

98

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORIES OF PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA IN THE 1958 BRITISH BIRTH COHORT**

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**Objectives** This analysis compares the employment histories of people with and without asthma, stratified by sex.

**Methods** Participants of the 1958 British birth cohort with an occupational history and some asthma information from ages 7, 11, 16, 33 and 42 were included (n=9881). Employment was defined as a job, a period of child/family care or a period of full-time education. Unemployment was a period out of employment due to unemployment, sickness/disability or other unspecified reasons. Non-parametric methods were used to determine differences in 1) ever being unemployed 2) duration of unemployment 3) number of unemployment periods and 4) number of jobs (by age 42) by asthma status (childhood asthma, severe childhood asthma and adult onset asthma).

**Results** (1) Men and women reporting asthma were no more likely to have ever been unemployed by age 42. (2) Men reporting 'adult onset asthma' spent marginally more time in unemployment than those never reporting asthma. Women reporting 'childhood asthma' and 'adult onset asthma' spent significantly more time in unemployment. (3) Men and women reporting asthma were no more likely to have had more unemployment periods by age 42 than those without asthma. (4) Women reporting 'adult onset asthma' were significantly more likely to have additional jobs by age 42 (p=0.002).

**Conclusions** There was little evidence to suggest that the employment histories of men were adversely affected by their asthma status. There was statistical evidence that asthma adversely affected women's employment histories but the actual effect was relatively small.