



Overview of back pain cases in Singapore from 2013 - 2015



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Introduction



60 - 90 % of people are estimated to suffer from lower back pain at some point in their life with majority attributed to work¹. In Great Britain, as well as the EU, it was reported that lower back pain was a major cause of ill health and socioeconomic problems such as disability, high healthcare costs as well as absence from work^{1,2}.

Objective

To identify the profile of workers and work activities which posed high risk of back injury in Singapore.

Methodology

Cases which sustained more than 3 days of medical leave and which were reported to the Ministry of Manpower between 2013 to 2015 were analysed.

Conclusion

More needs to be done to prevent work-related back disorders in Singapore. Impact on productivity is high as 50% took 4 – 7 days of medical leave.

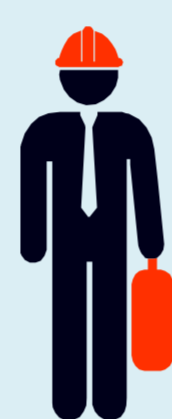
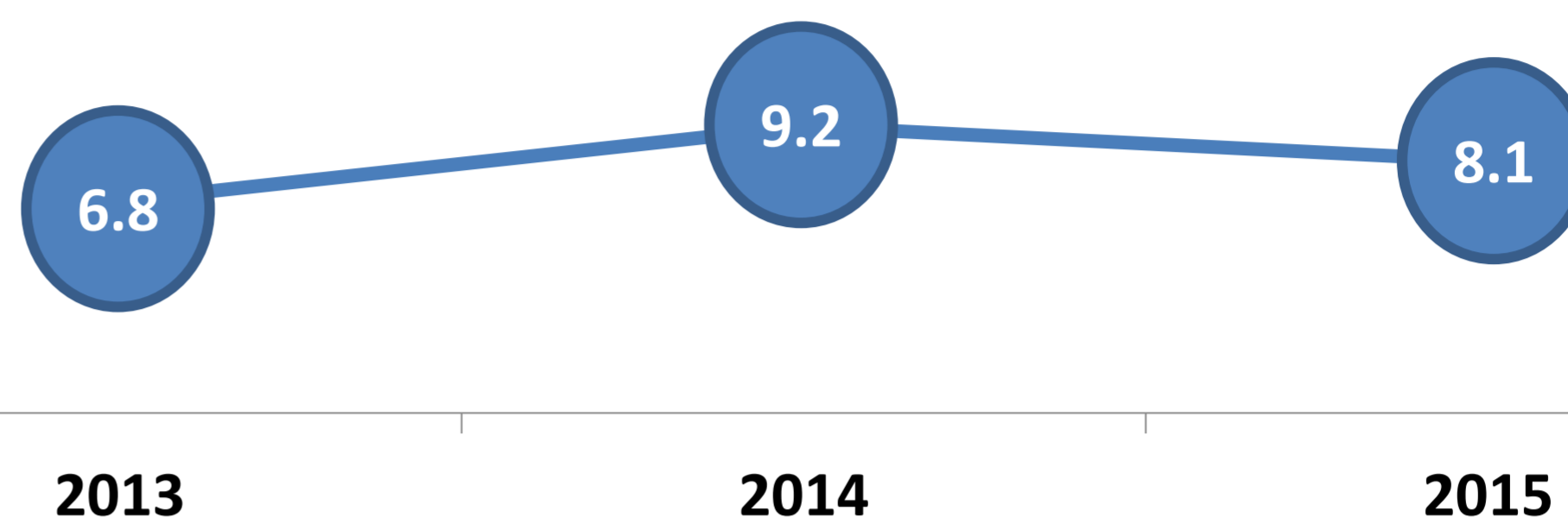
As affected workers are relatively young, the risk of recurrence and disability would affect their future work ability³.

References

1. Wong SH, Choy KK. A Review of Back Injury Cases Notified to the Ministry of Manpower from 2011 to 2012. *Ann Acad Med Singapore*. 2015 Jul;44(7):244-51.
2. Health and Safety Executive, 2015 Available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/Statistics/causdis/musculoskeletal/msd.pdf>. Accessed on 1 April 2016
3. Coole C, Drummond A, Watson PJ, Radford K What Concerns Workers with Low Back Pain? Findings of a Qualitative Study of Patients Referred for Rehabilitation. *J Occup Rehabil*. 2010 Dec; 20(4): 472-480

Results

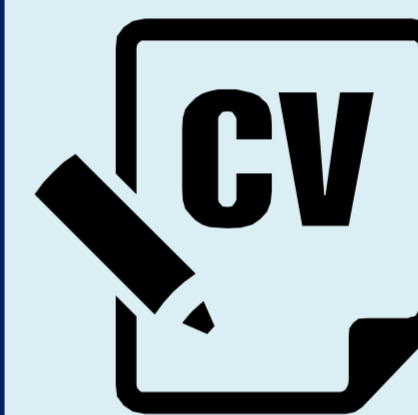
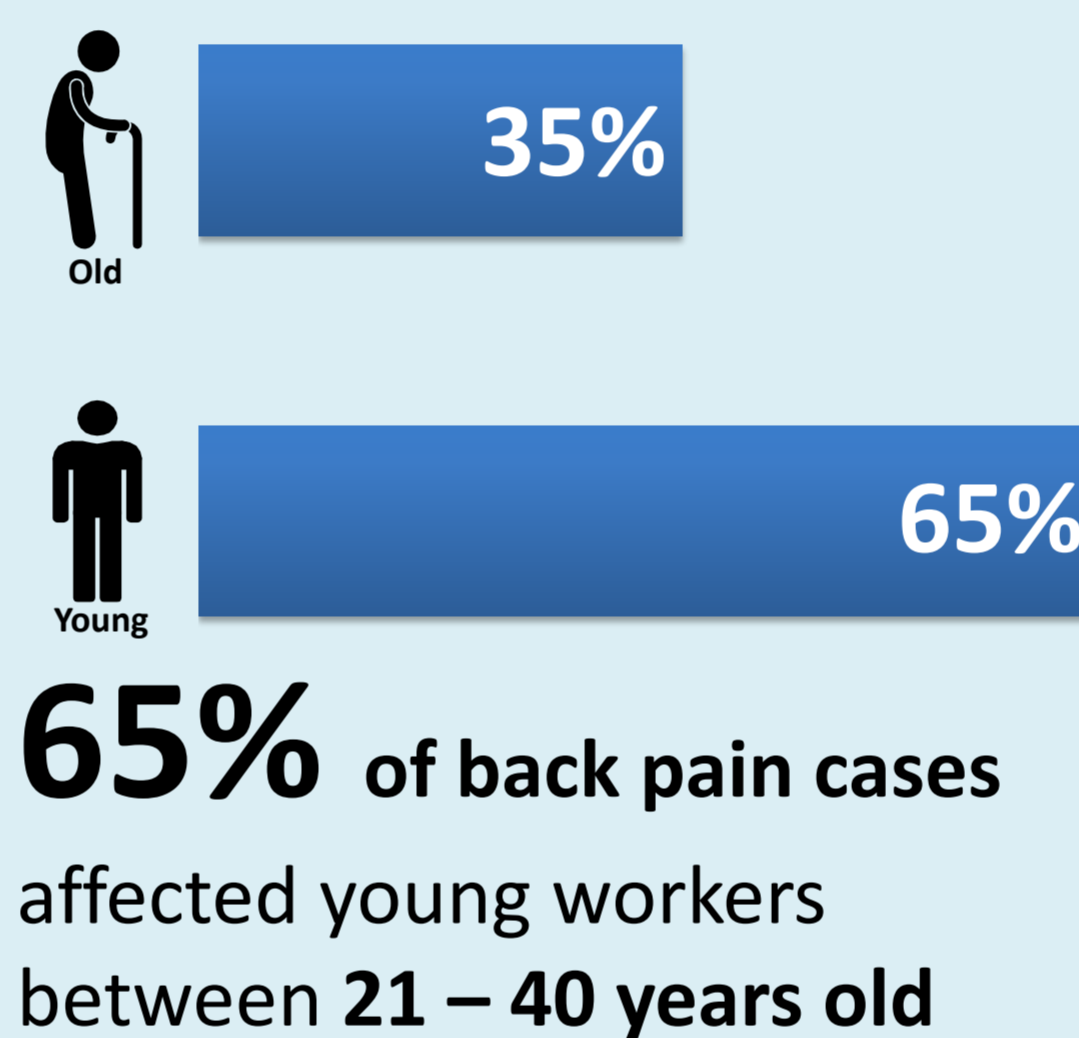
Back pain prevalence rates (per 100,000 employed persons)



76% of back pain cases involved male workers



8 in 10 back pain cases involved manual workers



More than quarter of back pain cases happened within 1st year of employment



1 in 2 workers were given 4 to 7 days of MC for their back injury.



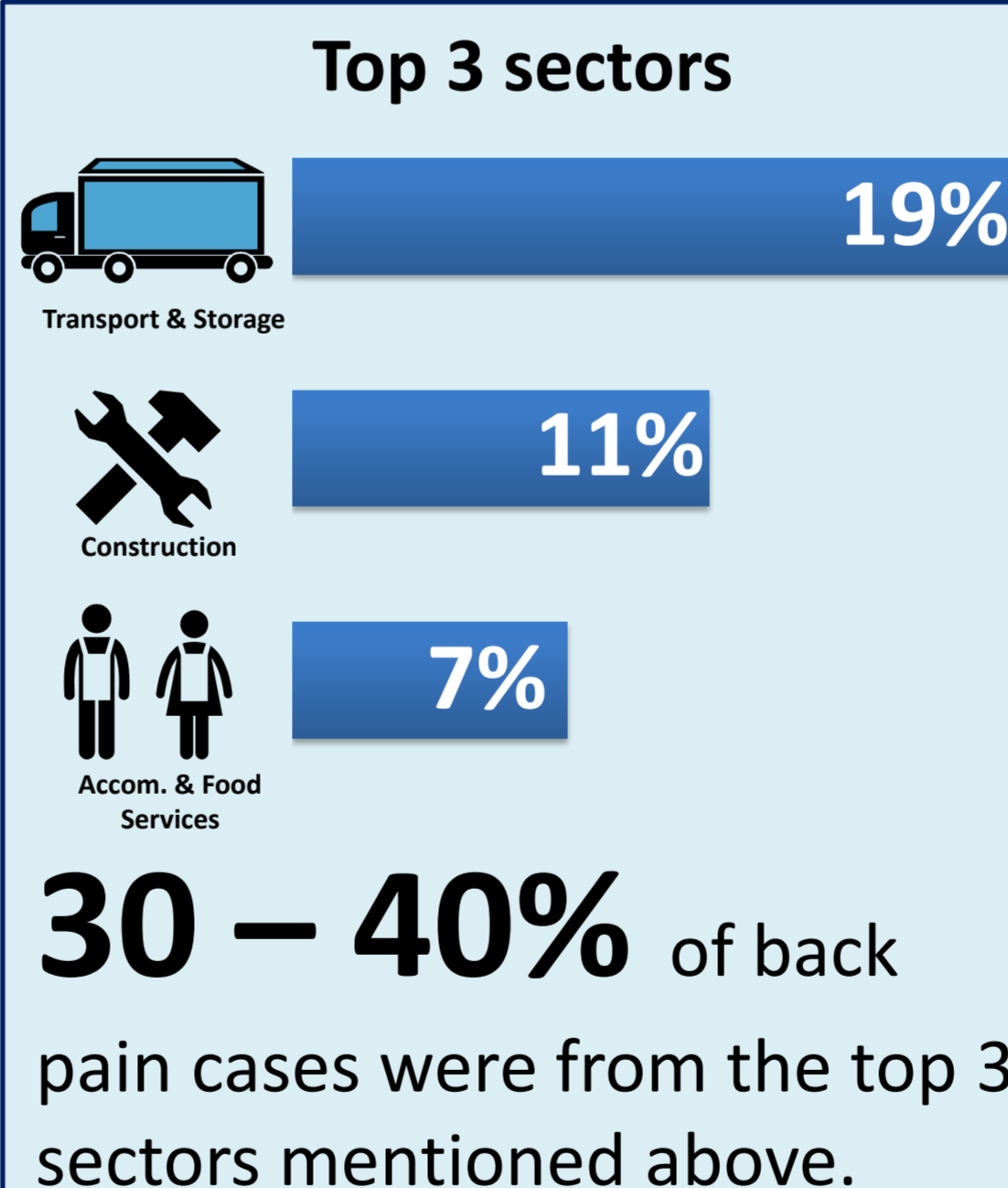
Transport & Storage



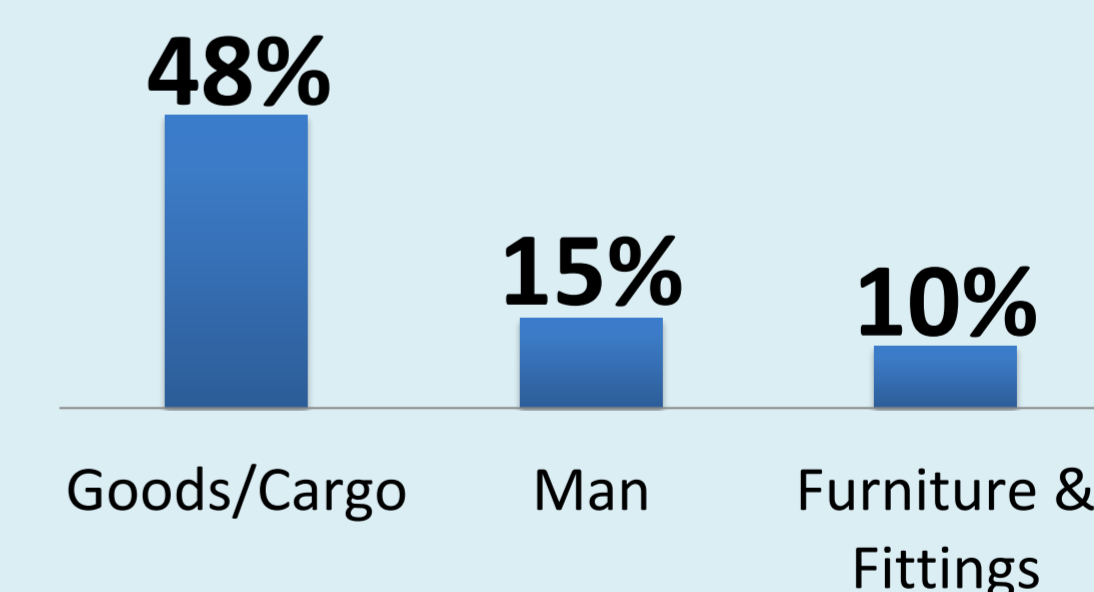
Construction



Accom. & Food Services



Top 3 Incident Agents



48% of back pain cases were caused by Goods & Cargo



Manual Handling



Bending/Twisting



Awkward Posture

