

Despite evidence that age related physical changes may make older workers more vulnerable to workplace injuries, ABS work-related injuries survey does not indicate that injuries and disease increase with increasing age. This may be because older workers are more likely to be aware of safety issues, have developed their own means of avoiding injury due to experience on the job or may have in fact moved out of industries where the risk of injury would otherwise increase with age.

The more healthy workers are, irrespective of their age, the more productive they will be in the workplace.

Possible strategies and actions include:

- Improving job and work task design by avoiding the use of excessive work rates and production workload targets. For example, self-paced work is preferable to machine-paced work or time limits imposed for handling call centre based inquiries. Research indicates that employees experience lower anxiety, lower depression and higher job satisfaction when they have higher control over the timing of their work and methods they use in their work. Adequate control can enable older workers, particularly, to adopt performance strategies to minimise problems that may be associated with age related reductions in processing and response speed.
- Offering training about the easiest and most efficient methods for task performance.
- Adjusting aspects of the job or workplace to match workers needs in terms of mobility, ergonomics or other requirements.
- Contacting the **Division of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Department of Employment and Industrial Relations** (<http://www.whs.qld.gov.au/>) for more information.

*Source: Department of Employment and Industrial Relations 'A Guide for the Queensland Public Service: Managing an Ageing Workforce'*