

What's Next?

An investigation into how older
Australian physiotherapists view
their lives beyond retirement

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Background

- Shortage of 10 million healthcare workers by 2030 (WHO 2020)
- Physiotherapy is Australia's largest allied health profession (AHPRA 2021)
- AHPRA reported 7.8% of registered physiotherapists had passed retirement age (AHPRA 2021)





Literature Review

Theoretical Models

- Continuity Theory (Atchley 1989)
- Role Theory (Merton 1957)
- Life Course Perspective Theory (Elder et al. 2003)

Transition in other professions

- Nurses in the NT seeking non-clinical roles. “Working Retired” (Voit and Carson 2012)
- Poor retention among doctors (Joyce et al. 2015)

How do older Australian
physiotherapists around
retirement age envisage
their retirement?

Study Design

- Qualitative descriptive design
- Naturalistic and allowed everyone to tell their story
- COREQ checklist to guide
- Ethics approval was obtained (#205093)



Recruitment and Sampling



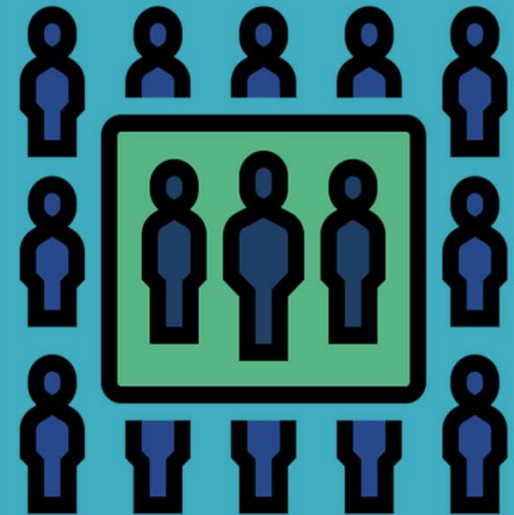
- Purposefully recruited from supervisors' network
- Snowball sampling used to identify participants from interviewees networks
- Participants were contacted via email



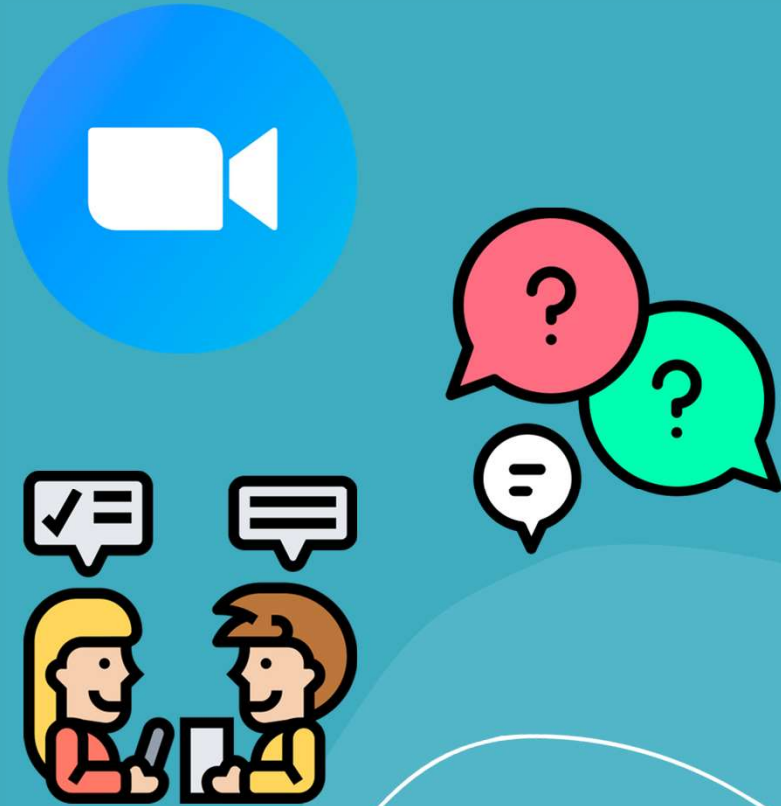
Recruitment and Sampling

Inclusion Criteria

- Over 55 years of age
- Cognitively able to participate
- Has internet access
- Physiotherapists who were registered and practised in Australia in the last 5 years
- Located in Australia



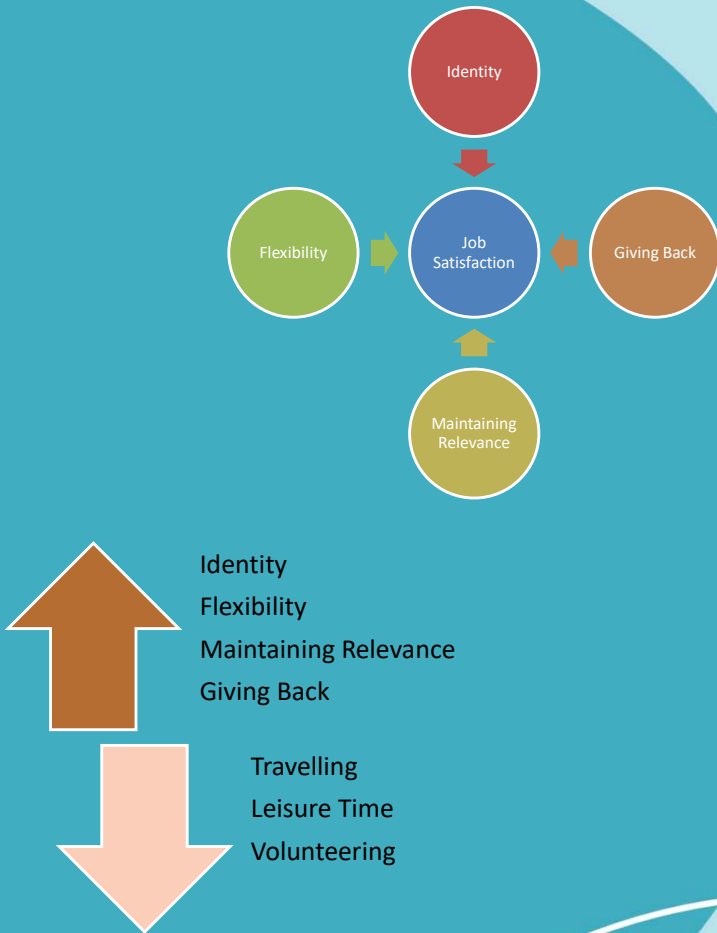
Data Collection



- Pilot testing with the whole research team
- Interviews conducted on Zoom
- Use of a semi-structured interview guide with 7 guiding questions and probing questions

Analysis

- Completed with the whole team to improve rigour and trustworthiness
- Braun and Clarkes (2013) 6 phase approach: familiarisation of data, generating codes, combining codes into themes, reviewing themes, determining significance and reporting findings



Results

Themes	Sub-themes
Identity	Structure in the day
	Identified as a physiotherapist for their whole career
	Grief and loss
Flexibility	Organisation level
	Increased work-life balance
Staying Relevant	Staying connected
	Preserving experience
	Valuing older workers
Giving Back	Mentoring and teaching younger physiotherapists
	Volunteering

Themes 1 & 2

Identity

“That's been my identity for probably 40-something years” - J

“...there was a feeling of emptiness.” - D

Flexibility

“...flexibility has been something that has been a wonderful part of keeping me in my career” - B

“I've got a really good combination of work and life” - J

Themes 3 & 4

Staying Relevant

“It [staying connected] certainly keeps me interested, keeps me learning. It keeps me feeling valued. It keeps me rewarded.” - B

“...to be honest, they can't buy my experience” - L

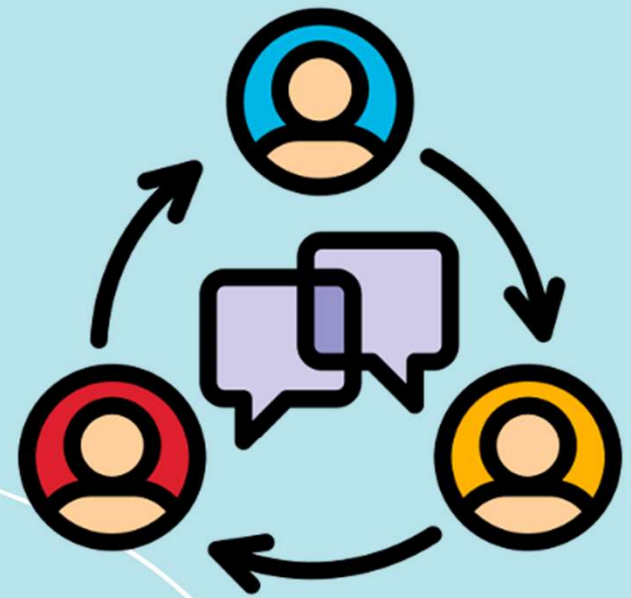
Giving Back

“My purpose in life is to gain joy and happiness from sharing my experiences in life” - D

“I'm trying to spread the ripple effect and give back” - B

Linking Back

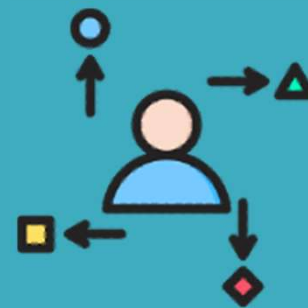
- Continuity theory (Atchley 1989) best fits the themes identified
- Successful adaption to retirement was due to relationships they had built, participation in activities, framework of thinking and adaptive skills.
- Physiotherapists strive to maintain identity, have flexibility, stay relevant and continue to give back



So What?

Employers

- Education and supervision of newer clinicians
- Flexible working hours and part-time options

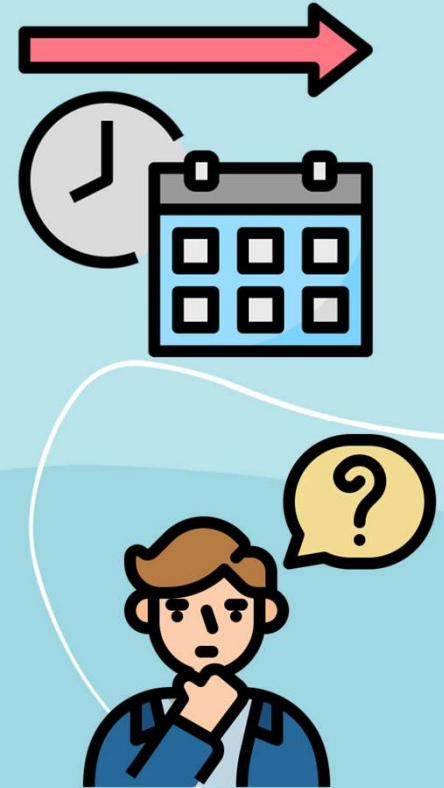


Older physiotherapists

- Build networks with others and find ways to give back
- Provide mutual support to one another



Limitations & Future Directions



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Thank you!

Interview Guide

Stage of Transtheoretical Model (Prochashka and Diclemente 1997)	Question
	<p>Can you tell me about your decision to choose a career in physiotherapy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why did you choose this particular role? - What different types of roles have you had? - How many years have you been practicing in Australia?
Pre-contemplation	<p>What are your current thoughts on retirement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you plan it? - How far away is retirement for you?
Contemplation	<p>What are some influencing factors surrounding your decision to retire?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why are you choosing to continue working or leaving the profession - Do you think you could continue to work? - Do you see yourself contributing back to the profession after retirement?
Preparation	<p>Have you heard of the term “working retired”? How do you feel about working after retirement?</p>
Action	<p>What actions have you taken to plan for your retirement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your approach to financial planning? - Can you tell me about the process from thinking about it to actually retiring?
Maintenance	<p>How do you think you will feel when you are retired?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you feel about leaving work? - Do you think your plans will change further into your retirement? - What do you plan on spending your time doing when you retire?
	<p>What rewards and challenges have you come across since you started this retirement journey?</p>