

Age, health and professional drivers' network



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Who are we?

- Collaboration with:
 - AMBS: Dr Sheena Johnson and Dr Lynn Holdsworth
 - HSE: Helen Beers, PhD, and Nina Day
- Age, Health and Professional Drivers' Network (AHPD Network)
- A network promoting best practice in the transport industry relating to the ageing workforce and the health of professional drivers
- Partly funded by an ESRC-IAA award
- Building on research in 2017, funded by MICRA and CfAB

Why?

- Age demographics of organisations are changing and will continue to change.
 - Increased number of older workers
 - In 2014 29% of 'economically active' people were aged over 50
 - Over 65s in work doubled between 2006 -2016
- Why the change??
 - People are living longer
 - % young adults decreasing, % older adults increasing
 - Overall working population expected to decrease over coming decades
- People working longer; changes in retirement and pension entitlement
- Implications on health and safety of extended working lives is scarce

“Given this changing trend toward an older workforce, it is important to provide older workers with opportunities to maintain healthy, productive, and less stressful work lives.”

Shultz et al. 2010, p. 22

Why the AHPD Network?

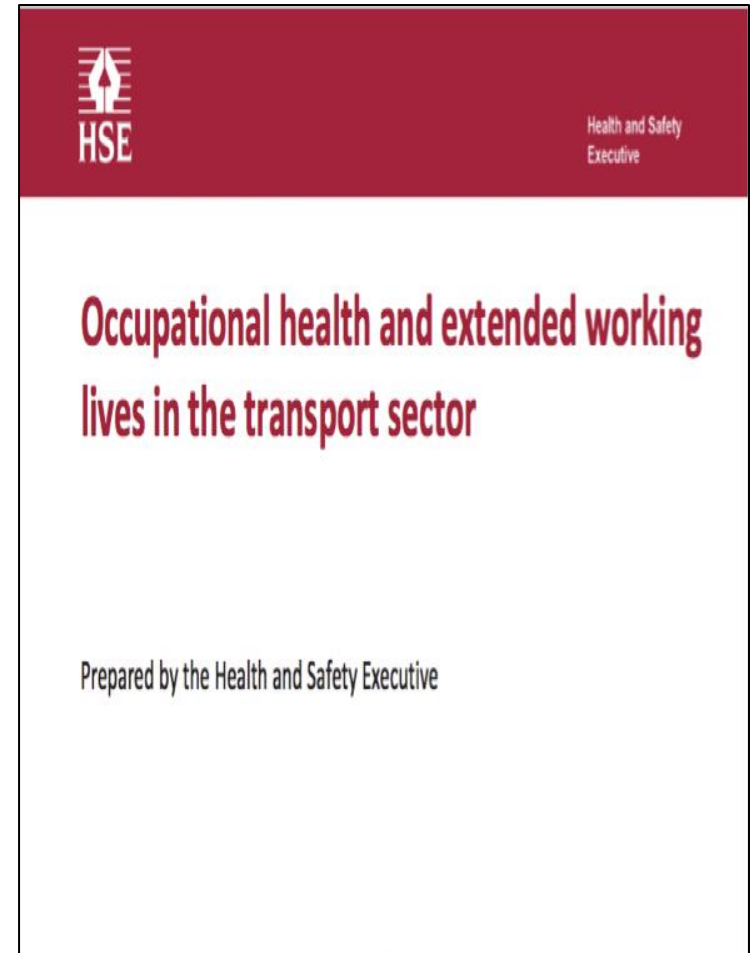
- Average age of HGV drivers in UK is around 50 years and is increasing (Freight Transport Association, 2017)
- 13% of drivers are over 60; 2% are under 25 (HGV training network, 2017)
- Chronic shortage of qualified HGV drivers
- Evidence from America suggests long-haul truck driving is disproportionately detrimental to health and safety

Health and wellbeing of HGV drivers

- Multiple risk factors:
 - Obesity
 - Hypertension
 - Unhealthy diet
 - Lack of exercise
 - Sleep deprivation and disturbance
 - Exposure to stress
- Can lead to medical conditions e.g. diabetes, sleep apnoea, cardiovascular disorders

Research phase one

- What is the reality of working into older age for HGV drivers in the UK, and what does this mean for health and wellbeing?
- Interviews in 5 medium to large logistics companies
- 14 male HGV drivers
- 7 managers and supervisors
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr1104.pdf>



Health and wellbeing



"You can imagine if you're sat there for four hours just on the motorway. Your knees, because you're not moving them are you? Your back will go. It's alright when you're young but as you get older it starts catching up with you."

"I think you get a bit more tired as you get a bit older. Easier, I think you tend to doze even when you're at home at weekends more than you would do when you're younger. I think that's a problem for people that are driving at my age, you do get more tired"

Health and wellbeing



“To get something to eat, you can’t just park the wagon anywhere – and you are also restricted on time – so it’s virtually impossible to eat healthily.”

“There is no exercise now – you’re perhaps in/out of the cab only four to five times a day. My weight does fluctuate a lot.”

Health and wellbeing



- *“I don’t get stressed out now like I used to. That’s down to me saying I ain’t pushing myself anymore. When you’re younger, you’ll get pushed and pushed and pushed, and do more and more and more, and as the roads have got busier, it’s got harder. But, I’ve got to a point in my life where when they give me a run, it gets there when it gets there. I ain’t going to kill myself or anybody else to get that load to that place.”*

Working environment and technology



“You’ve nothing to do, not even changing gear because it does it for you. You become like in a tunnel vision. It’s harder into the early hours of the morning.”

Working environment and technology



“Fifteen to twenty years ago there wasn’t the technology and the vehicles were a lot more manual. There’s a lot less to do to drive the vehicles now. They almost drive themselves. This is a good thing, and power steering takes a lot off you.”

“There’s a lot of mental stuff with driving because you’ve got all the technology in the cab.”

Retirement



"Drivers were saying they were planning to retire, but now they're thinking about going on a little bit further, because of government and changes. They work to make ends meet (everyone would like to retire at sixty-five, seventy). Some drivers are a lot older seventy- two, seventy-four. They plod along, they come in, part-time work...they fill the gap, but I think if life was different for them, prior to them reaching that age, they wouldn't have worked it. They wouldn't be working now. It's just they've got to make ends meet, you know. Their pensions or their retirement programme or planning didn't meet their needs. So they just keep on going until they basically stop."

Retirement



"If driving is all you know – all you can do – you continue working – you live with the health issues."

"If I feel the way I do now I wouldn't be retiring when I have to. You don't have to really retire here....If I feel as fit and as healthy as I do...I'm not saying I'll be a hundred per cent, but I'd still like to carry on with it, to be honest... I'd be quite happy to keep working as long as I was fit and healthy to do stuff."

What are companies doing?

Good practices

- Plan work to build in extra time for deliveries
- Ensure equipment works well
- Provide training in lifting and moving objects
- Use relatively new vehicles with better design features
- Provide more driver training for drivers less comfortable with technology
- Adapt equipment to meet health needs
- Encourage physical work activity (within capabilities)

Bad practices

- Pushing drivers to deliver within specific time windows
- Constant time pressures
- Drivers working 70-80 hours per week
- Inadequate and broken equipment related to loading and unloading

What are companies doing?

Good practices

- Provide access to healthy food (hot if possible)
- Promote health and exercise information
- Provide a 'toolkit' of in-cab exercises
- Monitor drivers' health (especially night workers)
- Introduce a 'know your numbers' clinic
- 'Open door' policy to discuss health issues
- Encourage occupational health referrals by driver trainers

Bad practices

- Not discouraging drivers from tampering with tachographs
- Lack of support for drivers wellbeing
- Shift patterns that are too demanding

What are companies doing?

Good practices

- Offer flexible working patterns
- Adapt tasks to meet health needs
- Collecting drivers 'stuck' away from home
- Reduce working hours, or give days off to compensate for longer shifts
- Listen to the drivers 'letting off steam' at the end of a day

Bad practices

- Resistant to flexible working
- No planning of pre-retirement schedules
- Lack of understanding about too many nights away from home
- Creating a culture that 'getting the job done' overrides any compassion on the road

Research phase two

- Extend the research to light goods van drivers and employers
- Combined studies will develop best practice guidelines
- AHPD Network website will share research findings and provide a forum for knowledge exchange between companies in relation to their professional drivers' age, health and wellbeing
- <https://sites.manchester.ac.uk/ahpd/>

AHPD Network website

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About the Network



Who we are

The AHPD Network is a collaboration with AMBS, within The University of Manchester, and the British Health and Safety Executive



Get involved

Join the Network and have a voice in the design of best practice guidelines relating to age and well-being of professional drivers.



Useful Resources

Visit our resource page for guidance and support to help with all aspects of healthy driving at work, particularly for older drivers.

Network event



- Winter 2018/2019
- To share and discuss findings of Phase Two research
- Leave contact details/ join the AHPD Network



Any questions?

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