



LABOR AND POPULATION

CENTER *for*
DISABILITY
RESEARCH

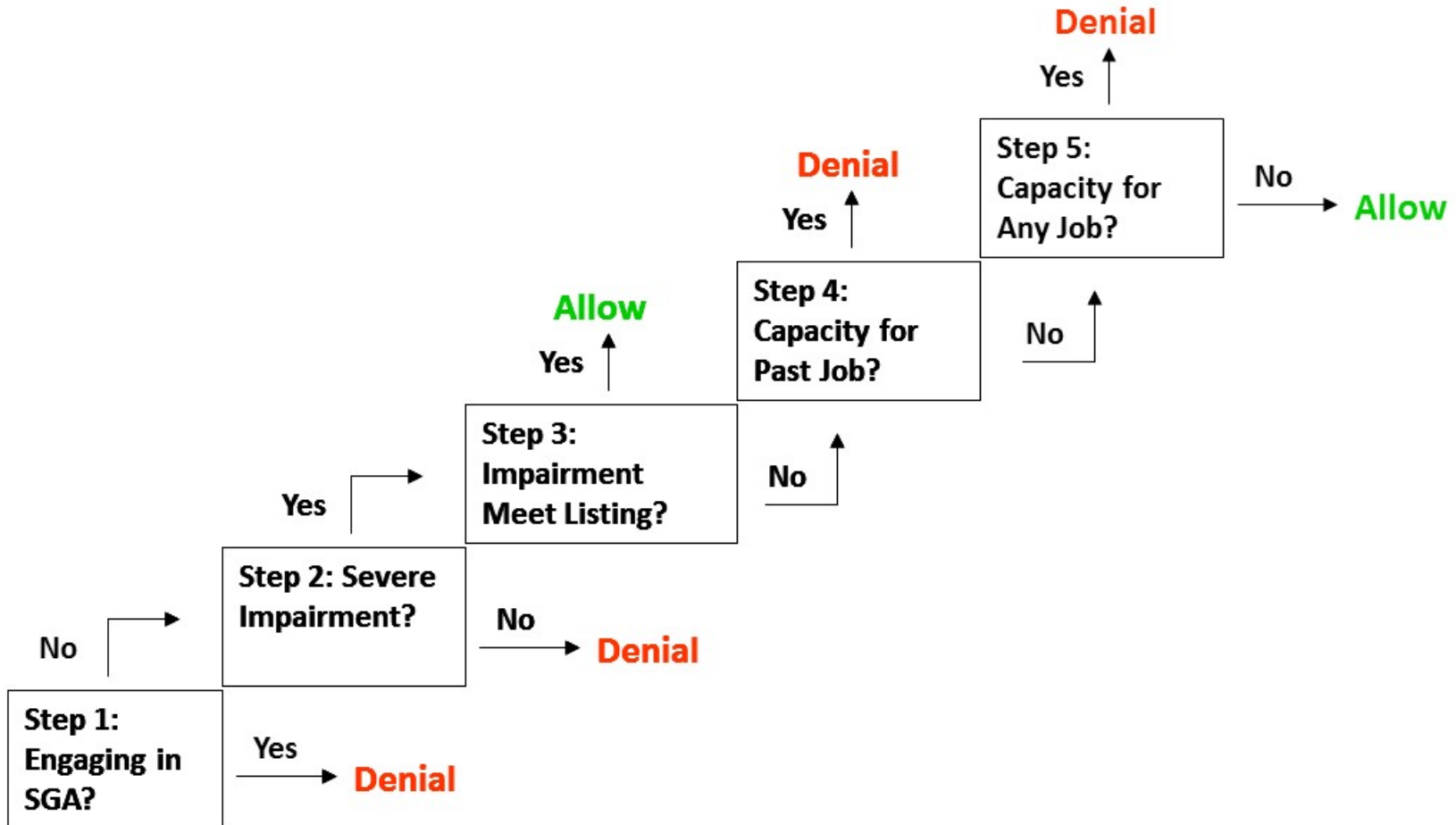
Workers at Older Ages with Disabilities: The Role of Employer Accommodation

Kathleen J. Mullen, RAND

DRC Annual Meeting

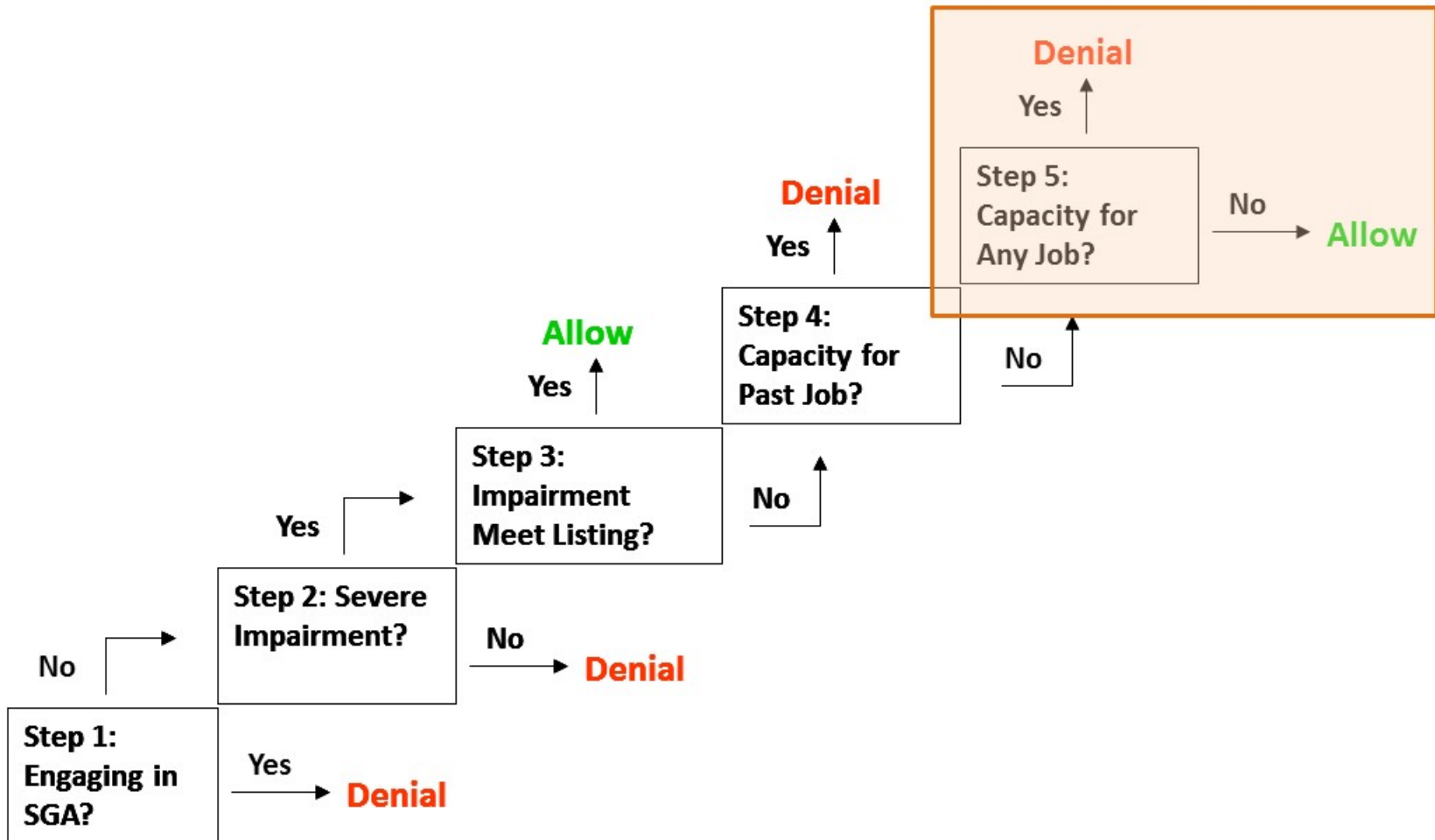
August 2015

Five-Step Review Process



Five-Step Review Process

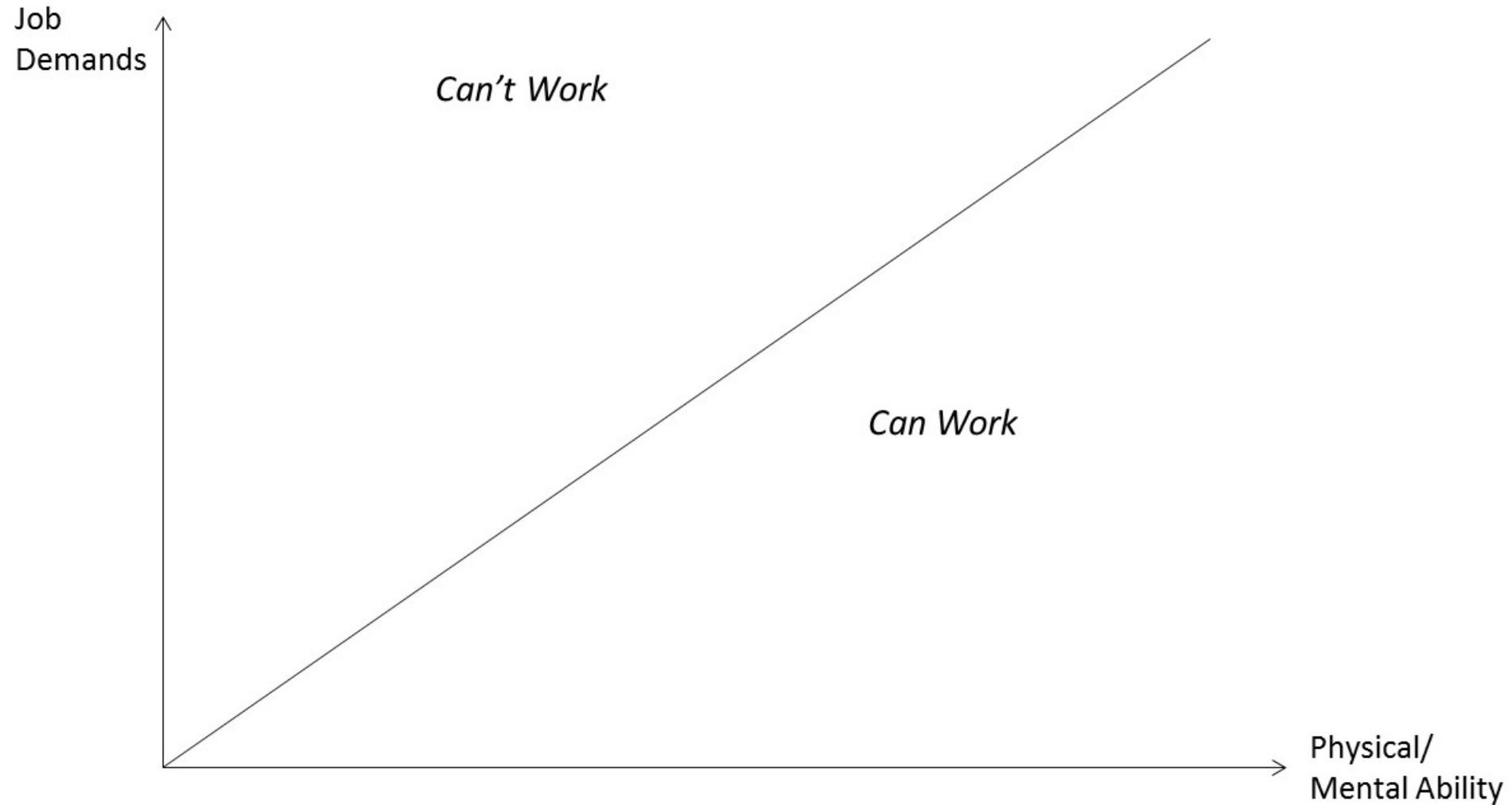
Medical-Vocational Guidelines



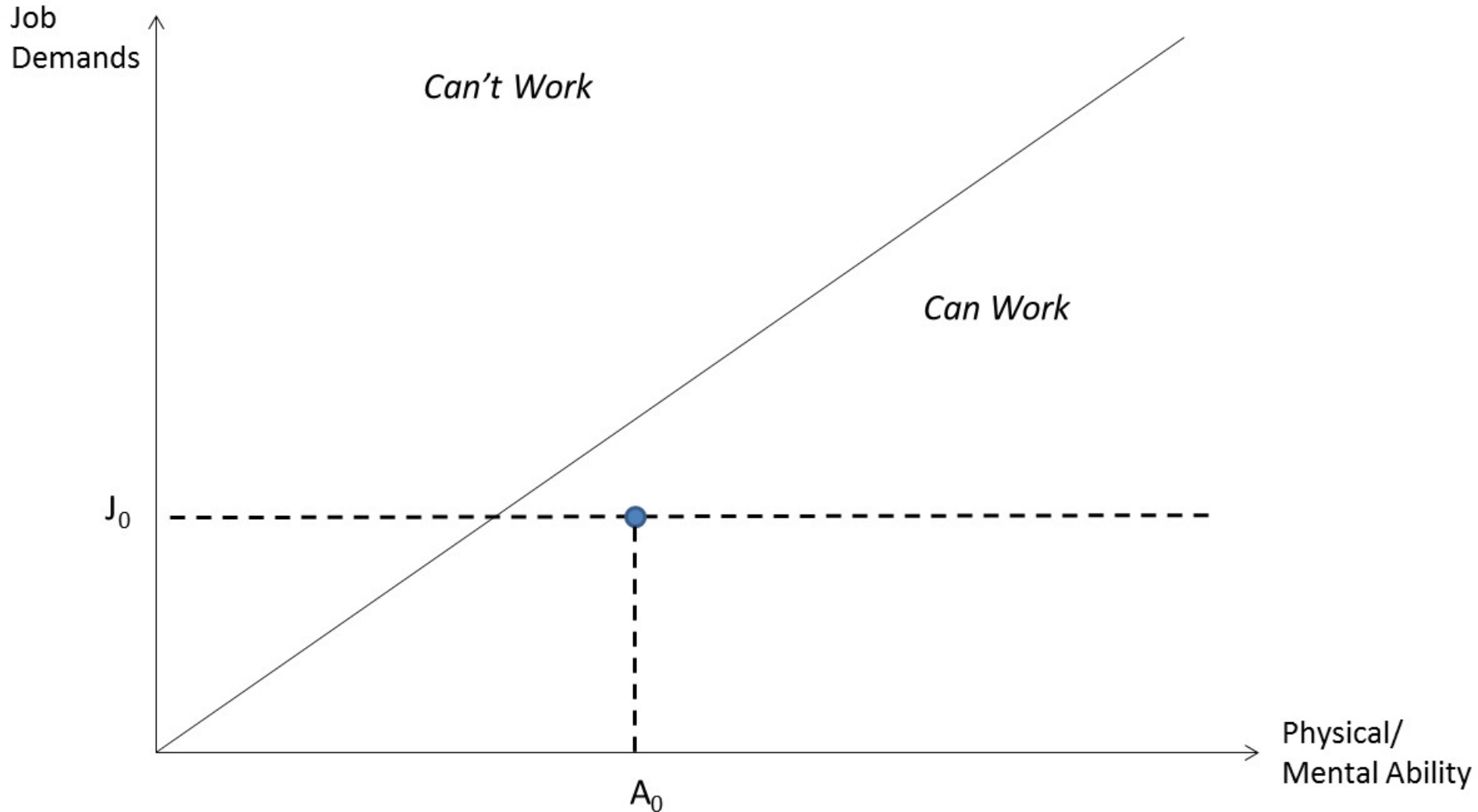
Medical-Vocational Guidelines (aka Grid)

- Grid combines vocational factors (age, education and work experience) with residual functional capacity to evaluate individual's ability to engage in SGA in “vocationally relevant” work other than his or her past work
- Availability of appropriate jobs is not a factor
- Step 5 determinations have been growing % of cases; sensitive to economic conditions (Maestas, Mullen and Strand 2015)

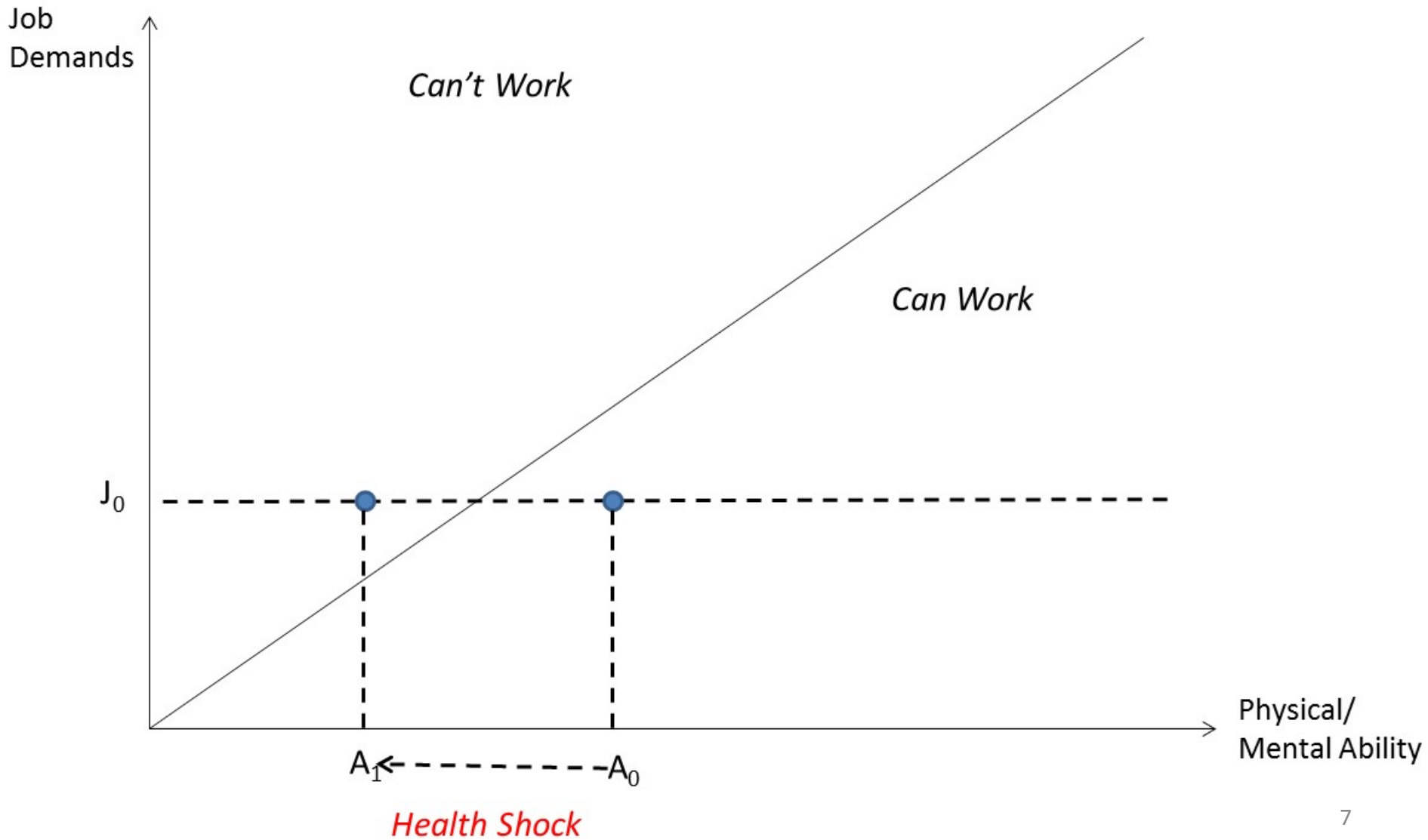
Conceptual Framework



Prior to Onset, Ability Meets or Exceeds Job Demands

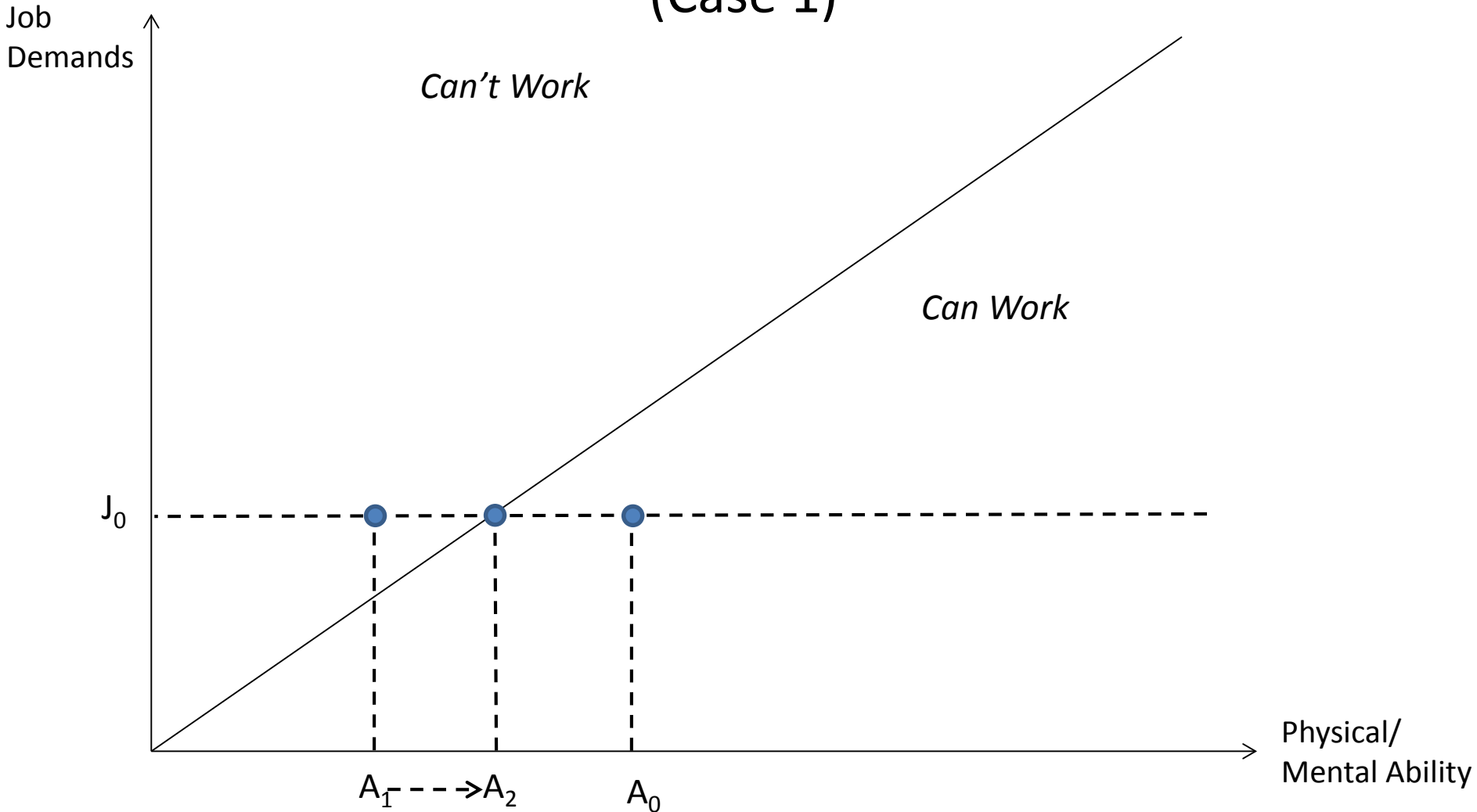


Health Shock Reduces Work Ability

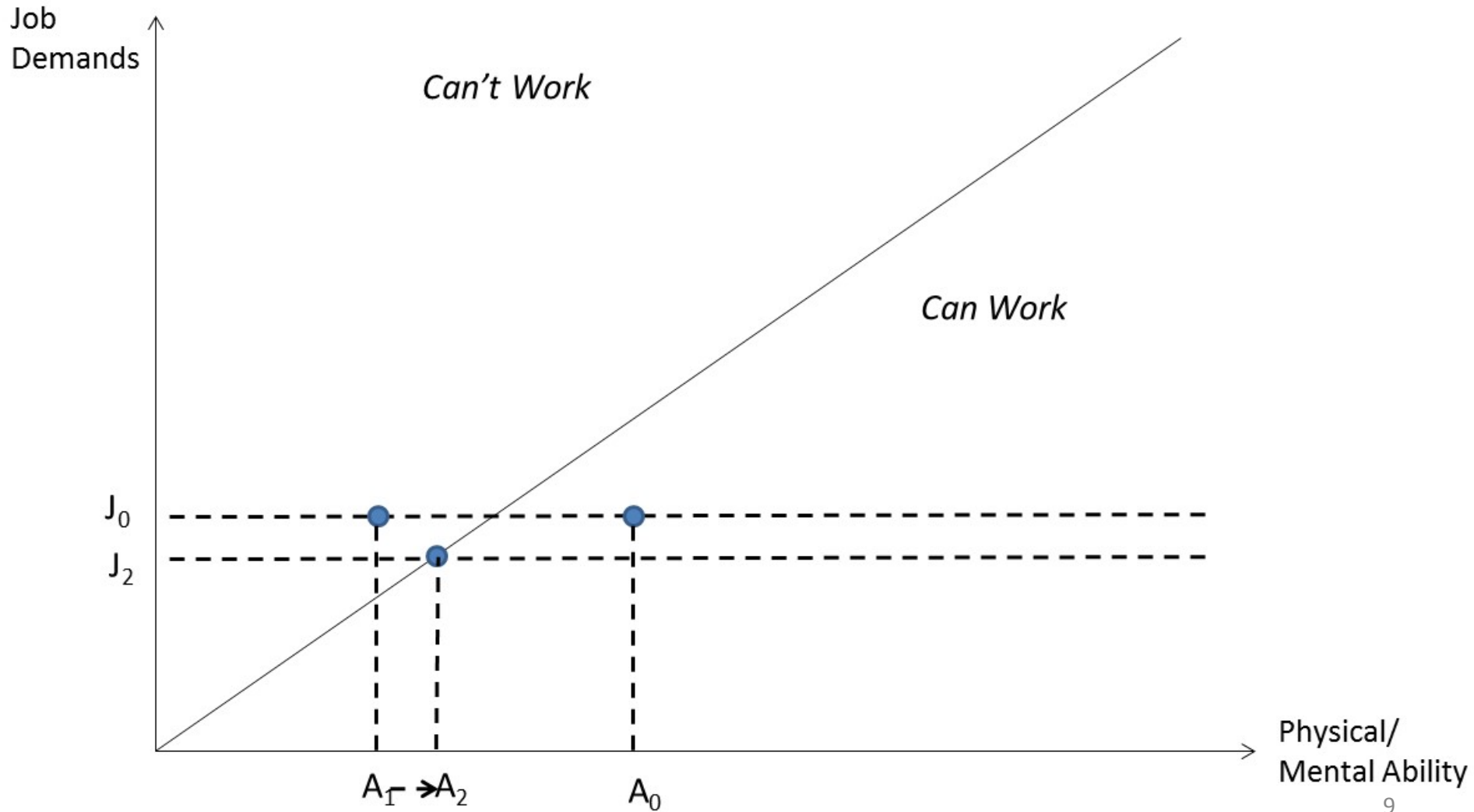


Accommodation Restores Some Ability

(Case 1)



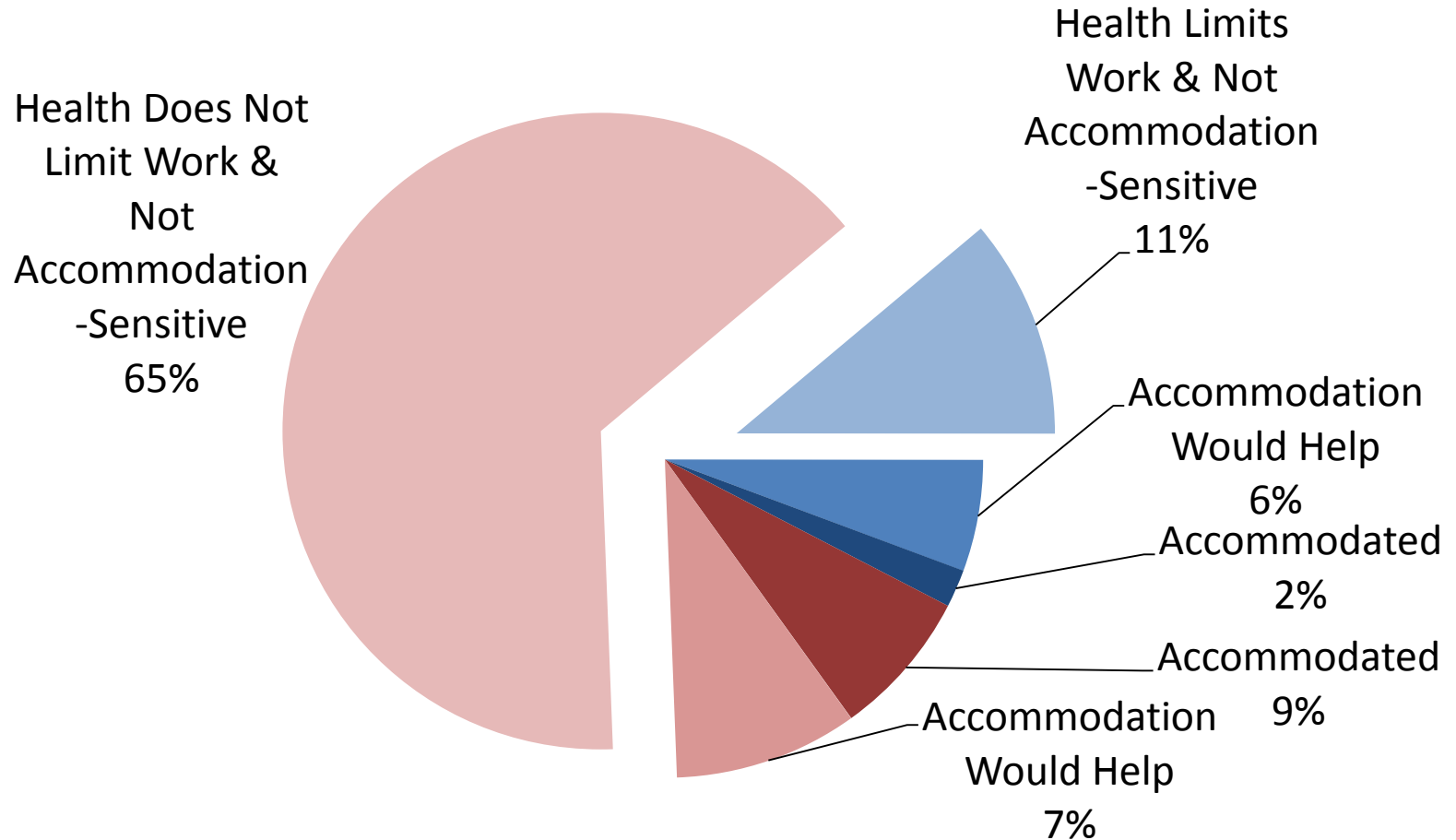
Accommodation Adjusts Job Demands and Restores Some Ability (Case 2)



Accommodation Required under *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*

- Mandates that employers provide “reasonable accommodation” of disabled workers except in cases of “undue hardship”
- Employers do not have to provide the *specific* accommodation requested by the employee
- Reach of ADA was initially limited by strict interpretation of disability by the courts
- 2008 Amendments attempted to correct this

24% Accommodation-Sensitive; Of those, 46% Percent Accommodated



Types of Accommodation

Type of accommodation	% of current accommodated working for someone (RAND ALP)	
Allow more breaks or rest periods	26.5	<i>Time</i>
Allow arrival or departure change	47.1	
Shorten work day	19.9	
Change the job to something can do	11.5	<i>Work change</i>
Help learn new skills	43.2	
Get someone to help you	38.7	<i>Equipment/ assistance</i>
Get special equipment for job	17.9	
Arrange special transportation	3.8	
Other	11.6	

Types of Accommodation

Type of accommodation	% of current accommodated working for someone (RAND ALP)	% of accommodated at onset health limits work (HRS)
Allow more breaks or rest periods	26.5	37.3
Allow arrival or departure change	47.1	37.2
Shorten work day	19.9	27.9
Change the job to something can do	11.5	33.2
Help learn new skills	43.2	12.2
Get someone to help you	38.7	36.6
Get special equipment for job	17.9	15.1
Arrange special transportation	3.8	4.3
Other	11.6	21.9

Work change accommodation most effective at retaining older workers*

Type of Accommodation	Effect on Working Within Two Years of Onset
Any Accommodation	0.150** (0.0668)
Time	-0.003 (0.0597)
Work Change	0.133** (0.0601)
Equipment/Assistance	-0.0130 (0.0591)
Other	-0.0503 (0.0604)

Mean Dependent Variable: 0.41

* *Caveat: No effect on working within four years, or on applying for or receiving disability insurance.*

Directions for Future Research

- Unpack “work change” effect: can we achieve the same thing with job training?
- How many successful disabled workers change employers rather than obtain accommodation?
- What are predictors for who is most likely to successfully change jobs? (Cognitive flexibility; age, education and work experience)