

# Occupational engagement after stroke a long-term perspective

Akademisk avhandling

Som för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen vid Sahlgrenska akademien, Göteborgs universitet kommer att offentligen försvaras i sal 2119, Arvid Wallgrens Backe hus 2, Göteborg, fredagen den 2 oktober klockan 13:00.

av Charlotte Wassenius

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## Avhandlingen baseras på följande delarbeten

- I. Blomgren C, Jood K, Jern C, Holmegaard L, Redfors P, Blomstrand C, Claesson L. Long-term performance of instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) in young and middle-aged stroke survivors: Results from SAHLSIS outcome. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 2018;25(2): 119-126.
- II. Blomgren C, Samuelsson H, Blomstrand C, Jern C, Jood K, Claesson L. Long-term performance of instrumental activities of daily living in young and middle-aged stroke survivors - Impact of cognitive dysfunction, emotional problems and fatigue. *PLoS One*. 2019;14(5): e0216822.
- III. Wassenius C, Claesson L, Blomstrand C, Jood K, Carlsson G. Integrating consequences of stroke into everyday life – experiences from a long-term perspective. Manuscript submitted
- IV. Wassenius C, Claesson L, Blomstrand C, Jood K, Carlsson G. The centrality of work in the life of long-term stroke survivors. In manuscript

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# Occupational engagement after stroke a long-term perspective

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## Abstract

**Aim:** The overall aim of this thesis was to explore long-term performance and experiences of everyday life occupations for young and middle-aged stroke survivors and factors that may affect the ability to engage in occupation

**Methods:** Study I and II used a quantitative design and explored the frequency of performance in Instrumental Activities of Daily Living seven years post stroke. Further, factors that independently predict (study I) or explain (study II) long-term occupational performance were identified by using multivariable logistic regression. Study III and IV used qualitative data from interviews and addressed occupational engagement over a time perspective of 15-18 years. Data were analysed using thematic analysis and focused on how engagement changed over time and across contexts (study III) and how views on and experiences of work affect life after stroke (study IV).

**Results:** Findings show reduced frequency of occupational performance, especially within leisure and work activities. Regression analyses show that reduced frequency was related to gender, cohabitation status, global functional independence, stroke severity, cognitive dysfunction, emotional problems, and fatigue. Qualitative findings revealed that with time consequences of stroke were integrated into everyday life and participants described how they had moved on. Throughout this long process, occupational engagement was key for understanding, accepting and adapting to consequences of stroke. Work was described as a central occupation affecting everyday life. Maintaining or replacing work with new occupations was challenging. The facilitators and barriers in the process surrounding return to work and at the workplace identified indicate a need for individual support.

**Conclusion:** The changes in occupational performance and experiences after stroke found in these studies indicate a need for long-term support and rehabilitation where attention should be paid to supporting stroke survivors to engage in occupations that enable them to find ways of adapting to consequences that are in accordance with individual goals and context. For younger stroke survivors' particular attention should be paid to work and encompass a broader perspective than just initial return.

**Keywords:** ADL, Adaptation, Cohort study, Occupational engagement, Occupational performance, Occupational therapy, Participation, Rehabilitation, Return to work, Stroke, Qualitative research