

Capturing the experience of health among persons aging in a migration context

Health promotion interventions as means to enable health and occupations in daily life

Akademisk avhandling för avläggande av medicine doktorsexamen vid Sahlgrenska akademien, Göteborgs universitet kommer att offentligens försvaras den 19 oktober, klockan 13.00 i Hörsal Arvid Carlsson, Medicinaregatan 3, Göteborg.

Av
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Legitimerad arbetsterapeut

Fakultetsopponent:
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Avhandlingen baseras på följande delarbeten

- I. Arola LA, Dellenborg L, Häggblom Kronlöf G. Occupational perspective of health among persons ageing in the context of migration. *J Occup Sci* 2018; 25:65-75.
- II. Arola LA, Mårtensson L, Häggblom Kronlöf G. Viewing oneself as a capable person – experiences of professionals working with older Finnish immigrants. *Scan J Caring Sci.* 2016;16. doi: 10.1111/scs.12395
- III. Arola LA, Barenfeld E, Dahlin-Ivanoff, S, Häggblom Kronlöf G. Distribution and evaluation of sense of coherence among older immigrants before and after a health promotion intervention-Results from the RCT study Promoting Aging Migrants' Capability. (*submitted*)
- IV. Arola LA, Dahlin-Ivanoff, S, Häggblom Kronlöf G. Impact of a person-centred group intervention on life satisfaction and engagement in activities among persons aging in the context of migration. (*accepted for publication in Scan J Occup Ther*)

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Abstract

Aim: The overall aim of this thesis was to increase our understanding of health in everyday life among older persons aging in migration, and to evaluate the outcome of a health promotion intervention on sense of coherence, life satisfaction and engagement in activities. **Methods:** Studies I and II had a qualitative approach and aiming to obtain deeper descriptions of older Finnish immigrants experiences of health in daily life (study I), and to explore healthcare professionals' experiences of health in daily life among older Finnish immigrants (study II). Studies III and IV were evaluations of the RCT emerging from the "Promoting Aging Migrants' Capability project. A total of 131 persons, aged 70 or older living at home, were assessed at baseline, 6 months and 1- year post intervention on sense of coherence, life satisfaction and engagement in activities of interest. **Results:** The overriding meaning of the experience of health was connected to the older person's perception of oneself as a capable person with possibilities to use one's capability to manage daily life (study I & II). Additionally, the interwoven relationship to country of birth and to life in the host country was perceived as a health resource (study I). The health-promotion intervention demonstrated a significant difference between the two groups regarding the total score of sense of coherence at 6 months follow-up (study III). At 6 months and 1-year follow-up the odds for maintained or improved life satisfaction was higher for participants in the intervention group compared to participants in the control group (study IV). **Conclusion:** The experience of health in everyday life seems to be connected to the persons' perspectives of their own capability, health and ageing rather than to the migration background. The results embraces an understanding of how humans are able to create a meaningful life after migration. This confirms the basic concept of occupational science that humans, through their own actions, can shape their daily life despite the changes in context.

Keywords: occupation, health, aging, migration, health promotion, person-centredness