



NASW Annual Practice Conference

The Aging Boom: Is Your Clinical Practice Ready?

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Disability Issues and the Need for Employment After Retirement

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Key Assumptions

- There will be an increase demand on services for individuals age 62 and older who want and/or need to work in some capacity.
- The new generation of elderly will have far more medical information and utilize more mental health services than previous generations.
- Clinicians will need to have more medical/pharmaceutical knowledge and a greater understanding of both life long and acquired disabilities.
- Social policy regarding employment support will have to adapt to assist older individuals.
- For some individuals, the erosion of assets will force the need to work to an older age.
- Improved medical technology has and will continue to increase the number of older individuals in the workforce.

The Importance Of Work



- I used to work in a fire hydrant factory. You couldn't park anywhere near the place. *Steven Wright (1955 -)*
- The brain is a wonderful organ. It starts working the moment you get up in the morning and does not stop until you get into the office. *Robert Frost (1874 -1963)*
- The human race is faced with a cruel choice: work or daytime television. *Unknown*
- The world is full of willing people, some willing to work, the rest willing to let them. *Robert Frost (1874 - 1963)*
- Work is a necessary evil to be avoided. *Mark Twain*
- The supreme accomplishment is to blur the line between work and play. *Arnold J. Toynbee*

A Few Facts About Work



- The average person will have spent at a minimum 100,120 hours in paid employment in their lifetime. That equals 1/6 of all hours one has lived.
- This does not count the hours preparing for employment ...obtaining a HS diploma, earning a college diploma, employment related training and other pre-employment activities.
- The number of jobs held by individuals ages 23 - 38 is 10.
- True or False: Money is the number one reason people are dissatisfied with their job.

Work As Identity (All Ages)



- Acceptable identities in society.
- Identity, work and good mental health.
- Work, the daily grind vs. meaningful daily structure.
- Work as a means to exercise some control in our lives.

Relevant Aging Demographics & Statistics

YEAR	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040
% POP 65 - 85	12.5	12.6	13.2	16.5	20.0	20.3

AGE (YEARS)	% WITH DISABILITY	% WITH SEVERE DISABILITY
< 15	8.8	3.6
15 – 24	10.4	5.0
25 – 44	11.4	7.5
45 – 54	19.4	12.8
55 – 64	30.1	20.8
65 – 69	37.4	26.1
70 – 74	43.8	27.6
75 – 79	55.9	37.8
> 80	71.0	56.2

Understanding The World Of Work 101

- Functionally defining behavior & disability related conditions.
- Choose – Get – Keep. A universal process for employment related activities.
- Review w/client the functional aspects of previous employment experiences in relation to Work Aptitudes, Attitudes & Skills.

Attitudes, Aptitudes & Skills

- **Aptitude;** 1. Natural ability. 2. Capacity to learn. 3. Appropriateness.
- **Attitude;** 1. Posture. 2. A mental position or feeling with regard to fact or state of being. 3. The position of something in relation to something else.
- **Skill;** 1. The ability to use one's knowledge effectively in doing something. 2. Developed or acquired ability.

Summary Of Choosing, Getting & Keeping Factors

- **CHOOSING:** Narrowing the focus (short term, intermediate, long term.); Financial considerations; Location; Family influences; Self concept; “Realistic” goals; Using career assessment/interest materials such as the Self Directed Search; Volunteering as a means of vocational assessment & use as “Work Samples”; Work aptitudes (Data, People, Things)
- **GETTING: Job search skills:** Beginning, Middle and Follow – up; **Looking:** Newspaper. Internet sources; Preparation: Application, resume, cover letter and other documentation; **The Interview:** Do not assume the client knows how to do any of these activities, including interview. Messaging = Confidence, Knowledge, Willingness/ability to learn and Availability; **Follow-up:** Make the call. May write a letter depending on type of job.
- **KEEPING:** Refer by back to Aptitude, Attitude & Skills

Understanding Work & The Dictionary Of Occupational Titles (DOT)

Federal Department of Labor

DATA — PEOPLE — THINGS STRUCTURE			
	DATA (4th digit of DOT code)	PEOPLE (5th digit of DOT code)	THINGS (6th digit of DOT code)
Difficult High ↑ Average ↓ Simple Low	0 Synthesizing 1 Coordinating 2 Analyzing	0 Mentoring 1 Negotiating	0 Setting-Up 1 Precision Working
	3 Compiling 4 Computing	2 Instructing 3 Supervising 4 Diverting 5 Persuading	2 Operating - Controlling 3 Driving - Operating 4 Manipulating
	5 Copying 6 Comparing	6 Speaking-Signaling 7 Serving 8 Taking Instructions - Helping	5 Tending 6 Feeding - Offbearing 7 Handling

DOT & Two Examples

- **School Social Worker: 195.107.038**



- **Assembler - Corn Cob Pipes. 739.687.014**



O-NET ONLINE

<http://online.onetcenter.org/>

O*NET OnLine Page 1 of 2



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Enter a code or title from the DOT, MOC, RAIS, SOC, or CIP to find matching O*NET-SOC occupations.

Current Resources For Employment Assistance

- **Senior Community Service Employment:** Designed for poor older individuals with an annual family income at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Level. Includes re-training, job placement assistance. Age 55 or older.
- **Federally Funded State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs:** Must have significant disability that prohibits work without assistance. Must be found “eligible” by state authority. Includes vocational assessment, funded training and education that is designed to lead to employment, job placement assistance and supported employment services. Service availability varies by state.
- **Local and State Programs including Community Action Program and Senior Center initiatives.**

Current Legal Information & Protections

- **Americans With Disabilities Act.**
Prohibits discrimination base on a disability in several areas including public and private employment settings. May require work place modifications under certain conditions.
- **Older Americans Act: Includes Senior Community Service Act.**
- **State Human Rights' Office**

Current Concerns In Helping Older Persons With And Without Disabilities Gain And Maintain Employment

- Poor Economy
- Transportation
- Lack Of Specialized Support Services
- Lack Of Supportive Work Environments
- Changing Expectations
- Lack Of Public Support
- Age Discrimination
- Per Capital Cost Of Healthcare Of Individuals Over 65 (\$11,089) Compared To Under 65 (\$2,793)
- Inadequate Public Policy

National Governors Association

Recommendations Regarding Mature Workers

- Develop new information tools and improve existing systems that connect older adults to employment opportunities.
- Promote lifelong learning by enhancing training and educational opportunities for mature workers.
- Assess labor market needs to help engage older adults and review policies that could affect them as they remain in the labor market or try to reconnect to the workforce.
- Raise awareness of the benefits of hiring older adults and improve perceptions of mature workers among employers.

Recommendations

- Develop grassroots coalitions to effect public policy on the local and state levels.
- Support national organizations that promote public policies that are designed to improve or create employment support and service systems for older individuals with and without disabilities.
- Integrate into your practice when appropriate the question; “Do you want to work?”
- Develop the necessary skills to help your clients who want to work develop and attain meaningful employment goals.

Credits, Information & Resources

- <http://www.cbo.gov/>
- <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa>
- <http://www.doleta.gov/Seniors>
- <http://www.cbo.gov/>
- <http://www.seniorjournal.com/>
- <http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga>
- <http://www.ada.gov/>
- <http://www.gao.gov/>
- <http://www.ncoa.org/>
- <http://www.helpstartshere.org/>
- <http://www.socialworkers.org/>
- <http://www.rinasw.info/>

About the Presenter

Richard N. Harris, LICSW, has worked in the field more than 30 years including extensive experience in clinical and rehabilitation services. He earned his MSW from Rhode Island College, and he currently serves as the Executive Director for the NASW Rhode Island Chapter.

For more information . . .

Please visit the NASW Web site at
www.socialworkers.org/agingconference