

# DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTIDISCIPLINARY LIFECOURSE APPROACH IN THE STUDY OF OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURES TO CARCINOGENS AND THEIR SOCIAL AETIOLOGY

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**Objectives** Occupational mobility has rarely been addressed as a determinant of exposure to deleterious working conditions. Our aim is to develop innovative approaches to identify critical periods of occupational life as well as relevant social pathways leading to the accumulation of carcinogenic exposures at work over the lifecourse.

**Methods** Our research is based on a permanent study conducted since March 2002 which enrolled 1010 incident cancer patients, mainly respiratory tumors. We combined face-to-face interviews of lifelong job experience, multidisciplinary expertise of exposures, and statistical methods borrowed from the fields of lifecourse epidemiology and demography to characterise occupational trajectories and their association with carcinogenic exposures at work.

**Results** A majority of patients (85%) experienced at least one period of occupational exposure and multiple carcinogenic exposures were very frequent (57%). Occupational mobility was difficult to capture through the strict comparison of first and last job held and return to original interviews was necessary to ensure the coherence of statistical constructs. Stable trajectories of low qualification level tended to accumulate more episodes of exposure. Moreover, deskilling processes, instability and discontinuity of job trajectories seemed to play an important role in the ability for workers to avoid exposure.

**Conclusions** Our innovative approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods borrowed from the fields of sociology, ergo-toxicology and epidemiology should allow better understanding of the social construction of lifelong experiences of carcinogenic exposures at work. It could be further expanded to study differential access to the right for compensation of occupational cancers.