

Getting the Pulse on Workplace Experiences & Accommodations

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Background

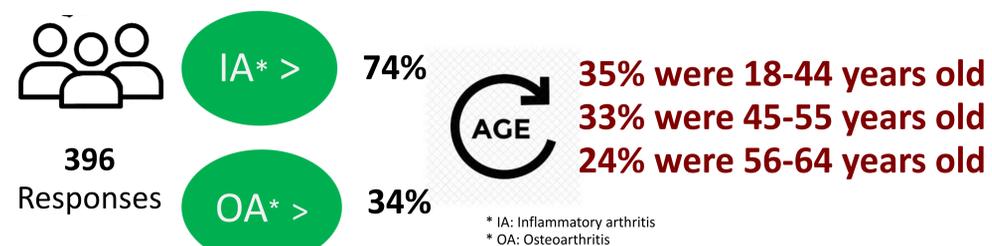
As a patient-run organization, we know that a diagnosis of arthritis means changes to a patient's life, activities and extends to their participation in the labour force and the workplace. Over a quarter of people who live with arthritis in Canada between 25 and 44 years with arthritis do not participate in the labor force¹, and a third report productivity loss and limitations to workplace activities². Given these broad impacts on a personal and policy level, the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance (CAPA) initiated a project on arthritis in the workplace, and the first phase was to develop a survey to identify the experiences of people living with arthritis in the workplace.

Methods

The survey was launched in December 2017 and was intended for people living with arthritis with past or present experiences in the workplace. The survey focused on better understanding the workplace challenges faced by people with arthritis, the type, and effectiveness of personal and workplace accommodations and the effectiveness of available resources. The survey was promoted through the CAPA website, newsletter and Facebook page with additional promotion through partnership with various stakeholders up until February 2018.

 www.arthritispatient.ca
 @CAPA_Arthritis
 www.facebook.com/CAPA.Aca/

Results



Impact of arthritis on workplace



85% reported "a great deal" or "somewhat" of an impact

Work impacts my health



81% reported "a great deal" or "somewhat" of an impact

Top 4 workplace challenges

- Work takes me away from other life activities (70%)
- Difficulties staying focused due to fatigue (67%)
- Difficulties performing physical tasks (66%)
- Stress or feeling down caused by arthritis or workplace demands (62%)

Reasons for not using accommodations

- I'm worried that others will think I'm being given preferential treatment (34%)
- I'm worried that my manager may react negatively (25%)
- I don't need any workplace accommodations (25%)
- I don't want to disclose my health status to my employer (19%)
- Unsupportive workplace (15%)

Results

Workplace Accommodations

	Accommodation type	Effectiveness
1	Modifying work tasks	49%
2	Reduced work hours	39%
3	Better physical layout and equipment (e.g. stools)	38%

Personal Accommodations

	Accommodation type	Effectiveness
1	Reduce social activities	71%
2	I pace myself during the day	68%
3	I spread out non-work activities to save energy	62%

Conclusion

The survey results will be used to create an educational resource to assist people living with arthritis. CAPA aims to raise the profile of this issue and help people living with arthritis increase their participation and engagement in the labour force.

References

1. Life with arthritis in Canada: a personal and public health challenge, chapter 3: Disability and quality of life, 2010
2. Xin Li, Monique Gignac et al: The Indirect Costs of Arthritis Resulting From Unemployment, Reduced Performance, and Occupational Changes While at Work, Medical Care, Vol. 44, No.4 April 2006, pp. 304-310.

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