

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO



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Emerging Illness in Workers and Age of Retirement

Emerging and re-emerging illness

- The concept of emerging illnesses does not necessarily imply these illnesses did not previously exist; it refers to its recent identification, knowledge, extension, or gravity.
- Emerging illnesses are caused by new risk factors, but also by already known factors which have recently acquired an epidemic character becoming a health threat in places where they were previously inexistent.

- Re-emerging illnesses are those that have reappeared, once their incidence was reduced significantly.
- Emerging and re-emerging illnesses usually are associated with high morbidity and mortality; thus they need to be quickly identified and reported both locally and internationally.

Emerging risks, determinants of new occupational illnesses

- **New technologies and production processes**
Nanotechnology
Biotechnology
Computer technology and robotics
- **New working conditions**
Higher workloads
Work in the informal economy
- **New forms of employment**
Temporary contracts
Subcontracting
- **New industrial products**
6000 new compounds per year

- **New forms of work organization**
Rotating work and work during the night
Intensification of work
- **Significant changes in the working environment**
- **Characteristics of the social security system in each country**
- **Insufficient labor laws**
- **Non-compliance with current legislation**
- **Low income**
- **Precarious and poorly paid work for women, and double work-time**

Emerging illnesses in the medium term

- Increase of cancer among professionals, as well as musculoskeletal disorders and cardiovascular diseases
- Mutagenic and teratogenic alterations
- Burnout syndrome
- Mobbing syndrome
- Chronic fatigue syndrome
- Tecnostress syndrome
- Workaholism

Factors in addition to labor risks which increase occupational illnesses

- Undernutrition
- Obesity
- Smoking
- Alcoholism
- Overcrowding
- Bad conditions in dwellings and personal hygiene
- Age of worker
- Gender

In most countries the age at retirement is increasing, up to around 67 years old, due to increases in life expectancy

By increasing the retirement age, the time of exposure to risk factors within the work environment increases, too. Therefore, the probability of damage increases and life expectancy after retirement decreases

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. OECD

In OCDE countries, the average retirement age is 64 years old

Mexico is the country with the working retirement age higher in the OECD



The actual average age at which people no longer works, is often higher than the retirement official age

Mexico

65 years or more: 100% of pension

The average age for stop working is 73 years old

Life expectancy
Men: 73.4 years old
Women: 78.1 years old

Leading causes of mortality in retired workers (65 years old and more). Mexico, 2008

- Diabetes mellitus
- Ischemic diseases of the heart
- Stroke disease
- Obstructive chronic pulmonary disease
- Hypertensive diseases
- Cirrhosis and other chronic diseases of the liver
- Lower respiratory infections
- Nephritis and nephrosis
- Protein calorie malnutrition
- Malignant neoplasm of trachea, bronchus, and lung
- Malignant tumor of the prostate
- Malignant neoplasm of liver
- Malignant neoplasm of stomach
- Anemia
- Malignant neoplasm of pancreas
- Malignant neoplasm of colon and rectum

What to do ...

- Education
- Research, journal articles
- Share experiences
- Legislation
- Better reports
- Honest reports
- Consolidate criteria for diagnosis and working plans

Universities

- Occupational health should seek integral health of workers, not only prevention of accidents and illnesses at work
- Need to train professionals at the undergraduate and graduate levels in occupational health
- Training for medical students at universities aimed at identifying health problems that are a consequence from occupational exposure
- Research in each country to develop the maximum permissible levels of exposure according to the particular characteristics of the working population and exposition levels
- Update tables of occupational diseases

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Research

“Physiological, medical, and psychiatric study in workers exposed to electrical hazard”

715 workers were studied

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| -Peptic ulcer | -Depression |
| -Conjunctivitis | -Sleep disturbance |
| -Calfitis | -Decreased libido |
| -Hypertension | -Erectile dysfunction |
| -Diabetes mellitus | -Chronic fatigue syndrome |
| -Anxiety disorder | |

29% of workers died within 10 years after the retirement age; on average, 58 years old

**Tell me what do you do for
work and I will tell you
of what you will die**



THANK YOU

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