the findings.

Results:

Nine studies were included in the narrative synthesis. Five main predictors of job loss were identified and classified into modifiable and non-modifiable risk factors. Non-modifiable risk factors included older age, female gender, and lower educational level. Modifiable risk factors included physical type of work and not using disease-modifying therapies (DMT). This review highlighted a mixed evidence base on depression as a risk factor, and a research gap on studies examining environmental and social risk factors as predictors.

Conclusion:

Next steps are to find mechanisms for ensuring that people with MS can work in jobs where the physical activities are matched to their physical capabilities. Work outcomes should be included in trials of DMT for MS.

References:

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2.   Dorstyn, D. S., Roberts, R. M., Murphy, G. and Haub, R. (2019) 'Employment and multiple sclerosis: A meta-analytic review of psychological correlates', Journal of Health Psychology, 24(1), pp. 38-51.