

Predictors of Job Retention After Onset of Visual Impairment in Late Middle Age

What Were We Trying to Learn?

In this study, we explored factors associated with job retention after vision loss in late middle age. We aimed to identify factors that predict who will continue working after developing vision loss and identify sub-groups that are most at risk of leaving the workforce.

How Was This Project Carried Out?

We used data from the Health and Retirement Study, focusing on 248 people who developed vision loss from age 44 to 64 and were working before they first reported vision loss. We explored relationships between job retention and 11 variables, including age, gender, marital status, education, mental health, physical health, chronic conditions, and work history. Using a multiple logistic regression model, we identified variables that predicted whether individuals continued working after experiencing vision loss.

Research Takeaway

Health plays the biggest role in whether individuals continue working after developing vision loss in late middle age, with poor health and chronic conditions making job retention less likely. Married individuals and women were more likely to retain their jobs.

What Are the Most Important Things We Learned?

This study revealed that health is a key factor in whether someone stays employed after vision loss, with poor health and chronic conditions increasing the likelihood of leaving the workforce. It also showed that having a spouse or partner is associated with continuing to work after vision loss. Surprisingly, women were more likely than men to retain their jobs, which may be due to differences in job types or workplace accommodations. These findings emphasize the need for timely support, such as vocational rehabilitation (VR) services and accommodations, to help individuals remain employed.

How Do These Findings Relate to Me?

If you or someone you know develops a visual impairment later in life, these findings highlight important considerations for job retention, including maintaining good health, seeking support from family members or VR service providers, and exploring workplace accommodations. VR services can support job retention by identifying or assisting with accommodations and supporting the learning of non-visual techniques and development of new skills. Timely referral to VR may be particularly important for individuals at higher risk of leaving the workforce, such as men, single individuals, and those in poor health. Understanding these factors can help individuals retain employment after developing vision loss.

Learn More

Findings were taken from the following article:

Cmar, J. L., McDonnall, M. C., & Mitchell, G. L. (2024). [Predictors of job retention after onset of visual impairment in late middle age. *Journal of Aging and Health*, 37\(5-6\), 270-280.](#)

For more information about this project, visit the [project overview page](#).

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