



Job Ready Services

September 2012 Issue

Our Services:

- Functional Capacity Evaluations
- Work Conditioning
- Job Analyses
- Fit for Duty Testing
- Employment Testing



Older Workers Mean New Problems for Employers

Quick Facts About Aging in NC:

- The **number of persons aged 65+** in NC increased 25.7% between 2000 and 2010, to 12.9% of the state's total population.
- Between 2010 and 2030, North Carolina's 65+ population is projected to **increase by over 400,000 persons per decade**, reaching 2.14 million, or about 18% of the state total, by 2030.
- In 2008, North Carolina **ranked 10th among US states** in the size of the population aged 65+.
- North Carolina is projected to **rank 19th among states** in the growth of the 65+ population from 2000-2030.
- The **median age in NC is projected to increase** from 36.9 years in 2009 to 37.8 years in 2030.
- The **North Carolina metropolitan areas** of Raleigh-Cary and Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord were #1 and #10, respectively, in national rankings for **fastest growth in the 65+ population** between 2000 and 2010.
- Between 2000 and 2010, North Carolina's **very old (85+) population increased by nearly 40%**.
- From 2010 to 2030, the **proportion of the very old (85+)** will remain between 11% and 13% of the elderly North Carolina population. Age cohorts from 0-44 years are expected to decline in their proportions of the state total.

Ergonomic Considerations for the Workplace:

Vision – Typically, vision problems begin in the 40-50 age group, however recent research indicates this number is moving more toward 35-40. One reason may be the increased usage of computers and computer games at an earlier age. Print instructions in larger print. Provide proper lighting. Computer monitors should be

35" – 45" away from eyes. Increase lighting in areas where color distinction is needed. Improve visibility of stairs, hallways and close spaces. Use color to distinguish critical machine parts or safety valves.

Hearing – Problems begin between 35 and 40. Difficulties include tuning out background noises, inability to distinguish low intensity or high frequency sounds and difficulty locating their source. Help older workers by reducing background noises in the workplace and combining auditory and visual cues for such things as warnings and announcements. Being able to see someone speak allows the person to hear much better. Always provide hearing protection in workplaces with excessive noise.

Touching – Approximately 25% of older workers lose all sensation in their fingertips. Grasping is harder and takes more force, and there is a decrease in joint mobility. Help by providing hand protection, substituting levers or push buttons for knobs, and offering different tool designs depending on the job. For example, a barrel grip drill is much better for horizontal surfaces and a pistol grip is better for vertical surfaces.

Body Temperature Regulation – There are multiple variables affecting body temp regulation. There is no OSHA standard for body temp regulation; it's under the "General Duty" clause. In excessive heat, dehydration is the biggest concern because in temperatures greater than 77 degrees tissue metabolism decreases. Drinking water is necessary to stay hydrated, and wearing more clothes may be preferable, as it allows the body to sweat and keep moisture in. In extreme cold, manual dexterity decreases, peripheral circulation decreases and nerve irritability increases.

Physical Strength – Certainly our physical strength declines with age, but unfortunately, the job demands do not change as we do. We just aren't able to do what we did 20 years ago, so offering incentives to maintain fitness levels is a good idea.

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The Raleigh-Cary area of North Carolina was #1 in growth of the 65+ population between 2000 and 2010 out of all American metropolitan areas.



"New Problems" cont.

Although older workers are more likely to have fewer injuries at work, when they are injured, they tend to stay out of work longer, as their recovery time is longer. What do you do to ensure that your workforce continues to be safe to do their job? Consider annual Fit for Duty exams to determine whether employees are still physically safe to do the essential functions of their job. Or, EEOC says that there are "triggers" that allow employers to test employees who may be having problems performing parts of their job safely. For more information on when and how to legally test employees (existing and new hires) for fitness for duty, contact Job Ready Services.

Job Ready News

Ernie Lopez, our Work Conditioning Coordinator since 2006, has moved on to pursue his dream position of working with elite athletes. We will miss him and wish him well in his new position.

Sean Zmijewski has joined Job Ready as the Work Conditioning Coordinator and hit the ground running with new ideas in conditioning and job specific training. Sean is a graduate of the University of North Carolina with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Exercise and Sports Science with a focus on overall health improvement. He is originally from Philadelphia, PA and moved to NC in 2004. Welcome, Sean!

Vivian Alicea has transitioned from Administrative Assistant to a full time Technician with duties including assisting with Work Conditioning and employment testing. Vivian is bilingual and will be working closely with our Spanish speaking clients to optimize their work conditioning outcomes.

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Lunch and Learn

Thursday, October 18, 2012
12:00 – 1:00pm

Topic: **Violence in the Workplace**

Speaker: Dennis Parnell, Director of Safety Education,
NC Industrial Commission

Cost: \$10.00

CCM & CRC approved (1 hour)

OHN credits pending approval (1 hour)

To register, go to <http://www.jobreadyservices.net/index.php/contact/lunch-and-learn-registration/> or visit our website and click on "education"



Upcoming Events

Visit the Job Ready booth at the following conferences:

- Mid-state Safety Council Workshop - October 9
- NC Industrial Commission conference – October 10 – 12
- NC Safety & Health Council – Nov 15-16 (Debra Lord is also a featured speaker at this conference)

Debra will also be speaking at the NC Assisted Living Association fall conference on October 9