



**Department of Clinical Neuroscience**  
Division of Insurance Medicine

## **Paid work and sickness absence after 65 years of age**

### **Background**

In many countries, including Sweden, political discussions are on-going about the importance of extending working lives in higher ages, and more and more people are in paid work after 65 years of age. Those who continue working often have better health than those who leave the labour force at standard pension age. This health selection effect is expected to lead to lower sickness absence levels among those who stay in work after standard pension age than in younger ages. However, it is possible that when more older people participate in the labour market, this health selection effect will decrease, and that sickness absence in this group will increase over time. The knowledge about those who stay in paid work after age 65 is still very limited. In this project we conduct both time series analyses, based on five cohorts of all individuals over 65 years of age who lived in Sweden 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2015, respectively, as well as prospective cohort studies on several different cohorts who are followed before and after they turn 65. The studies are based on Swedish register data. We have also conducted a systematic literature review about health and morbidity among people in paid work after the age of 64 within the project.

**The aim** of the project is to

- Generate knowledge about paid work and sickness absence after 65 years of age, related to sex, morbidity, sociodemographics, socioeconomics, and psychosocial working environment,
- Generate knowledge about sickness absence before and after 65 years of age in different diagnoses, especially differences between mental and somatic diagnoses.

**Collaboration** is within the IDEAR network (Integrated Datasets in Europe for Ageing Research, [www.idear-net.net](http://www.idear-net.net)), a European collaboration between researchers in Sweden, the UK, France, Denmark and Finland regarding older people and work.

### **Project participants**

Kristin Farrants, Ph.D., assistant professor, *PI*  
Kristina Alexanderson, Ph.D., professor  
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### **Contact**

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## Financing

The Swedish Research Council for Health, Work and Welfare

## Publications (listed after type of publication)

### Published in international scientific journals

1. Martikainen A, Alavi Svensson A, Alexanderson K, Farrants K. *Associations of sickness absence and disability pension due to mental and somatic diagnoses when aged 60–64 with paid work after the standard retirement age; a prospective population-based cohort study in Sweden*. BMC Public Health 21:2322. 2021. DOI:10.1186/s12889-021-12382-4.
2. Farrants K, Head J, Alexanderson K. *Trends in associations between sickness absence before the age of 65 and being in paid work after the age of 65: prospective study of three total population cohorts*. Journal of Aging & Social Policy. 2022. Online ahead of print. DOI: 10.1080/08959420.2021.2022950.
3. Farrants K, Head J, Framke E, Rugulies R, Alexanderson K. *Associations between combinations of job demands and job control among 616,818 people aged 55-64 in paid work with their labour market status 11 years later: a prospective cohort study*. International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health. 2021.95(1):169-185. DOI: 10.1007/s00420-021-01717-8.
4. Farrants K, Marklund S, Kjeldgård L, Head J, Alexanderson K. *Sick leave before and after the age of 65 among those in paid work in Sweden in 2000 or 2005: a register-based cohort study*. Journal of International Medical Research. 2018.46(2):464-577. DOI: 10.1177/0300060517734744.
5. Farrants K, Marklund S, Kjeldgård L, Head J, Alexanderson K. *Sick leave among individuals in paid work after age 65; a Swedish population-based study covering 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010*. Scandinavian Journal of Public Health. 2018.46(3):297-305. DOI: 10.1177/1403494817731487.

## Publications in Swedish

([ki.se/cns/forsakringsmedicin](https://ki.se/cns/forsakringsmedicin) under ”publikationer > rapporter”)

1. Farrants K, Alexanderson K, Dervish J, Marklund S. 2022. Hälsa och sjuklighet bland personer som förvärvsarbetar efter 64 års ålder: en systematisk litteraturöversikt. Avdelningen för försäkringsmedicin, Karolinska Institutet. ISBN 978-91-8016-693-5.
2. Marklund S, Kjeldgård L, Alexanderson K. 2013. Sjukfrånvaro efter 65 års ålder. Underlagsrapport Nr 14 till Parlamentariska Socialförsäkringsutredningen. Statens Offentliga Utredningar S 2010:04.

**Abstracts accepted for presentation at scientific conferences**

1. Farrants K, Head J, Alexanderson K. Trends in associations between sickness absence, disability pension and paid work after age 65. European Public Health Conference, Digital conference, 10 – 12 November 2021.
2. Farrants K, Head J, Framke E, Rugulies R, Alexanderson K. Job demands/control among people in paid work age 55-64 and their labour market status 11 years later. World Congress on Public Health, Digital conference, 12-17 October 2020.
3. Farrants K, Head J, Framke E, Rugulies R, Alexanderson K. 'A Prospective Cohort Study of Associations Between Job Demands and Job Control Among People in Work Aged 55-64 with Their Labour Market Status 11 Years Later.' International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics European Region Congress, Gothenburg, Sweden, 23-25 May 2019.
4. Farrants K, Kjeldgård L, Marklund S, Head J, Alexanderson K. Sick leave before and after the age of 65 in 2000 and 2005: a Swedish register-based cohort study. European Public Health Conference, Vienna, Austria, 9-12 November 2016.