

Managing Workplace Fatigue- Impact of the Environment on Workplace Fatigue

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This summary and accompanying video presentation highlight the influence of a range of environmental factors on workplace fatigue. The environment has many dimensions- a number of which are covered in more detail in the other presentations in this series. The accompanying video presentation discusses how the following aspects of the environment can influence the prevention or minimize the risk of fatigue in the occupational therapy workplace.

Dimensions of the environment that influence fatigue

Physical:

- * **Lighting**- below 300 lux in daytime promotes daytime sleepiness (http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d_708.html)
- * **Heat**- especially with existing medical conditions, closed environments, physically demanding tasks (http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/gl_heat.php)
- * **Sound** – e.g. open plan offices (see presentation 22- Noise) , physiological stress response above 65 decibels; worse in hearing impaired (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23117542>)
- * **Setting**- study of nurses found community least fatiguing, Long term care most fatiguing (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21352271>)
- * **Privacy/ surveillance / monitoring** – (<http://www.hazards.org/privacy/>)
- * **Access to nature**- restorative breaks (<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/14/488>)

Socio-emotional environment

Examples of the types of fatigue that are driven by the socio-emotional environment and its perceived demands and expectations that can carry over into the workplace:

- * Compassion fatigue – video clip 9 in this series and <https://compassionfatigue.ca/video-the-basics-understanding-compassion-fatigue-and-vicarious-trauma/>
- * Technology
http://www.researchgate.net/publication/48380702_Engagement_with_information_and_communication_technology_and_psychological_well-being
- * Decision-making (Burgess 2010, 'higher cognitive load contributes to more stereotypical decision making and decreased clinical reasoning'
<http://mdm.sagepub.com/content/30/2/246>
- * 'Social action/organizational politics (Miller et al 2008 <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10869-008-9061-5>)
- * Family (Albertson 2008, Worklife balance http://scholar.google.ca/scholar?cluster=16836525544578843966&hl=en&as_sdt=0,5&as_vis=1)

Cultural environment

- * Culture of over-work – workaholism rewarded (but fatigue and stress buffered by engagement (Beek
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4117275/>)
- * Culture of 'Super Mom' – advertisement messages- (Robinson et al <http://jfi.sagepub.com/content/29/4/465.short>)
- * Culture of change in healthcare- fear of being left behind or seen as unprogressive. (Ead 2014
<http://www.jopan.org/article/S1089-9472%2814%2900411-0/abstract> and YouTube clip- Change fatigue
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uViqUMyFh8o>)

Action Plan- IDEAS

- * Identify – reflect, collect, gather information
- * Decide – what to tackle, bite off what can be chewed
- * Engage others- remember, the issue an individual responsibility
- * Act- collaborate with other stakeholders. Remember: little actions accumulate
- * Share – examples and lessons for and from others

Key Resources: Alberta Health Service – A Healthy Work Environment <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/2676.asp>
Health Canada- Environment and Workplace Health Toolkit <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/index-eng.php>