

Introduction

- People with Parkinson's disease (PD) exit the workforce on average 5 years earlier than people without PD due to motor and non-motor symptoms.^{1,2}
- Decreased employment in people with PD results in significant individual and societal costs, including financial instability.³

Objectives

- To review existing resources with input from clinical and community expert stakeholders.
- To assess needs for improved resources and interventions for people with PD and their healthcare teams.

Methods

- Resources were gathered through gray literature using Google, peer-reviewed literature using PubMed, and with input from clinical experts in vocational rehabilitation, occupational medicine, and social work.
- Emergent themes were identified from the data sources using conventional content analysis techniques and multiple coders for triangulation of findings.

Results Overview and Discussion

- Peer-reviewed research does not present results on many of the issues that are key concerns of people with PD.
- The complex decision of maintaining work vs. retiring should balance factors related to quality of life, type of work, severity of symptoms, and support/culture of the workplace.
- Employment-related problems expressed by people with PD vary greatly from person to person.
- Interventions should be adaptable, individualized, and tailored to one's unique needs.

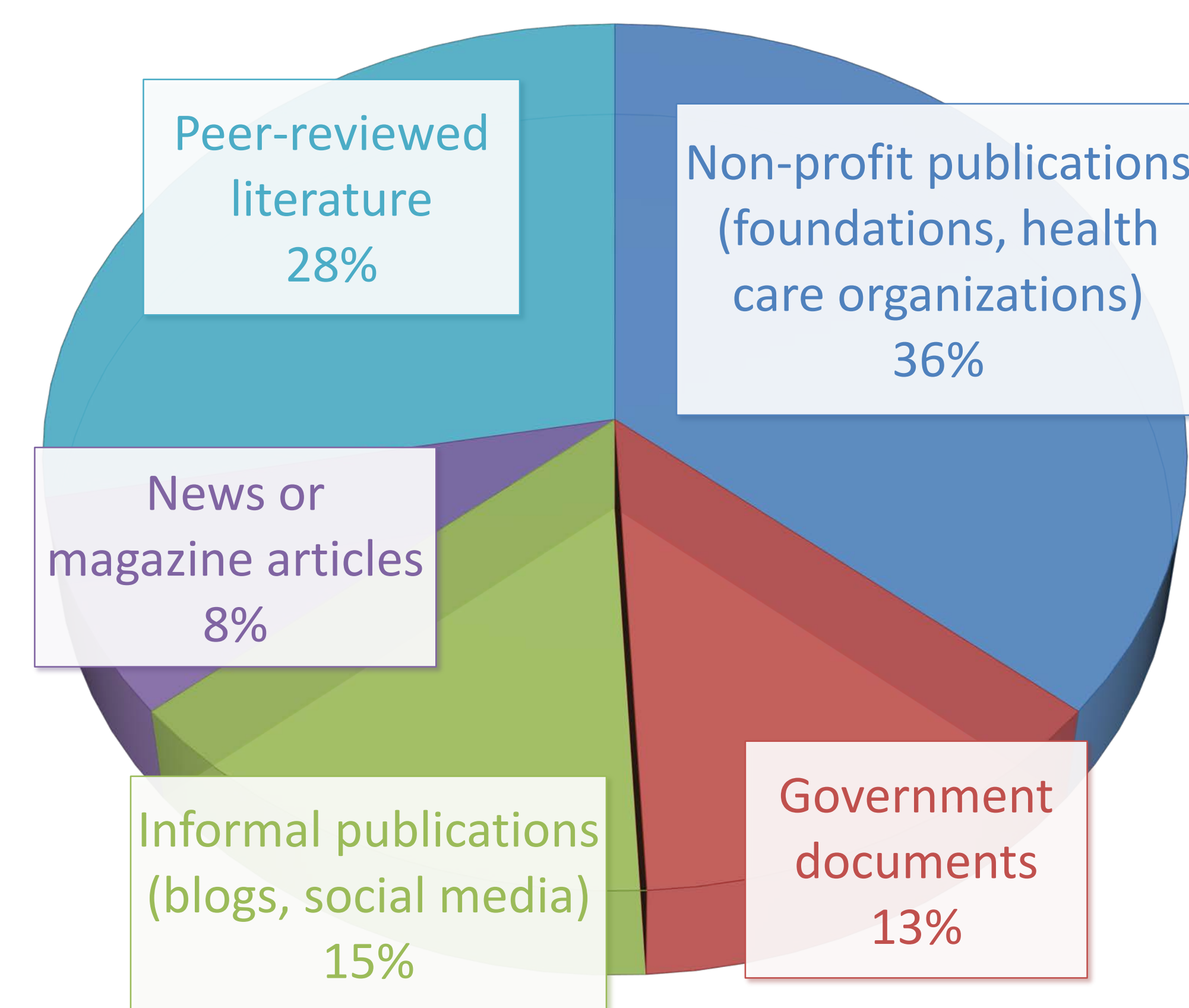
References

1. Gustafsson H, Nordstrom P, Strahle S, Nordstrom A. Parkinson's disease: a population-based investigation of life satisfaction and employment. *J Rehabil Med*. 2015;47(1):45-51.
2. Murphy R, Tubridy N, Kevelighan H, O'Riordan S. Parkinson's disease: how is employment affected? *Ir J Med Sci*. 2013;182(3):415-419.
3. Kowal SL, Dall TM, Chakrabarti R, Storm MV, Jain A. The current and projected economic burden of Parkinson's disease in the United States. *Mov Disord*. 2013;28(3):311-318.

Results

KEY FINDINGS: 1. There is a gap between patient-facing online content and existing research on PD and employment.
2. Data suggest that people with PD have employment issues that are not being met.

Description of PD Employment Resources



60 total resources related to PD and employment were found and compared.

Ten of the 15 peer-reviewed publications were based on research outside the United States (UK and Scandinavia).

Stakeholder Resource Review and Needs Assessment

Characteristics of Discussion Group Participants	Group 1: People with PD	Group 2: People with PD	Group 3: Clinicians
Total N	9	7	10
Age (mean)	55.9	56.6	N/A
Male (N)	4	5	N/A
Employed in full-time position (N)	5	4	N/A
Disclosed diagnosis at work (N)	7	4	N/A
Requested accommodation at work (N)	2	2	N/A

Roles of clinicians: Social work, Vocational Rehabilitation, Occupational Health, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, Neurology

Resource Content Comparison

	Theme	Online info	Peer-reviewed articles	Expert-curated content
Quality of life	Benefits of maintaining work	✓		
	Benefits of early retirement	✓		
Type of work	Disclosure	✓		✓
	Personal anecdotes	✓		
Symptom severity	Workplace accommodations	✓		✓
	Government support (SSDI/ADA)	✓		✓
Workplace support	Conflict resolution	✓		✓
	Factors affecting decision to retire	✓	✓	
	Impact of PD on work	✓	✓	
	Costs of early retirement	✓	✓	✓

Stakeholder Resource Review and Needs Assessment

Suggestions for Future Interventions

People with PD frequently do not know that social workers or rehabilitation counselors can help.

Each individual with PD needs to consider the economy of early retirement including potential reduced salary, benefits that may be available such as SSDI, and costs of maintaining health insurance.

Flexible tiered interventions will allow individuals to find information when they need it.

Vocational rehabilitation can help with the individualized decision making about how employment is impacted by and impacts type of work, effectiveness and safety of employment, quality of life, symptom severity, and workplace support or culture.