



Career Transitions & Accessibility in the Canadian Federal Public Service

Final Research Report

August 31, 2021

Contents

1. Executive summary	1
2. Project mandate, team, background, and rationale	3
2.1 Project mandate and team	3
2.2 Background	4
2.3 Rationale	4
2.4 Organization of report	5
3. Data collection and analysis	5
3.1 Data collection	5
3.2 Participant Recruitment	6
3.3 Final participant numbers	7
3.4 Data analysis	8
a) Interviews and focus groups	8
b) Survey	8
c) Case studies	9
3.5 Research limitations	9
4. Research Findings	10
a) Introduction	10
b) Demographic Information	10
4.1 Environmental Scan of the FPS	10
a) Literature Review: Worthwhile practices to enhance accessibility of career transitions	10
b) Our findings: Environmental scan of the FPS	12
i) Policies and practices currently in place in the FPS to support employment accessibility	12
ii) Key worthwhile practices in the FPS	14
4.2 Into the FPS - Exploring the external hiring process and onboarding transitions	14
a) Introduction	14
b) Literature Review	14
i) External Hiring Process	14
ii) Onboarding	15
c) Our findings: External hiring process	16
i) Self-identification – reasons for and against and its impact on the experience of the hiring process	16

ii) Barriers to accessibility in the external hiring processes	17
iii) Facilitators to accessibility in the external hiring processes	18
iv) Managers' perspectives on the accessibility of the external hiring process	19
d) Our findings: Onboarding – barriers and facilitators to accessibility.....	19
i) Barriers to accessibility of onboarding.....	19
ii) Non-existent or poor onboarding	22
iii) Facilitators to accessibility of onboarding	22
iv) Managers' perspectives on the accessibility of onboarding.....	22
e) Our findings: Enhancing accessibility of transitioning into the FPS – the ideas of applicants, employees with disabilities, and managers.....	23
f) Key issues from our findings and their implications for transitioning into the FPS	24
4.3 Within the FPS - Exploring promotions, lateral moves and return-to-work transitions.....	25
a) Introduction.....	25
b) Literature Review	26
i) Promotions and lateral moves	26
ii) Return-to work (RTW).....	27
c) Our findings: Promotions and lateral moves – barriers and facilitators to accessibility	28
i) Barriers to accessibility of promotions and lateral moves	28
ii) Impacts on employees of barriers to promotions and lateral moves	32
iii) Facilitators to accessibility of promotions and lateral moves	32
iv) Impacts on employees of facilitators for promotions and lateral moves	33
v) Self-identifying and trust - impact on career advancement.....	34
vi) Managers' challenges to implementing and improving accessible promotion transitions	35
vii) Human resources staff perspectives on the challenges managers face to implementing and improving accessible career transition practices.....	36
d) Our findings: Return-to work (RTW) transition	37
i) Barriers to accessibility of RTW transitions and their impacts on employees.....	37
ii) Facilitators to accessibility of RTW transitions	38
iii) Self-identifying during the RTW transition and its impact on employees	38
e) Our findings: Systemic and cultural factors that impact career transition accessibility across the FPS.....	38
f) Our findings: Enhancing accessibility of career transitions within the FPS – the ideas of employees with disabilities, managers, and human resources staff	39
g) Key issues from our findings and their implications for transitioning within the FPS	41

- 4.4 Out of the FPS - Exploring the separation transition and its reasons44**
 - a) Introduction.....44
 - b) Literature Review.....44
 - i) Separation or turnover intention.....44
 - c) Our findings: Reasons for separation and the separation transition45
 - i) Reasons for thinking of separating, staying, and deciding to separate45
 - ii) Accessibility of the separation process for transitioning out of the FPS.....47
 - iii) Barriers to accessibility of the separation transition47
 - iv) Impacts on employees of barriers in the separation transition48
 - v) Facilitators to accessibility of the separation transition and their impact on employees.....48
 - vi) Self-identification while working in the FPS – perspectives of former employees48
 - d) Key issues from our findings and their implications for transitioning out of the FPS48
- 5. Key Recommendations49**
 - 5.1 Introduction49
 - Recommendation 1: Address managers’ unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes about disabilities, particularly nonvisible disabilities, through enhanced training and support of managers50
 - Recommendation 2: Improve the implementation of accessibility policies and practices in order to bolster employee confidence that such policies and practices will be effectively applied across the FPS51
 - Recommendation 3: Address the inconsistency in the quality of key transition accessibility practices51
 - Recommendation 4: Streamline onerous policies and procedures that create barriers to effective transitions52
 - Recommendation 5: Support effective transitions by creating accessibility-related Transition Resource positions and implementing more mentorship programs52
- 6. References.....53**
- 7. Appendix.....60**
 - 7.1 Interview, Survey, and Focus Group Demographic Data60
 - 7.2 Data Sources for Into, Within, and Out of the FPS Transitions64
 - 7.3 Flow charts showing Disability Type and Impact.....67

1. Executive summary

The *Career Transitions and Accessibility in the Federal Public Service* project was implemented by the Research, Education, Accessibility, and Design (READ) Initiative and a group of faculty researchers at Carleton University, with funding from Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC). The project had the primary goal of investigating the key transition points unique to the Canadian Federal Public Service (FPS) for persons with disabilities. These transition points are necessary to create conditions for a successful employment life cycle of an employee with disabilities, such as effective onboarding, retention and career development, transition support, and mentorship.

The project engaged persons with disabilities and other experts to realise the following objectives:

- Identify and examine barriers and facilitators to accessibility that affect employees with disabilities during key career transitions in the FPS;
- Glean new evidence and advance ongoing research that will lead to the development of transition-related standards and accessibility-confident practices that support and facilitate the journey for employees with disabilities throughout the employment lifecycle; and
- Identify targeted actions and interventions to help inform the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada* (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019a) as well as the development of relevant employment standards under the *Accessible Canada Act 2019*.

To accomplish these objectives, using an accessibility lens, we conducted one-on-one interviews, a quantitative survey, and focus groups with persons with disabilities who had transitioned into, within, and out of the FPS. They were asked about the accessibility of the following transitions: hiring process and onboarding (into); promotions, lateral moves, and return-to-work (within); and separation (out of), including the barriers and facilitators, and what success would look like if these transitions were fully accessible.

Through further focus groups, managers and human resources staff with and without lived experience of disabilities were invited to share their perspectives on the accessibility of key career transitions into and within the FPS for applicants and employees with disabilities.

The interview and survey questions were informed by a review of the literature on the barriers and facilitators for persons with disabilities for employment and career transitions and an environmental scan of existing FPS accessibility policies and practices. The environmental scan also included discussions with key contacts in the FPS about its existing accessibility enhancement activities and future plans. The interview and survey questions were designed to provide insight into the career transition experiences of persons with disabilities, their perceptions of the barriers and facilitators for these transitions, and the impact of these barriers and facilitators on their experience. They were also designed to provide insight into the perceived impact of disability disclosure (self-identification) on the experience of career transitions.

For the focus groups with persons with disabilities and with managers and human resources staff with and without lived experience of disabilities, questions were developed based on the key themes that merged from the interview and survey data. Questions invited discussion on the accessibility of the hiring process, promotion, and separation transition around further accessibility challenges and enablers including the viability of transition specialists to be resources for employees and managers.

Through our research findings we identified key themes which speak to interconnected issues relevant to the need for enhanced manager accessibility confidence, the tackling of unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes, and the need for accessibility policies, processes, and practices that will instill employee confidence. Within these themes, the identified underlying findings include:

- Managers' lack of accessibility-related knowledge and skills;
- Onerous and complicated hiring processes and inadequate onboarding;

- Unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes;
- Low level of employee confidence in accessibility policies and practices;
- Inconsistent processes;
- Low level of employee confidence in management;
- Lack of effective employee support for the separation transition; and
- Separation intention related to unsupportive workplace environments.

Participants also identified certain facilitators that supported accessibility of their transitions into, within, and out of the FPS:

- Accommodation requests for the hiring process met fully in a timely manner;
- Co-worker “buddy” system to facilitate onboarding to a new position;
- Manager and team conscious of inclusion and accessibility, supportive, and accepting;
- Managers make accessibility conversations with all employees the norm;
- Manager with disabilities or a manager that has other employees with disabilities;
- Sponsorship through the Mentorship Plus program; and
- Accessibility, Accommodations, and Adapted Computer Technology (AAACT) team’s support.

We acknowledge that the FPS has already commenced its journey towards enhanced accessibility through a stated commitment and evolving discussions and collaborations. However, more action is required, for instance, managers involved in our focus groups expressed how they valued accessibility, but they often lacked the support from FPS to be effective. Managers shared having the desire to be accommodating of employees with disabilities, however this can be impossible due to the existing FPS systems and structures. More action is also required on balancing attention paid to current employees with that of new recruits with disabilities - longer-serving employees with disabilities

reported feeling left behind due to the strategic focus on hiring 5000 new persons with disabilities by 2025. Manager and employee confidence in the FPS could be enhanced if there was supportive and inclusive leadership, transparency and consistency around policies and practices, respect of privacy, and readily available accessibility resources to facilitate transitions.

This report offers five key recommendations broken down into 22 sub-recommendations for translating the findings into action:

- Address managers’ unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes about disabilities, particularly nonvisible disabilities, through enhanced training and support of managers;
- Improve the implementation of accessibility policies and practices in order to bolster employee confidence that such policies and practices will be effectively applied across the FPS;
- Address the inconsistency in the quality of key transition accessibility practices;
- Streamline onerous policies and procedures that create barriers to effective transitions; and
- Support effective transitions by creating accessibility-related Transition Resource positions and implementing more mentorship programs.

The recommendations offer opportunities for the FPS to build capacity, competence, and expertise around transition support, disability disclosure, and accommodations to enhance the accessibility of transitioning into, within and out of the FPS. They also present an opportunity for innovative collaboration between employees with disabilities and management to implement accessibility enhancement activities for a more inclusive work environment. As is commonly stated in the Disability community: “Nothing about us without us!”

2. Project mandate, team, background, and rationale

2.1 Project mandate and team

The purpose behind the research project *Career Transitions and Accessibility in the Federal Public Service (FPS)* was to explore the barriers and facilitators to workplace career transition accessibility¹ at key transition points into, within, and out of the FPS ecosystem for employees with disabilities. The findings from this research can help inform the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada* (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019a) as well as the development of relevant employment standards under the *Accessible Canada Act 2019*.

The project was funded by Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC) for one-year (2020-2021) and was proposed, developed, and conducted by the READ (Research, Education, Accessibility, and Design) Initiative and a group of faculty researchers at Carleton University.

The project team includes five Principal Investigators, a Project Officer and a Research Lead, and 11 Research Assistants. The Project has partnerships with two national organizations, the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) and the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW). The project was reviewed and approved by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board.

Key project outputs for ASC involve:

- Literature and environmental scan review of the current state of supports for transition into, within, and out of the FPS, with particular focus on select sub-populations;
- Survey, interview and focus group methods for use within the project to gather data relevant to transition through an accessibility lens and with consideration of lived experience of disability;
- Recommendations of indicators that will be useful

in measuring progress on improving the quality and support of transitions for employees with disabilities;

- Final research report to be shared with key partners and made publicly available in accessible format in both official languages; and
- Presentation of research findings to the relevant Accessibility Standards Canada staff and other stakeholders.

Principle Investigators:

Tara Connolly, Assistant Director Research & Development, READ Initiative, Carleton University

Lorraine Godden, Instructor, Faculty of Public Affairs, Carleton University

Janet Mantler, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Carleton University

Linda Schweitzer, Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University

Boris Vukovic, Director, READ Initiative, Carleton University

Research Team:

Samantha Butler, Research Lead

Shamarukh Chowdhury, Research Assistant

Mahdi Moshirian Farahi, Research Assistant

Rielle Haig, Research Assistant

Margaret Lyons-MacFarlane, Research Assistant

Simona Mackovichova, Research Assistant

Darby Mallory, Research Assistant

Joy McLeod, Research Assistant

Katja Newman, Research Assistant

Cathrine Pettersen, Research Assistant

Mirvat Sanaallah, Project Officer

Cassandra Starosta, Research Assistant

Shreena Thapa, Research Assistant

¹ In this report career transition accessibility means persons with disabilities can participate fully in career transitions without experiencing barriers.

2.2 Background

In consultations for the *Accessible Canada Act 2019*, the government (referred to as the Federal Public Service (FPS) from hereon) was tasked, among other things, to lead by example. Creating accessible pathways for all FPS employees with disabilities from start to finish of their career trajectory with the FPS is thus an essential step for demonstrating leadership in accessibility.

The FPS is currently engaged in a number of employment related initiatives relevant to the *Accessible Canada Act 2019*, including the following:

- Working on the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada*
- A hiring target of 5000 persons with disabilities by 2025
- Establishing an internship program for persons with disabilities

Other targeted recommendations from the FPS's "What We Heard" consultations identified a need to strengthen supports for accommodations, recruitment, career development, and promotion for persons with disabilities (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019b). These findings indicate a need to better understand the experiences of career *transition* of persons with disabilities in the FPS. Career transition is defined "...as the period during which an individual is either changing roles (taking on different objective roles) or changing orientations to a role already had..." (Louis, 1980, pg. 330). Career transitions are a vital avenue for today's generation of workers who are seeking to increase their employability while balancing their psychological and home needs. The transition experience of persons with disabilities is understudied and is of vital importance to an organization's talent management, the personal well-being of their workers, and workers career success (Sullivan & Al Ariss, 2019).

2.3 Rationale

The *Accessible Canada Act 2019* was developed through a large consultation of more than 6000 Canadians. Of this, 39% of respondents stated that employment was an important area for improving accessibility (Treasury

Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019a). Employment is now one of the top seven priorities² in the *Accessible Canada Act 2019*. Participants of this large consultation indicated that barriers existed for persons with disabilities in obtaining jobs, succeeding in their work, and being promoted as leaders. Emphasis was also given to the need for employers to understand the importance of workplace adjustments (or accommodations) and to expand existing requirements to make the workplace more accessible.

Research shows that persons with disabilities face barriers at many points along the employment trajectory, including preparation, hiring, retention, and promotion. These barriers take energy to navigate and can translate into significant gaps between persons with disabilities and their peers. Specific to the FPS, the Employment Equity section in the *Public Service of Canada for Fiscal Year 2017 to 2018 Report* (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019c) highlighted the following:

- The rate of hiring persons who identified with a disability did not match the availability of those represented in the workforce;
- The rate of retention of employees identifying with a disability was lower than that of their peers; and
- The rate of promotion of employees who identify with a disability is lower than their representation in the public service.

The quality of transitions throughout an employment journey are critical to the health and wellness of both employees and the settings in which they work. Transitions and the mechanism and resources available to support those transitions are a key element in creating accessible work environments. Based on current information collected by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat we know that employees with disabilities are experiencing barriers to transitions into, throughout, and exiting the FPS. This project examined the accessibility

2 The other six priorities are: the built environment; information and communication technologies; communication, other than information and communication technologies; the procurement of goods, services, and facilities; the design and delivery of programs and services; and transportation.

of critical transitions for employees in the FPS to help inform the development of employment accessibility standards.

2.4 Organization of report

The rest of this report, following the data collection and analysis section, is focused on the study's findings and recommendations. The findings section is divided into two main parts: Environmental Scan and Career Transitions. The environmental scan includes: a literature review of worthwhile practices for enhancing transition accessibility and our findings that highlight the existing policies and practices that the FPS already has in place to support employment accessibility.

The part about career transitions is divided into three key transition sections: Into the FPS (hiring and onboarding), Within the FPS (promotions, lateral moves, return-to-work transitions), and Out of the FPS (separation). Each of these sections includes: a literature review of career transition accessibility; our findings including the transition barriers, facilitators, and impact of self-identification (the Into the FPS section also includes the ideas of our study participants for enhancing accessibility, and the Within the FPS section also includes the perspectives of our study participants on the key systemic and cultural factors that are perceived to impact career transition accessibility as well as their ideas for enhancing accessibility); and key issues from our findings and the implications of those issues to the FPS. The report concludes with our five key higher order recommendations, including 22 sub-recommendations, for the FPS to consider for enhancing the accessibility of transitioning into, within, and out of the FPS.

3. Data collection and analysis

3.1 Data collection

The research for this project combined case study methodology, that draws on the lived experience of diverse employees with disabilities, with a literature review of previous research about career transitions for persons with disabilities, discussions with key contacts in the FPS about current and future accessibility

enhancement activities, and data from key publicly available studies generated by stakeholders in government and community³.

In order to explore the barriers and facilitators at transition points into, within, and out of the FPS ecosystem for employees with disabilities, across the employment lifecycle through an accessibility lens, three data collection methods, compatible with case study methodology, were used:

- one-on-one semi-structured interviews conducted on-line with persons with disabilities who were in the process of applying or who had recently applied to work at the FPS, who currently worked at the FPS, and who had separated from the FPS (participants could choose to be interviewed in either English or French),
- on-line screen reader friendly survey to persons with disabilities who were in the process of applying or who had recently applied to work at the FPS, who currently worked at the FPS, and who had separated from the FPS (participants could choose to do the survey in either English or French),
- focus groups conducted on-line with persons with disabilities who were in the process of applying or who had recently applied to work at the FPS, who currently worked at the FPS, and who had separated from the FPS, as well as with managers and human resources advisors and generalists with and without lived experience of disability, discussing questions around key themes that emerged from the interview and survey data (each focus group topic was offered in English and French).

3 Key publicly available studies include: *Employment: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada* (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019a); *Federal Accessibility Legislation - Technical analysis report* (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2018); *What We Heard: First Survey on the Draft Public Service Accessibility Strategy* (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2018); *What We Heard: Second Survey on the Draft Public Service Accessibility Strategy* (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2019b); and *Workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities in Canada* (Morris, 2019).

The interview and survey data collection instruments were developed with the input of persons with disabilities in the Fall 2020, and ethics clearance was granted by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board in December 2020. The focus group instrument was devised in March 2021 based on the key themes identified from the interview and survey data, and ethics clearance granted in April 2021.

The interviews and focus groups were conducted by the project’s research assistants after training was provided by the research lead and project officer. Interviews and focus groups were conducted on-line through Zoom and recorded with the participants’ permission. Accommodations were offered for accessible participation and 16.7% of the interviewees and 25% of the focus group participants requested and were provided with accommodation(s). Interview and focus group recordings were then transcribed using Nvivo Transcription and then the research assistants went through the transcriptions created by Nvivo to ensure they were accurate.

The interviews and survey were conducted from January to early April 2021, while the focus groups were conducted in the last two weeks of April 2021, except the ones with human resources staff which were conducted at the end of May 2021. Data analysis, including the use of Nvivo and SPSS, was conducted through May and June 2021, and the research report written through July and August 2021.

3.2 Participant Recruitment

Participants for the interviews, survey, and focus groups were recruited by project partners, National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) and the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW), and through the assistance of a key contact at the FPS in the Office of Public Service Accessibility, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. Participants were recruited by emailing the combined interview and survey invitation poster to the project partners’ communication networks and channels. Another 17 organizations were also recruited to help disseminate the invitation poster to

try further to reach potential participants who were in the process of applying or who had recently applied to work at the FPS, or who had separated from employment at the FPS for any reason (retirement, end of contract, another job outside the FPS, etc.). These organizations were:

Organizations
Accessible Media Inc.
Adecco
Algonquin College ⁴
Association of Public Service Alliance Retirees (APSAR)
BC Partners in Workforce Innovation (BC Win)
Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE)
Carleton University
Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD)
Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN)
Employment Networking Group (ENG)
La Cite College
Laval University
Neil Squire Society
Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)
Quebec Association for Equity and Inclusion in Post-Secondary Education (AQEIPS)
Saint Mary’s University
Waterloo University

The invitation poster to participate in the survey and/or one-on-one interview, that included the link to the survey and to the interview registration form, was sent to the partners and other organizations listed above to distribute through their communication channels on January 7, 2021.

The project team could not predict the exact number of persons with disabilities that would be recruited to participate in the survey and interviews due to the

⁴ Please note that the Disability and Careers Services offices of a total of 31 universities and 15 colleges across the country were contacted but only the 6 universities and colleges listed in the table responded to assist with participant recruitment.

recruitment method, whereby the interview/survey invitation poster was disseminated by organizations across their communication channels which have a wide, national reach. Persons who received the invitation poster were also encouraged to share it with others who they thought may be interested in participating; this snowballing effect also negated the prediction of exact final recruitment numbers. The final numbers were determined by how many participants registered voluntarily for the interview and/or survey after they read the invitation poster.

However, despite this recruitment method, it was possible to obtain an approximate idea of the number of participants who may be recruited for the survey and interviews from amongst current employees with disabilities within the FPS. According to the report, *Employment Equity in the Public Service of Canada for Fiscal Year 2019 to 2020* (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2021), 5.2% of the FPS's 214,120 core public administration employees self-identify as being a person with a disability. This means that there are 11,134 who self-identify as persons with disabilities. It is known, though, that not all persons with disabilities self-identify, therefore it can be assumed, given that approximately 22% of the Canadian population, 15 years and older, are persons with disabilities (Employment & Social Development Canada, 2021), that there is a higher percentage of persons with disabilities working in the FPS. So, the project team assumed, still conservatively, that 10% of employees are persons with disabilities bringing the number up to about 21,412. Then, assuming a return rate of 5%, it was possible that about 1070 current employees with disabilities, who self-identified or not to the FPS, could have registered to participate in either the survey or the interview or both.

3.3 Final participant numbers

The interviews were conducted by the end of March 2021 with 78 being completed in total:

- 8 interviews conducted with persons with disabilities who were in the process of applying or who had recently applied to work at the FPS;
- 69 interviews conducted with current employees with disabilities in the FPS (represents 0.65% of

the reported total number of the FPS core public administration employees with disabilities, 11,134 in 2019-20); and

- 1 interview conducted with a person with disabilities who had recently separated from the FPS.

The survey was closed on April 7, 2021 with 407⁵ completed in total:

- 13 surveys completed by persons with disabilities who were in the process of applying or who had recently applied to work at the FPS;
- 373 surveys completed by current employees with disabilities in the FPS (represents 3.5 % of the reported total number of the FPS core public administration employees with disabilities, 11,134 in 2019-20); and
- 21 surveys completed by former employees with disabilities of the FPS.

Ten focus groups were conducted covering six topics as listed below (the seventh topic about the return-to-work transition had to be cancelled in both English and French due to low registration), with a total of 40 participants with and without lived experience of disabilities (one participant attended two focus groups). The number of people who attended each is shown in brackets after the title of each focus group.

1. *Separating from the Federal Public Service permanently or for Long-Term Disability Leave: A discussion about accessibility.* For employees with

5 626 potential participants started the survey but only 410 met the qualifications to take part in the survey (i.e., gave consent to participate and identified as a person with a disability). 216 potential participants were excluded because they did not meet one or both qualifications. Of the 216, 105 gave consent but did not fill out the disability question (i.e., are you a person with a disability?), and thus were screened out. The remaining 111 potential participants who did not respond to the consent question were screened out, and thus also did not fill out the disability question. In sum, all 216 respondents who were excluded from the following analysis did not fill out the disability question. Of the 410 though, 3 respondents did not answer the question about their status in the FPS – applying, currently working, or separated – which followed the disability question and the consent, so they could not carry on with the survey and did not answer any of the questions. Therefore, the descriptive statistics are based on responses from the 407 qualified respondents.

disabilities who are currently separating from the Federal Public Service either permanently or to go on Long Term Disability leave and for former employees with disabilities (4 participants in the English focus group, but the French one was cancelled due to low registration).

2. *Applying to Work at the Federal Public Service from Outside the Federal Public Service: A discussion about accessibility.* For recent employees with disabilities working at the Federal Public Service since 2017 and for people with disabilities in the process of applying (5 participants – 3 in the English one and 2 in the French).
3. *Promotions Within the Federal Public Service: A discussion about accessibility.* For current employees with disabilities (13 participants in 3 focus groups – 10 in total in two English ones and 3 in the French one; a second English focus group was conducted as there was a waiting list for the first one).
4. *Hiring Persons with Disabilities into the Federal Public Service: A discussion about accessibility.* For current managers involved in external hiring (2 participants in the English one, but the French one was cancelled due to low registration).
5. *Promoting Employees with Disabilities within the Federal Public Service: A discussion about accessibility.* For current managers (7 participants in the English one, but the French one was cancelled due to low registration).
6. *Supporting managers in the hiring and career transitions of employees with disabilities in the Federal Public Service: The views of Human Resources Advisors and Generalists on accessibility.* For current Human Resources Advisors and Generalists who work in the disciplines of Staffing and Resources, Performance and Talent Management, Occupational Safety and Health, Disability Management and Duty to Accommodate, and Diversity, Inclusion and Employment Equity (10 participants – 5 in the English one and 5 in the French).

3.4 Data analysis

a) Interviews and focus groups

Thematic analysis of the interview and focus group data was selected because, from our research question, we are interested in examining the ways that persons with disabilities make meaning out of their experiences of the barriers and facilitators of career transitions, as well as the ways in which their experiences are informed by the structural and social contexts of the FPS where project participants work, have worked, or want to work (Evans, 2018). In addition, the qualitative data analytic software, Nvivo, was used to help inform the thematic analysis by looking at themes (codes) broken down by different attributes of the data, such as comfort level in disclosing disability at work broken down by disability impact (whether someone experiences their disability at work mildly, moderately, or severely), and broken down by single versus multiple disabilities and whether these disabilities are visible or invisible.

Thematic analysis is a way to identify and interpret patterns of meaning within a dataset and involves semantic (surface or explicit) and latent (interpretive) levels of analysis (Evans, 2018). While semantic analysis focuses on what participants say, latent analysis enables sense to be made of the data by interpreting it through consideration of the broader, underlying assumptions, or meanings (such as those of an ableist culture). Broader, underlying assumptions which exist for the project participants, or in the wider society, can be involved in informing what the project participants share.

A theme should capture something important about the data in relation to our research questions and “some level of patterned response or meaning” within the data should be represented by the theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pg. 82). The extent to which a theme addresses our overarching research questions determines its importance or significance, rather than the frequency of instances of a theme (Evans, 2018).

b) Survey

Most of the survey data were analyzed quantitatively using the data analytic software SPSS to produce

descriptive statistics on various breakdowns of the data, including by disability impact and complexity of disability (if respondents indicated that they experience two or more disability types and whether these disabilities are visible or nonvisible).

Some of the survey questions asked the respondents for their views on different topics which they typed into a text box. These text box answers were analysed thematically, with the help of Nvivo, in a similar manner to the interview and focus group data described above.

c) Case studies

Data from the interview, focus group, and survey were converged to obtain a holistic understanding of the experiences of career transition accessibility barriers and facilitators, and then cases that represent specific sub-populations from amongst all the participants were created. For each sub-population the essential components of their transitions in their employment journey that reflect key issues from the findings are described in the case studies.

3.5 Research limitations

As with any research study, there were specific limitations that should be disclosed and noted. The FPS is the largest employment ecosystem in the country. This study focused on a specific subset of employment-related issues relevant to persons with disabilities: transitions. However, even with the focus on the transitions, this study may not be able to represent the entire spectrum of transition issues from all stages of an employee's lifecycle or from all possible disability experiences.

We limited this study to the case of the FPS as an initial investigation into transition experiences for persons with disabilities in the federally regulated sectors. There are other sectors under the federal jurisdiction which are not included in this project, such as banking and transportation. There is a potential for future studies to address these sectors by applying a similar methodology from this research project.

There were specific methodological limitations. We followed established conventions in recruiting

representative samples from sub-populations of persons with disabilities relevant to the study design. However, we could not commit to a specific sample size as there are always challenges with participant recruitment. Specifically, we acknowledged and realized the challenge of collecting relevant and representative data on employees leaving the FPS or those who were unable to enter.

Despite having 19 organizations disseminate the invitation poster widely throughout their communication channels twice (they were asked to resend the invitation half-way through the data collection phase), the numbers of interview and survey participants with disabilities were low for those who were in the process of applying or who had recently applied to work at the FPS and were unsuccessful in obtaining a job, and for those who have separated from the FPS. In terms of the survey, these low participation numbers may have been due to on-line survey fatigue and perhaps former employees did not see any benefits to participating in the survey, or interview, as they had left the FPS. Persons with disabilities in the process of applying to work at the FPS may have perceived participation in this project as hindering to their application even though it was clear in the recruitment materials that the interview was confidential and the survey anonymous. In addition, the stressful impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the lives of many people cannot be understated whereby participation in an on-line research project may have been seen as less important than in more 'normal' times.

For the focus groups, there were more people who registered than attended as focus groups were limited to a maximum of eight participants given that they were conducted on-line. Also, some people who registered and indicated they would attend did not actually attend on the day. The total number that registered, including those who were placed on the waiting list, for all the 10 focus groups was 120. Of this 120, a total of 40 people participated.

There was likely some overlap in the interview and survey participants as they had the option of participating in either the interview or survey or both.

Some interview and survey participants could have also participated in the focus groups, but we could not know this as the survey participants were anonymous.

4. Research Findings

a) Introduction

The Findings are divided into four key parts: Environmental Scan, Transitioning Into the FPS, Transitioning Within the FPS, and Transitioning Out of the FPS. To begin though, before delving into the Environmental Scan, the demographic information of the interview, survey, and focus group participants is described. After that, the environmental scan starts with an outline of some worthwhile practices for enhancing transition accessibility from the literature review. Then our environmental scan findings are reported highlighting the existing policies and practices that the FPS already has in place to support employment accessibility, including career transition accessibility.

The environmental scan is followed by descriptions of the facilitators and barriers perceived as supporting and/or hindering accessibility in the career journey of persons with disabilities as they transition through the FPS, from the application stage through internal transitions to separation. These descriptions are based on the key themes that emerged from the convergence of the data from the interviews and survey with persons with lived experience of disabilities, and from the focus groups with persons with and without lived experience of disabilities.⁶ The perceived impact of self-identifying on the experiences of the barriers and facilitators of each transition is also explored as well as the perspectives of managers and human resources staff on career transition accessibility.

The key transitions that are the focus of the three sections following the Environmental Scan are:

⁶ The number of participants in each data set is as follows: 78 interviews, 407 surveys, 6 focus groups with persons with disabilities (22 participants), and 4 focus groups with managers and human resources staff with and without lived experience of disabilities (18 participants). Please see Appendix 7.1 for the participants' demographic information.

Transitioning Into the FPS – External hiring process and onboarding;

Transitioning Within the FPS – Promotion, lateral move, and return-to-work transitions; and

Transitioning Out of the FPS – Separation transition.

b) Demographic Information

Please see the Appendix 7.1 for the demographic data for the interview, survey, and focus group participants and Appendix 7.3 for flow charts showing participants' types of disabilities and their impacts on work. The project participants are FPS applicants, employees, and former employees with disabilities whose disabilities are described as either single visible, single invisible, multiple visible, multiple invisible, or a combination of invisible and visible⁷ and that impact them in various ways at work (mildly, moderately, severely or in a combination of these, and/or episodically, chronically or a combination of episodically and chronically).

4.1 Environmental Scan of the FPS

a) Literature Review: Worthwhile practices to enhance accessibility of career transitions

Building inclusiveness to tackle stigma and discrimination:

Inclusive workplace cultures are significantly associated with organizational fairness (Stainback, Ratiff, & Roscigno, 2011). Organizational fairness is a key predictor of the turnover rate of an employee with a disability (Chordiya, 2020), feeling socialized into the workplace culture (Clark, 2001), and feeling like a valued member of the organization (Rogers & Ashforth, 2017). The literature states that to increase workplace

⁷ We defined visible disabilities as those that present visible aids that may signify a disability (such as a wheelchair, cane, guide dog, hearing aid) rather than any characteristic of a person. As such, we categorized mobility, seeing and hearing types of disabilities as visible and all other types as invisible (or nonvisible).

inclusion and organizational fairness for retention and career advancement, organizations need to implement disability-focused employee support networks or employee resource groups (ERGs) (encouraged and supported by managers), mentoring programs for enhanced onboarding and career progression, and disability training and education (Chordiya, 2020; Lindsay, Cagliostro, Leck, Shen, & Stinson, 2018b; Lindsay, Hartman, & Fellin, 2015; Scholl & Mooney, 2004). ERGs are voluntary, employee-led groups that help foster an inclusive and diverse environment (Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, 2015). The goal of ERGs is to support employees, and enhance socialization, career development, and networking opportunities (Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN), 2021).

Mentorship programs that demonstrate employee talent can increase inclusion and productivity, decrease separation rates (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011), reduce stigma, and increase the perception of organizational fairness (Allen & Carlson, 2003; Lindsay et al., 2015) among employees with disabilities. Other advantages of mentorship programs include a greater likelihood of disability disclosure and requests for accommodations (Powers et al., 2012) and higher self-confidence (Kim-Rupnow & Burgstahler, 2004; Powers et al., 2012). Research shows, though, that there can be difficulties with establishing mentorship programs, such as a lack of mentors, lack of time with mentors, or issues matching mentors to mentees (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002).

Improving management support of employees with disabilities:

The literature recommends that employers and all employees have disability accessibility and rights legislation training (Lindsay, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2018a; Lindsay et al., 2018b), sensitivity training on challenges employees with disabilities experience (Hunt & Hunt, 2004), awareness building such as about disability advocacy (Kulkarni & Gopakumar, 2014), and organizational diversity management training to combat discrimination and improve attitudes towards employees with disabilities in the workplace (Enayati,

von Schrader, Erickson, & Bruyère, 2019; Li, Zhu, Li, Chattopadhyay, & George, 2017; Schur et al., 2017; Yang, 2016). In addition, employers are more likely to be reasonable and supportive when granting workplace accommodations if they understand the disability legislation, and have experience working with and have positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities (Copeland, Chan, Bezyak, & Fraser, 2010). According to St-Arnaud and Pelletier (2014), trust between employer and employees is an essential step to ensuring employees' smooth return-to-work transition, as well as other career transitions, as this works to reduce the level of vulnerability the employee may feel if they have to request accommodations or self-identify.

Enhancing the transition accommodation process:

Erickson, von Schrader, Bruyère, and Vanlooy (2014) found from their survey of accessibility and accommodation-related policies and practices in over 600 organizations that a formal decision-making process, a designated person or office to address accommodation questions, and a centralized accommodation fund are effective at enhancing the accommodation process. However, Denton, Chowhan, and Plenderleith (2010) note that organizational inclusiveness and an effective accommodation process may require flexible organizational policies and the implementation of different assistive instruments or resources that provide the extra support and accommodation needed to enhance career transition accessibility and retain employees with disabilities. Swenor and Meeks (2019) also propose employing people with knowledge of disability, disability rights law, and accommodations in the specific work setting as resource persons for confidential disclosure of disability and to lead the interactive process of determining accommodations in order to build a more inclusive work environment. Other key facilitators to the accommodation process at the employee-manager level include a supportive manager, effective communication and collaboration, and mutual understandings of the motivations and responsibilities of all involved in the process, including any other professionals (Nevala, Pehkonen, Koskela, Ruusuvoori, & Anttila., 2014).

Enhancing the likelihood of self-identification for transitions:

According to the literature, worthwhile practices to facilitate disability disclosure are similar to those for tackling stigma and discrimination (as success in tackling stigma and discrimination facilitates disclosure), including developing inclusive work environments, mentorship programs (Lindsay et al., 2015; Scholl & Mooney, 2004), and employee resource groups (ERGs), that can be especially helpful for employees with invisible disabilities (von Schrader, 2014). Swenor and Meeks (2019) also propose developing a neutral-party disability disclosure system – a clear process of requesting accommodations that does not involve direct disclosure of disability status to a manager or co-workers.

b) Our findings: Environmental scan of the FPS

The sources of data for the environmental scan included scans of publicly available FPS documents and conversations with FPS staff.

i) Policies and practices currently in place in the FPS to support employment accessibility

Table 1: Policies and practices currently in place in the FPS to support employment accessibility

Policy or practice	Department/organization that administers policy or practice	Details
Recruitment programs specifically for persons with disabilities	Across the FPS	Federal Internship Program for Canadians with Disabilities (FIPCD) Employment Opportunity for Students with Disabilities (EOSD)
<i>Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada: "Nothing without us"</i>	Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA)	Launched May 2019 with 6 priority areas: Employment Built environment Technology Services Culture, and Measuring progress.
Mentorship Plus program	Centre on Diversity & Inclusion, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat	Supports career progression for equity seeking groups, is co-developed with equity seeking groups and adds the element of sponsorship, pairing employees with executive mentors/sponsors. This is a very recent initiative.

Policy or practice	Department/organization that administers policy or practice	Details
Federal Speakers' Forum on Diversity & Inclusion	Centre on Diversity & Inclusion, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat	Co-developed with members of equity seeking groups, where public servants can share their diversity and inclusion journey in the FPS. This is a very recent initiative.
Accessibility Hub (on-line resource)	Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA)	One-stop-shop for accessibility information with guidance, tools, and best practices for departments and agencies, launched Winter 2020.
Accommodation Passport	Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA) funded by Centralized Enabling Workplace Fund	Employee document that enables accommodations to transition with an employee, currently in pilot phase.
Accessibility, Accommodation, & Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) program	Shared Services Canada	Provides a wide range of adaptive computer technologies, tools, training, services, and resources to employees with disabilities or injuries.
Assessment Accommodation Unit	Public Service Commission (PSC)	For internal & external candidates with special testing needs.
Personnel Psychology Centre	Public Service Commission (PSC)	Offers a range of professional assessment products and services for FPS departments and agencies to use for recruitment, selection, and/or personnel development.
<p>Disability Management – may involve the following staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accommodation advisors - Return-to-work coordinators (also known as disability case managers) - Accommodation specialists 	Organized through human resources across the FPS and its structure varies between organizations, departments, and agencies	Accommodation specialists are in some departments attached to Centres of Expertise on accessibility and the duty to accommodate.
Accessible Procurement Resource Centre	Public Services and Procurement Canada	Resources on accessible procurement for managers.

Policy or practice	Department/organization that administers policy or practice	Details
Courses on accessibility, disability, and the duty to accommodate	Canada School of Public Service (CSPS)	Supports public servants through key career transitions.
Chairs & Champions Committees	Across the FPS	<p>Networks of employees with disabilities across the FPS. Chairs & Champions of accessibility – promote workplace for persons with disabilities on how to eliminate barriers.</p> <p>Champions exist at the departmental and national levels for diversity and inclusion.</p>
Senior leadership and managers with disabilities	Some departments, organizations, and agencies	FPS is trying to increase the number of senior leaders and managers with disabilities.

ii) Key worthwhile practices in the FPS

The Mentorship Plus program and the Champion and Chairs Committees may be considered worthwhile practices because, as previous research on similar initiatives has found, they should increase workplace inclusion and organizational fairness for retention and advancement (Chordiya, 2020; Lindsay et al., 2015). In addition, the forthcoming Accommodation Passport, the existing AACT program, the Assessment Accommodation Unit, the Personnel Psychology Centre, and accommodation advisors and specialists may be said to be workplace accommodation worthwhile practices because such practices should enhance communication, support, collaboration, and mutual understanding between the employee, employer and other professionals (Nevala et al., 2014).

4.2 Into the FPS - Exploring the external hiring process and onboarding transitions

a) Introduction

In this section a review of previous research regarding the external hiring process and onboarding are

presented first. This is followed by a description of our research findings⁸ including the barriers and facilitators to accessible external hiring and onboarding, and the impact of self-identification on the hiring and onboarding experiences for applicants and new employees with disabilities. Our findings also include the perspectives of managers on the accessibility of the external hiring process, and the perspectives of managers and employees with disabilities on how the accessibility of transitioning into the FPS can be enhanced. This section concludes with the implications of our findings for transitioning into the FPS.

b) Literature Review

i) External Hiring Process

Previous research about transitioning into a workplace through the external hiring process points to a number of barriers to accessibility for persons with disabilities. Bonaccio, Connelly, Gellatly, Jetha, & Martin Ginis (2020) found that managers may be underestimating the number of individuals with disabilities that apply for job openings because they do not recognize that there may be persons with invisible disabilities in applicant

8 The data sources for these findings are shown in Appendix 7.2.

pools, disabilities that have no visible manifestations (Santuzzi, Waltz, Finkelstein, & Rupp, 2014). Similarly, many disabilities are episodic, whereby individuals may experience fluctuations in symptoms and severity which at certain times would make the disability nonvisible. Consequently, many managers are not aware until disclosure (self-identification) that a person has a disability (Gignac, Cao, & Mcalpine, 2015).

Many applicants, though, may not disclose in the hiring process until an accommodation is crucial (Gignac et al., 2015). This is because disclosing to their employer or potential employer and requesting workplace accommodations are the most common challenges reported by persons with disabilities (Lindsay et al., 2018b; Lindsay, 2011). Factors that can make the decision to disclose a challenge include: severity and type of disability – visible or nonvisible (Corbière, Villotti, Toth, & Waghorn, 2014; Santuzzi et al., 2014; Vornholt et al., 2017), employers' perceived lack of knowledge surrounding accommodations (Nelissen, Vornholt, Van Ruitenbeek, Hülshager, & Uitdewilligen, 2014; Vornholt et al., 2017), fear of discrimination by employers and co-workers (Barclay & Markel, 2007; Jones, Finkelstein, & Koehoorn, 2018; Lindsay et al., 2018b; Snyder, Carmichael, Blackwell, Cleveland, & Thornton, 2009), and being labelled with a disability as this could make it difficult to secure employment (Shier, Graham, & Jones, 2009).

Applicants and employees with invisible (including psychological) disabilities are less likely to disclose their disabilities to their potential employer (Dong, Fabian, & Xu, 2016; Prince, 2017). This poses as a barrier to obtaining the adequate support from the employer. They are less likely to disclose to employers or coworkers because doing so may put their job at risk, especially if they disclose it in an interview. In contrast, applicants with visible disabilities claimed that discussion about their disabilities was important during the interview (Jans, Kaye, and Jones, 2012).

Managers may not be aware that their hiring practices are deterring persons with disabilities from applying to their jobs (Bruyere, Erickson, & Looy, 2005). For example, if applicants have the impression that an employer has a negative view of disability and that, as a result,

the employer may negate or disregard their skills and training (Shier et al., 2009), applicants with disabilities may be deterred from applying or overcompensate with education and/or experience to get a job, potentially at the risk of becoming overqualified.

In studying career transition facilitators, Lindsay, Cagliostro, and Carafa (2018c) and Copeland et al. (2010) showed that employers who have knowledge of disabilities or experience in working with persons with disabilities have positive attitudes toward these job applicants and employees. Positive attitudes and positive personal relationships in the workplace, according to Romeo, Yepes-Baldo, and Lins (2020), should be a priority for organizations and managers, as well as employees, for hiring and retaining employees with and without lived experience of disabilities. Copeland et al. (2010) also showed that employers who have experience working with persons with disabilities are reasonable and supportive when granting accommodation requests and believe in equal treatment of employees and applicants. In addition, Kristman et al. (2016) found that facilitators for transition accessibility for persons with disabilities include well defined roles and responsibilities, available tools and procedures, prompt and proactive responses, and attention to individual needs and circumstances.

ii) Onboarding

Onboarding into a workplace should involve social acceptance and organizational inclusion. Important components of onboarding are job training and mentoring by peers/co-workers, however, research has shown that new employees with disabilities received lower levels of these (Schur, Kruse, Blasi, & Blanck, 2009). Lower levels of job training and mentoring may result in fewer opportunities for career advancement following onboarding.

The social inclusion of new employees with disabilities into the organization can also be impacted by the unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes of managers and co-workers (Cavanagh et al., 2017; Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014). It is important, therefore, for managers to create an inclusive work environment to positively impact their team's behaviour towards

new employees with disabilities to facilitate informal 'on the job' training and mentoring by coworkers (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2011; Schur, Kruse, & Blanck, 2005). An inclusive work environment is particularly important for a safe transition into the workplace for young Canadians with disabilities, according to Jetha, Bowring, Furrrie, Smith, and Breslin (2019), so that they can access accommodations without having to disclose their disability. Jetha et al (2019) found that having to disclose their disability posed a barrier for young Canadians accessing accommodations.

With respect to mentoring, previous research has shown that appointing a co-worker with similar job responsibilities as a mentor to an employee with a disability, especially in the early stages of employment, promotes employment retention and facilitates social integration (Erickson et al., 2014; Lee, Storey, Anderson, Goetz, & Zivolich, 1997). In addition, the findings from research by Lindsay et al (2018c) revealed that persons with disabilities who have knowledge of their workplace rights and the supports available to them, and possess self-advocacy skills, are more likely to disclose their disabilities.

c) Our findings: External hiring process

i) Self-identification – reasons for and against and its impact on the experience of the hiring process

From our interviews and focus groups, it seems that there is an awareness that applicants may have invisible disabilities and recruitment applicant pools are now being created exclusively for persons with disabilities. However, to join such an applicant pool a person with a disability must be willing to disclose their disability to the FPS during the hiring process.

In our research, FPS job applicants with disabilities gave the following key reasons for not self-identifying during the hiring process:

- Worried that disclosing their disability would impact the hiring decision negatively;
- Worried about negative reactions to their disabilities;
- Worried that disclosing their disability would affect long-term career prospects;
- Wanted to maintain their privacy/or had privacy concerns,
- Felt uncomfortable;
- Unsure of where, when, or to whom to disclose their disability;
- Takes much time and energy to figure out what and how to self-identify to not feel too vulnerable; and
- Reluctance when applying for a regular hiring pool as opposed to one specifically for persons with disabilities.

Our findings concur with previous research regarding the relationship between the type of disability and the decision to disclose. The following table shows that a higher percentage of FPS job applicants with a single visible disability self-identified than applicants with a single invisible disability. Further, a higher percentage of applicants with a combination of visible and invisible disabilities self-identified than applicants with multiple invisible disabilities. When asked about the impact of self-identifying on their experience of the hiring process, more applicants with multiple invisible disabilities indicated a negative impact. Those with a single invisible disability were split between it having a negative or neutral impact.

Table 2: Type of disability and self-identification

Type of disability	Percentage of participants who self-identified during hiring process	Impact of self-identifying on experience of hiring process
Single Visible Only	70%	Neutral
Single Invisible Only	25%	Mix of negative and neutral
Multiple Invisible Only	35%	Negative
Multiple Combination Visible+ Invisible	61%	Neutral

For those FPS job applicants who did self-identify during the hiring process, their key reasons for doing so were as follows:

- To be open about who they are;
- Thought it would be helpful for their potential future employer to know;
- Felt comfortable to self-identify;
- To be understood by others even though self-identifying can require being open and vulnerable in disclosure conversations with others;
- To be informed of the right to accommodations in the workplace;
- To realize potential mechanisms in the FPS to help them succeed, and to demonstrate their abilities;
- To inform statistics as it was felt that FPS needs data to identify gaps in hiring and in career movement of persons with disabilities to make improvements; and
- To be considered for hiring pools for persons with disabilities.

From our research, disclosing a disability during the hiring process tended to have a neutral impact on the experience of job applicants during the hiring process, as self-identifying was not perceived to impact how they were treated. In addition, applicants were not generally aware of, or told to whom, their information goes or does not go.

ii) Barriers to accessibility in the external hiring processes

The recent FPS job applicants in our study noted that, overall, the external hiring process was onerous. In addition, there was the impression that the FPS was not overly positive about or supportive of applicants with disabilities given that there is much talk about hiring more persons with disabilities.

*“I thought they [the FPS] would be willing to work with me and help accommodate me but I haven’t got that impression so far, given they want to hire more equity groups but aren’t really helping to hire us”
(recent applicant with disabilities).*

Applicants with disabilities experienced the following specific key challenges or barriers to the accessibility of the different parts of the hiring process:

Job description accessibility barriers

- Job duties are not clear or detailed enough.
- Requirements listed are not necessarily needed to perform the job (for example, listing a driver’s license as a requirement).

Application form accessibility barriers

- Rigidity of application process; only online and not necessarily offered in alternative formats

- for persons with different types of disabilities (cognitive, fine motor skill, visual impairment).
- Poor structure (for everyone not just applicants with disabilities).
- Excessive time and energy required.
- Complex and onerous with too many rules - not easy to navigate.
- Lack of assistance.

- Locations not always physically accessible.
- Feeling uncomfortable during the job interview to talk about workplace accommodations that would be needed if hired.

Applicants noted that the above challenges had deterred them from continuing with previous job applications.

These challenges and barriers impacted the FPS job applicants in the following ways:

- Mental and physical energy depleted through participation in the hiring process; felt set up for failure from the beginning;
- Anxiety, stress, disrespect, feelings of incompetence (so may turn down other jobs offered as a result);
- Deterred and discouraged from applying again to the FPS due to impression that the culture of the FPS is dismissive towards accessibility/disability; and
- Need to overcompensate with education and/or experience to get a job.

We found that the FPS is aware that its hiring practices can deter applicants with disabilities, and it is in the process of making them more accessible. It takes time for these more accessible processes to be implemented and to take effect, especially when they involve training and educating hiring and onboarding managers and human resources staff on disability awareness and sensitivity and adapting existing tools and practices to be inclusive and consistent. The latter involves, for example, having job posters that include how to request accommodations, making the application forms more user friendly, and having a contact person listed on exam preparation materials who can inform candidates about the assessment methods and accommodations available.

Accommodation accessibility barriers

- Having to ask for accommodations for the application process, interview and/or exam (feels uncomfortable to identify a need for them).
- Not being informed of the right to receive accommodations.
- Costly and time-consuming medical assessments (may be required before an accommodation can be granted).
- Having to go through the Personnel Psychology Center assessment (a Public Service Commission service) for approval on accommodations (can be a long and invasive process that puts focus on health limitations).
- Receiving accommodations only after a long delay and/or without the appropriate training to navigate the accommodation (such as assistive technology training).
- Being denied an accommodation, for example, due to no funds being available to pay for a sign language interpreter.
- Lack of accommodations for language testing; mostly give extra time or larger font but other types of accommodations may be needed.

Job interview and exam accessibility barriers

- Questions not necessarily created with different learning styles, reasoning skills, attention, and neurodiversity in mind, so may not pass exam even with accommodations.
- Extra time not necessarily given.

iii) Facilitators to accessibility in the external hiring processes

FPS job applicants experienced the following that facilitated the accessibility of the external hiring process, made them feel accepted, and enabled them to self-identify when they start their new job.

- Job posters or descriptions that speak about a person's right to receive accommodation.
- Communication with the FPS that happens in an accessible way that the applicant prefers, such as through email to "limit vulnerability" when asking for accommodations.
- Accommodation requests for the hiring process met fully in a timely manner (accommodations such as extra time for tests and exams, physically accessible interview and/or testing site, adaptive software).
- Support from outside the FPS, such as from disability employment organizations, employment counsellors, job developers, and employment equity offices in universities.

iv) Managers' perspectives on the accessibility of the external hiring process

Supports and challenges to implementing accessible hiring processes:

In our research, managers explained how the support (such as training, resources, guides) available to help them implement accessible hiring processes for applicants with disabilities seems to vary between departments. Some managers have a lot of resources and tools available in their departments such as networks, internal and external partnerships (e.g., the Public Service Commission and the March of Dimes respectively), and 'Do's and Don'ts' fact sheets which are promoted widely and repeatedly to help with hiring persons with disabilities.

Other managers explained that there is a lack of accessibility resources and tools around the scope of disability (as disability tends to be understood only as a person who uses a wheelchair). Managers noted that more education is needed that disability also includes persons with other visible disabilities, cognitive and other invisible disabilities, that disabilities can impact someone at different levels and episodically and chronically, and the associated implications. Some of the managers in our study reflected a fear in terms of the depth and breadth of the scope of disability and what this might mean for workload.

The managers felt that some of them are not necessarily accessing the tools and resources available due to the perception that it is harder to hire persons with disabilities especially when they need accommodations. Identifying the accommodations an applicant may need and implementing them was described as one of the biggest challenges faced by managers in hiring persons with disabilities. They said that there needs to be more support for managers so that they feel comfortable to access and implement the resources and tools needed to enhance hiring process accessibility. In addition, they felt that managers may not be accessing currently available resources because they are not necessarily easy for managers to find and navigate when they are already constrained for time.

From the managers' perspective, when it comes to persons with disabilities identifying themselves in the hiring process, they felt that integrity on the part of the FPS seems to be lacking with respect to doing something with that information in a positive way to actively solicit those applicants. For example, self-identification processes can break down such that even though candidates self-identify and hiring managers want to hire persons with disabilities it may not be possible for the managers to find those persons in the data as the self-identification points are not included. As such, in these situations there is no advantage to identifying as a person with a disability even though that is who managers are specifically looking to hire. Also, the person with a disability would not be aware that their self-identification information was not available to the hiring managers.

d) Our findings: Onboarding – barriers and facilitators to accessibility

i) Barriers to accessibility of onboarding

As shown in the table below, with respect to new employee orientation (onboarding) with the FPS we found that onboarding resources and training were perceived to be accessible and new employees tended to feel welcomed into the culture of the FPS (statement 1 to 3). Whereas the statements numbered 5 through

12 tended to be disagreed with especially for comfort requesting an accommodation, career development, and mentoring. The openness of the culture to including persons with disabilities (statement 4) received more balanced responses between those who agreed and disagreed, with a slightly higher percentage tending to disagree.

These findings imply that current FPS onboarding could be improved, especially in relation to creating an atmosphere where new employees feel comfortable to request an accommodation and providing career development and mentoring opportunities. Such strategies could help to ensure that onboarding positively impacts employees with disabilities' opportunities for career advancement.

Table 3: Perceived accessibility of the onboarding process

Statement	Rating				Response # Number who responded to statement
	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	N/A (%)	
1. New employee orientation (onboarding) resources were accessible (available in a format that enabled me to participate fully without barriers).	33.3	18.2	47.8	0.1	318
2. New employee orientation (onboarding) training was available in a format accessible to me.	30.1	16.7	53.3	0	306
3. I felt welcomed into the culture of the Federal Public Service.	21.9	21.0	53.1	4.1	343
4. I felt that the culture of the Federal Public Service was open to including persons with disabilities.	39.6	22.0	38.4	0	323
5. I was prompted to disclose my disability.	51.0	14.1	32.8	2.1	290
6. I felt comfortable to self-identify about my disability to my manager.	56.4	10.7	32.9	0	298
7. I was informed of my right to a workplace accommodation.	57.5	12.3	30.2	0	308
8. I felt comfortable to request a workplace accommodation.	66.6	8.9	23.2	1.3	302
9. I felt that my manager was open to talking about my accommodation needs.	54.8	17.3	27.9	0	301
10. Career development opportunities were explained to me.	64.0	13.1	22.9	0	328
11. My manager asked me about career development supports needs.	72.7	10.1	16.2	0.9	326
12. I was informed of a Mentoring program (to develop my career path and networking skills with a more experienced employee).	76.8	7.8	14.8	0.6	332

Our research did reveal however, that onboarding into the FPS has improved recently for new employees with certain types of disabilities, with the exception of career development and mentoring opportunities. When we looked at the onboarding experiences of recent versus longer-serving employees with disabilities we found the following similarities and differences.

Table 4: Onboarding experiences of recent versus longer-serving employees

Experience	Recent employees (started in 2017 or after)	Longer-serving employees (started before 2017)
During onboarding their manager did <i>not</i> ask them about their career development support needs and did <i>not</i> inform them of a mentoring program	Agree	Agree
Felt that the culture of the FPS was open to including persons with disabilities when they onboarded	Agree	Disagree
Felt comfortable to self-identify their disability to their manager during onboarding	Agree (but recent employees with invisible disabilities felt uncomfortable)	Disagree
Felt comfortable to request a workplace accommodation during onboarding	Agree (but recent employees with invisible disabilities felt uncomfortable)	Disagree
Felt their manager was open to talking about their accommodation needs during onboarding	Agree (but recent employees with invisible disabilities felt their manager was not open to talking about their accommodation needs)	Disagree

The table above implies that participants who are **recent employees with visible or multiple visible and invisible disabilities** (starting in 2017 or after) tended to feel **comfortable** self-identifying to their manager and requesting a workplace accommodation and that their manager was open to talking about their accommodation needs during onboarding.

However, **recent employees with nonvisible disabilities** tended to feel **uncomfortable** self-identifying to their manager and requesting a workplace accommodation and that their manager was not open to talking about their accommodation needs during onboarding.

Therefore, new employees with invisible disabilities may be experiencing barriers to onboarding accessibility due potentially to unconscious bias and stigma.

ii) Non-existent or inadequate onboarding

From our research, in some cases onboarding was non-existent or very poor for recent new employees with all types of disabilities. At times, nothing was in place for them, and they had limited or zero opportunity to self-identify. As a result, needs for accommodations were overlooked which meant, in some instances, having to hide their disabilities. Having to hide their disabilities and function without the necessary accommodations had negative impacts such as employees having to go on unpaid stress leave and experiencing extended periods of pain. For some new employees, the hiring process may give the impression that everything will be in place in terms of accessibility when they onboard to and start their new job. However, this is not necessarily the reality once they are hired; the hiring process can give a false sense of security.

Quote - During onboarding:

“No supports, no information about the FPS, nothing, no accommodations ... very disappointing ... I had to figure out processes myself as my manager was not trained to work with employees with disabilities ... I discovered the loaning program for accessible equipment through the Accessibility, Accommodation, and Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) program after 6 months in the job and educated my manager and others about it, they didn't know it existed!”
(current employee with disabilities).

iii) Facilitators to accessibility of onboarding

We found that some recent employees with disabilities do experience accessible onboarding with the FPS because they have a supportive manager with a team conscious of inclusion and accessibility, and/or they had

a co-worker “buddy” to help orient them.

An accessible and smooth onboarding experience meant recent employees felt:

- Connected to their new job
- Accommodated
- Comfortable, welcome
- Informally supported, and
- Accepted (as they did not have to prove themselves).

Quote - During onboarding:

“... asked if I would like to meet with the Accessibility, Accommodation, and Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) team ... it was super inclusive, meant I didn't have to go searching for answers”
(current employee with disabilities).

iv) Managers' perspectives on the accessibility of onboarding

One of the main reasons for new employees with disabilities' lack of onboarding is that there tends to be a lack of specific guidance given to the hiring or onboarding managers on how to facilitate an easy transition for new employees with disabilities coming into the FPS. Managers themselves explained how full, formal onboarding processes tend not to be in place across the FPS. One manager said: “If I hired a person with disability, I would have no idea where to go for accommodations, it's not intuitive, it's not promoted, so I have no idea where I would even direct myself.”

Another manager explained how when a new person with disabilities is onboarded there does not seem to be anything specific in place that is “forward looking” in any department; it is all backward looking – reactive rather than proactive. They continued that this is “a huge hole for us going forward if we want to target persons with disabilities coming in.” For example, when an applicant receives accommodations during the external hiring process, they may assume once they

become an employee that these accommodations are communicated by human resources staff to their new manager. If this is not the case, the new employee does not know that their new manager has not been told about the required accommodations, and this can cause stress for the new employee when nothing is in place for them, and they are not asked if they have accommodation needs.

e) Our findings: Enhancing accessibility of transitioning into the FPS – the ideas of applicants, employees with disabilities, and managers

The participants in the interviews, survey, and focus groups provided a large number of suggestions for ways in which the FPS could improve accessibility for persons with disabilities who are applying to and those who have been recently hired by the FPS. We offer these for information, not necessarily as recommendations.

Ideas of applicants and employees with disabilities.

- Make the hiring process transparent and inclusive with no barriers where abilities can be showcased and applicants with disabilities can fully express themselves.
- Ensure managers communicate proactively and work through the process together with the applicants with disabilities to show that the FPS sees persons with disabilities as integral to their teams.
- Increase intersectionality awareness, for example, by explaining career development initiatives for each employment equity group if a person with a disability identifies with other equity groups.
- Ensure that applicants with visible disabilities are not treated as tokens to prove that persons with disabilities are being hired.
- Make online forms and applications easier and more straight forward.
- Provide a guidebook on how to get into the FPS to overcome the misinformation.

- Provide financial accessibility support to avoid persons with disabilities having to pay to get assistance/accommodations in the application process, such as for sign language interpreters.
- Provide a mentor and/or an advocate from inside the FPS, who ideally is also a person with a disability and who might also identify as a member of another employment equity group, to enhance the accessibility of the hiring and onboarding processes to:
 - o Explain the very specific FPS hiring process from beginning to end that has particular demands - the way you have to fill out the screening questions and the way you approach the exams and the interviews;
 - o Explain what accommodations are available and how to request them and what to expect in terms of potential challenges when it comes to requesting them such as attitudinal barriers;
 - o Explain what other supports may be available to access and how to locate and navigate them;
 - o Be located in the same job field to which the person with a disability is applying or onboarding as each department/ organization and each job field needs a mentoring program;
 - o Provide support if friction arises in the hiring or onboarding process, for example when accommodations are requested;
 - o Assist with navigating and completing applications or onboarding materials and removing barriers;
 - o Energize and support applicants and new employees to make it through the long application process or through onboarding; and
 - o Be a source of support and inspiration with whom to discuss career goals.

- Provide onboarding training and resources, including an onboarding guidebook for everyone including employees with disabilities, that account for different types of learning, disabilities, and sensitivities that are developed with employees with disabilities.

Ideas of managers with and without disabilities.

- To make the implementation of accessible hiring practices (and other career transition practices) part of senior managers' performance pay, so that managers are fully supported by senior managers to follow-through.
- To mandate managers to enhance accessibility practices by putting this into their performance management agreements.
- To make the hiring process accessible all the way through - at the beginning it is welcoming as it asks people to self-identify and that accommodations will be implemented but after that it falls apart.
- To have a hub of in-house specialists (like guidance counsellors) to support managers to hire and lead staff with disabilities, and when they come up against uncertainties and hesitations to navigate a situation. Currently managers tend to go to Labour Relations or Disability Management staff but these staff, managers said, are not necessarily equipped to support in this way.
- To highlight the benefit to applicants of self-identifying in their application, and to follow through on what that benefit is when they are hired. As there is such a stigma around self-identifying, managers need to instill confidence that it is going to be taken seriously, that they are going to accommodate, and that the person with a disability is valuable to the organization.

f) Key issues from our findings and their implications for transitioning into the FPS

Overall, from the findings from our research regarding into-FPS transitions for persons with disabilities, two key issues stood out that have the potential for negative implications for the FPS: 1) hiring and onboarding managers tend to have insufficient accessibility-related knowledge and skills; and 2) onerous and complicated hiring processes and inadequate onboarding. Both are discussed in detail below.

1: Hiring and onboarding managers tend to have insufficient accessibility-related knowledge and skills

In our research, recent FPS job applicants and employees with disabilities, and managers with and without disabilities, indicated that hiring and onboarding managers tend to lack the accessibility-related knowledge and skills to hire and onboard persons with disabilities effectively, especially persons with nonvisible disabilities.

Why this is important: It is important to support managers in gaining the knowledge and skills to be able to engage in inclusive leadership because this can lead to more supportive and accessible work environments and more effective career transitions for persons with disabilities (Chordiya, 2020; Erickson et al., 2014; Gupta & Priyadarshi, 2020). This is particularly relevant as job applicants and new employees with disabilities are becoming more likely to self-identify and request accommodations in such work environments (Lindsay et al., 2018b). Such knowledge and skills are enhanced when there is regular mandatory training and education about accessibility and ongoing professional development and resource support.

Potential negative implications: If hiring and onboarding managers' lack of accessibility-related knowledge and skills is not addressed, then unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes can become more of an

issue and applicants and new employees with disabilities may be given the impression that the culture of the FPS is not very inclusive or accommodating. This may deter them from joining the FPS or from planning to make career advancement transitions once they start their career for fear of having an unsupportive and unaccommodating manager and work environment.

2: Onerous and complicated hiring processes and inadequate onboarding

In our research, recent FPS job applicants and employees with disabilities and managers with and without disabilities indicated that the hiring process can be onerous and daunting and onboarding inadequate or non-existent. This is particularly troublesome for applicants and new employees with disabilities when they may require accommodations.

Why this is important: It is important to have a well structured, easy to navigate, clear, and accommodating hiring process and effective onboarding because these qualities convey that an employer has a positive perspective on disability and that it values the skills and training of employees with disabilities (Cavanagh, 2017; Rogers & Ashforth, 2017; Shier et al., 2009). Processes are enhanced when there is collaboration with employees with disabilities, such as through employee resource groups, in the development of policies, processes, and practices (Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, 2015; Lindsay et al., 2018a).

Potential negative implications: If onerous hiring processes for persons with disabilities remain in place and onboarding remains inadequate or non-existent, then applicants and new employees with disabilities are likely to feel undervalued and set up for failure from the beginning. They may be deterred from continuing with their application or deterred from pursuing career advancement once they start their new job as they have the impression that the culture of the FPS is dismissive towards accessibility and disability.

In summary, at present, persons with disabilities are finding it difficult to join the FPS and are deterred due to accessibility issues throughout the hiring process such as an onerous barrier-filled application

process and managers who are ill-equipped to apply accessible practices throughout the competition exams, interviewing, and onboarding. This is problematic given the FPS's goal to increase the number of employees with disabilities.

4.3 Within the FPS - Exploring promotions, lateral moves and return-to-work transitions

a) Introduction

In this section a literature review about the transitions of promotion, lateral move, and return-to work (RTW) for employees with disabilities is presented first. This is followed by a description of our research findings⁹ including the perceived barriers and facilitators to accessible promotion, lateral move, and RTW transitions, and the impact of self-identification on the experiences of these transitions. Promotion and lateral move transitions are discussed together throughout as they both usually involve an internal competition process (unless an employee is offered an acting position) and are two key transitions for moving within and across FPS departments, organizations, and agencies. These three transitions were selected to highlight in this report as project participants identified them as the key FPS career transitions which need to be more accessible to employees with disabilities.

Our findings also include the perspectives of managers on the challenges they face in implementing and improving accessible promotion practices, as well as human resources staff perspectives on these challenges that managers face. This is followed by the perspectives of employees with disabilities, managers, and human resources staff on the key systemic and cultural factors that are perceived to impact career transition accessibility, as well as their ideas on how the accessibility of transitioning within the FPS can be enhanced. This section also includes three case stories of fictitious characters that reflect actual experiences of specific sub-populations of our study participants.

9 The data sources for these findings are shown in Appendix 7.2.

These case stories describe the essential components of transitions that reflect key issues from our findings. The implications of our findings for transitioning within the FPS concludes this section.

b) Literature Review

i) Promotions and lateral moves

Attitudinal barriers

Unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes from managers and co-workers are some of the most significant barriers to employment and career advancement for persons with disabilities (Bonaccio et al., 2020; Lindsay et al., 2018b; Nelissen et al., 2015; Prince, 2017; Scherbaum, Scherbaum, & Popovich, 2005; Shier et al., 2009; Schur et al., 2017; Vornholt et al., 2017). Such bias and attitudes can create unsupportive work environments that make it difficult for persons with disabilities to transition and advance in their careers and maintain their employment (Erickson et al., 2014; Scheid, 2005). Key negative attitudes and assumptions towards employees with disabilities include disbelief of disability (requiring burden of proof) (Colella, 2001; Garcia, Paetzold, & Colella, 2005; Nevala et al., 2014); laziness (Bonaccio et al., 2020; Hemphill & Kulik, 2016); problematic as employees (Bonaccio et al., 2020; Vornholt et al., 2017); unproductive and incompetent (Hemphill & Kulik, 2016; McCary, 2005; Schur et al., 2005); and unable to perform on a similar level to their colleagues (McCary, 2005; Scherbaum et al., 2005; Vornholt, Uitdewilligen, & Nijhuis, 2013).

In addition, the incorrect assumption that employees with disabilities do not find career advancement as important as other employees might result in lack of career development opportunities for persons with disabilities, making it impossible for them to advance in their careers (Gupta & Priyadarshi, 2020; Kulkarni & Gopakumar, 2014). Biased attitudes related to qualifications of employees with disability also lead to highly educated and skilled employees being put in lower positions and not receiving promotions; many were also less likely to be assigned tasks and responsibilities (Vornholt et al., 2017).

With respect to type of disability and attitudinal barriers, previous studies show that persons with mental health-related, autism spectrum, cognitive, intellectual, learning, and executive functioning disabilities (all nonvisible disabilities) tend to experience the most negative attitudes from managers and administrators (Lauber, Nordt, Braunschweig, & Rössler, 2006; Rössler, 2016). This is because higher levels of workplace discrimination tend to be experienced by persons with more stigmatized disabilities (Beatty & Kirby, 2006; Chordiya, 2020; Schur et al., 2017). As such, those with mental and intellectual disabilities and more severe disabilities tend to experience more workplace discrimination than those with visible or less severe disabilities. Particularly, those with intellectual and mental disabilities are subject to more assumptions about their inability to be productive workers than those with physical disabilities (Chordiya, 2020).

In terms of the impact of discrimination on employees with disabilities, perceptions of greater discrimination have been linked with negative effects on physical and psychological health, lower job satisfaction, higher absenteeism, and separation intention (Villanueva-Flores, Valle, & Bornay-Barrachina, 2017).

Accommodation process barriers

Related to attitudinal barriers, discussed above, employees with disabilities may choose not to request the necessary workplace accommodations due to the fear of how they will be perceived by their co-workers (for example, it could appear that they are receiving preferential treatment), and due to the fear of stigmatization and labelling that is often associated with disclosing disability (Kulkarni & Lengnick-Hall, 2014; Syma, 2019). Managers, in turn, may worry that co-workers will resent employees with disabilities for 'unfair' accommodations and express stigma from this jealousy, and as such may be biased against hiring persons with disabilities (Bonaccio et al., 2020; Colella, Denisi, & Varma, 1999; Gold, Oire, Fabian, & Wewiorski, 2012; Schur et al., 2005; von Schrader, Malzer, & Bruyère, 2014). Managers may also fear that co-workers will begrudge having to work more to compensate for the employee with a disability's perceived low productivity

(Kosny et al., 2013). Studies show, as a result, that many managers report uncertainty about efficiently integrating employees with disabilities into the work culture (Bonaccio et al., 2020; Kaye, Jans, & Jones, 2011; Schur et al., 2009; Vornholt et al., 2013).

According to the literature, the burden of disclosing disabilities often falls on the employee (Lindsay et al., 2018b). This is because, in Canada, employers are often unaware of how to have effective disclosure discussions and provide appropriate accommodations to people with disabilities (von Schrader et al., 2014) despite workplace accommodations being supported by human rights and accessibility legislations (such as the *Canadian Human Rights Act 1985* and the recent *Accessible Canada Act 2019*). Employers' lack of knowledge regarding disclosure and accommodation processes, as well as their lack of collaboration with the employee who requested the accommodation, are two major barriers to employees with disabilities receiving workplace accommodations in a timely manner (Nevala et al., 2014).

In addition, previous research has demonstrated that employers are more likely to provide workplace accommodations to individuals with physical disabilities than those with invisible disabilities such as learning or psychological disabilities (e.g., depression) (Bonaccio et al., 2020; Lindsay et al., 2018b; McDowell & Fossey, 2015; Prince, 2017; Telwatte, Anglim, Wynton, & Moulding, 2017). If employers perceive that an employees' request for accommodation is not reasonable, legitimate, or necessary and is costly for the organization, then they are less likely to grant accommodations. These barriers are more prominent among individuals who have psychological disabilities compared to physical disabilities as employers have biases towards psychological disabilities being less legitimate, less reasonable and necessary to be accepted for accommodations (Telwatte et al., 2017).

Self-identifying and trust - impact on career advancement:

As discussed earlier, the literature shows that many employees with disabilities report fears that self-identifying will bring discrimination from colleagues (Bonaccio et al., 2020; Kensbock, Boehm, & Bourovoi,

2017; Lindsay et al., 2018b; Schultz, Duplassie, Hanson, & Winter, 2011). Employees with invisible and psychological disabilities, in particular, are less likely to disclose their disabilities to their employer as they feel it will put their job at risk (Dong et al., 2016; Prince, 2017).

Prince (2017) outlines that people with nonvisible disabilities face greater barriers to disclosing their disability. Many employers do not believe people with invisible disabilities have a disability because their disability may not fit into the stereotypical picture of a 'disabled person.' Prince (2017) notes that people with invisible disabilities may hesitate to disclose their disability due to overhearing their co-workers and managers' true perceptions regarding people with disabilities, and as a result it may not feel safe to disclose. Prince's (2017) findings are consistent with other researchers who have found that those with nonvisible disabilities are less likely to disclose than those with visible disabilities for fear of stigmatization and discrimination from their co-workers and supervisors (Beauchamp-Pryor & Symeonidou, 2013; Jans et al., 2012; Lindsay et al., 2018b).

Other studies have also revealed that employers whose views are constrained by negative attitudes towards disability are less likely to trust employees with disabilities who have self-identified and think that these employees make less of a contribution to the workplace (Strindlund, Abrandt-Dahlgren, & Ståhl, 2019). This lack of trust can result in the negation of employees with disabilities' skills, knowledge, and training relevant to their work and negatively impact career advancement (Shier et al., 2009). Contrary to these beliefs, employees with disabilities defy these expectations by demonstrating above-average performance evaluations, attendance, productivity, and safety records (Bonaccio et al., 2020).

ii) Return-to work (RTW)

Young et al. (2005) note that RTW transition outcomes can significantly impact the individual, their coworkers, and the organization. The consensus of previous studies is that a successful RTW outcome includes both workplace and personal factors (Nieuwenhuijsen, Verbeek, de Boer, Blonk, & van Dijk, 2004; Salkever,

Shinogle, & Howard, 2002; Semmer & Zapf, 1996; Young et al., 2005; Young & Russell, 2008).

Workplaces can foster successful RTW outcomes if they can ensure: flexible schedules; low job stressors; appropriate workplace accommodations; strong communication between supervisor and employer; and job security (Nieuwenhuisen et al., 2004; Salkever et al., 2002; Semmer & Zapf, 1996). Previous research also notes that individuals who attempt to RTW within 505 days of their leave are significantly more likely to RTW (Young & Russell, 2008).

Krause, Frank, Dasinger, Sullivan, and Sinclair (2001) note that because of the wide range of disabilities, injuries and illnesses that all vary in terms of the severity, treatment and rehabilitation strategies, it is difficult to assess the outcomes of RTW and therefore, a systematic review of such research is challenging. Societal (e.g., discrimination, legal factors), psychological, economic, medical care, rehabilitation intervention programs, characteristics of jobs (physical and psychosocial), employee insurance, and many other related factors have to be taken into consideration to understand the outcome of RTW making this a complex problem to address.

Research by Alaszewski (2009) found that the RTW transition was made difficult when lengthy assessments (e.g., medical referrals, workplace adjustments) were required. Other research by Lahelma et al. (2012) has shown that high job demand and low worker or job control¹⁰ can act as barriers to RTW transition accessibility. Also, Schwarz (2017) found that an unsupportive work environment (for example, prejudices and concerns of supervisors and co-workers regarding the employee with disabilities' productivity and employability) and a lack of availability and accessibility of rehabilitation services (e.g., medical and vocational rehabilitation) were barriers during the RTW transition. Similarly, Magnussen, Nilsen, & Råheim (2007), found barriers in the form of a lack of understanding and negative attitudes towards employees with disabilities,

such as co-workers complaining when the employee with disabilities was assigned tasks perceived to be easier. Lock, Jordan, Bryan, & Maxim (2005) noted that an understanding of the rights of individuals with disability is important to help reduce negative attitudes.

Brannigan (2016), following a systematic review of the literature on the barriers and facilitators to RTW accessibility, found that there was a fear to disclose disability or an illness (such as having a stroke) to employers in anticipation of negative attitudes. There was also a fear that any decrease in their work performance after the RTW could result in a demotion or salary reduction.

The findings from research by Kristman et al. (2016) support the importance of low job strain and high worker control as facilitators of the RTW transition following the onset of disability. Additional factors found to facilitate the RTW transition included appropriate work pace, good work posture, appropriate psychological demands, strong leadership, good co-worker and supervisor support, and a collegial workplace climate.

c) Our findings: Promotions and lateral moves – barriers and facilitators to accessibility

i) Barriers to accessibility of promotions and lateral moves

We found that employees with disabilities experience three key barriers to promotion and lateral move accessibility and hence to career advancement: 1) attitudinal barriers created by managers that impact employee self-identification, self-advocacy, the accommodation process, and advancement; 2) other accommodation process barriers; and 3) internal competition process barriers. A new initiative, 'Workplace 2.0' (open concept, desk hotelling), currently in the implementation phase, is causing concern for some employees with cognitive, executive functioning, hearing, and learning disabilities, and those who identify themselves as autistic or neurodiverse, as it is forecast to be a new barrier to career advancement. Open concept and unassigned seating arrangements can pose various

10 Low worker or job control means that workers do not have much control to make decisions about their work environment or how they use their skills (Institute for Work & Health, 2008).

barriers to effective job performance for employees with disabilities, such as distractions and noise, lack of privacy, and having to move heavy equipment to a different seat each day. Employees with disabilities were consulted about this new initiative but felt their concerns were not heard.

Attitudinal barriers

Managers' unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes and assumptions: Our research found that FPS employees with disabilities have experienced all of the negative attitudes and assumptions identified in the literature review either periodically or consistently through their careers. Most notably, a significant number of employees with invisible and episodic disabilities have experienced the disbelief of managers and the assumption that persons with disabilities are lazy. These individuals described how they had been made to feel that they were faking their disabilities to get accommodations so they would not have to work as hard. As such, they were denied accommodations and overlooked for, or denied, advancement opportunities. Sometimes employees felt it necessary to wear a physical marker of their disability, not ordinarily needed, to be taken seriously (such as wearing a leg brace).

We found that FPS employees perceive stigma and bias, both conscious and unconscious, as creating problems for employees with disabilities trying to advance. It is felt that there is an assumption that persons with disabilities cannot manage or lead others, and as a result, employees with disabilities tend not to be given assignments that challenge them. This could help to explain our finding that voluntary promotions were experienced by just over half of the survey participants with two-thirds of these participants experiencing mostly one or sometimes two promotions over the course of their careers (averaging just over 15 years). We also found that there was no significant difference in the number of promotions experienced by persons with different types of disabilities (visible and/or nonvisible) and impacts on work (mild, moderate, severe).

Case story: Mid-career employee whose disabilities are not believed

Participant D is a fictitious character whose story is a composite of the actual experiences of our study participants who are mid-career employees with multiple invisible disabilities whose disabilities are not believed.

D has worked at the FPS for about 15 years and has three invisible disabilities that impact them moderately at work, both chronically and episodically.

In the 15 years they have worked at the FPS they have not seen much change in the culture, despite the new *Accessible Canada Act 2019* and the launch of the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada* in 2019. They feel there is only lip service paid to the values of inclusion and accessibility as they have experienced discrimination due to their disabilities in the last 2 years.

They feel they have been mostly overlooked or screened out for promotions and lateral moves due to their disabilities. When they were offered a promotion in a different department it was rescinded due to their disabilities because they were told they could not be accommodated

Conversely, it has been insinuated over the years that they are faking or lying about their disabilities to have accommodations because they are perceived to be lazy or wanting an unfair advantage. This is despite D showing medical reports to their managers to prove their disabilities. D fights to receive accommodations and against these attitudinal barriers.

D sees all the buzz around the new accessibility legislation but feels it will not apply to them; they see peer support and mentorship for new hires fresh out of school but not as much for longer-serving employees.

D has thought about leaving the FPS on a regular basis but plans to stay because the compensation is excellent, and they feel the work they do makes a difference in the lives of others.

Self-identifying: In addition, we found that due to unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes, self-identifying was either experienced or perceived as a barrier to advancement. Self-identifying was experienced as a barrier to advancement in that employees felt stigmatized and medicalized and experienced lower expectations and decreased responsibility after they self-identified.

“ Since my disability came to be, I feel like since that day I have had to continuously prove myself to get promoted whereas I see other people get ahead and get promoted and for me I am told I can't be promoted. They don't tell me why, but I am asked to train and teach the individuals they hire instead of me. So self-identifying is a huge problem and leads to horrible treatment ”
(current employee with invisible disabilities).

Self-identifying was perceived as a barrier to advancement because employees worried or feared that self-identifying would mean being screened out, judged negatively, and/or perceived as a problem employee who would not perform as well.

Self-advocacy: Also, as a result of unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes, we found that self-advocating, including filing grievances to the union, about a lack of accommodations and other accessibility issues could lead to reprisal such as being branded a troublemaker or difficult, or overlooked for promotions and lateral moves. Employees pointed to there being a very strong power relationship whereby speaking up (“rocking the boat”) could lead to problems with their manager. Despite knowing that reprisal was a possibility, some employees continued to self-advocate as they felt it was important to fight for their needs and their rights.

Shortage of supportive managers: We found that while there are supportive managers who are accessibility allies there is a significant shortage of them. Such managers are perceived by our participants to be “very rare.” This shortage of supportive managers can

impact the choices employees with disabilities make about advancement based on a fear of not finding an equally supportive or disability confident manager in the next role. The paucity of disability confident managers throughout the organization can result in employees turning down or pursuing promotions and/or lateral moves.

Accommodation process barriers

Employees with disabilities can experience a number of barriers to requesting and/or receiving workplace accommodations for a promotions or lateral moves.

From our research we found that the accommodation processes for promotions and lateral moves presented the following five accessibility barriers to employees:

1) onus on employee to self-identify and request accommodations; 2) privacy issues; 3) managers' lack of understanding about accommodations and the process and/or negative reaction to an accommodation request; 4) onus on employee to prove their disability; and 5) onus on employee to know what accommodations they may need but unclear as to what accommodations are available. These barriers are described in more detail below:

1. In our research we found that employees had the burden of disclosing and having to ask for and re-negotiate accommodations at each transition, often to new people each time (whether an employee transitions through promotions or lateral moves or if an employee's manager changes through a transition). Employees do not like having these conversations. They can be stressful psychologically and they can feel that they are having to admit that they are different and, as a result, can feel they are being labelled. In addition, these conversations can take a lot of energy due to often negative perceptions of their abilities and lack of understanding about the accommodations needed.

2. In relation to the previous factor, we found that privacy issues and concerns around accommodation requests create barriers to transitioning. Many staff can be involved in the internal competition process for promotions and lateral moves, including human resources, disability management, and labour

relations staff, so employees are often unaware of the conversations that may be held regarding their personal information. Employees want to know that their accommodation requests will be kept confidential but because managers and employees move around a great deal in the FPS, and there is high manager turnover, they feel their personal information has the potential to be distributed widely. As such, there tends to be little sense of privacy or control of their own information, especially when they have to repeat very personal information to staff they have just met.

3. We found that some managers seem to lack understanding about accommodations not knowing how to action them and/or reacting negatively when an employee asks for them. For example, in the internal competition process, asking for accommodations can be perceived by the hiring manager and human resources staff as the employee asking for unfair advantage (and causing more work). The request may then be excessively questioned even when medical documentation is provided. This can create a bias against the employee before they start the competition, as asking for accommodations has not been normalized. As a result, employees may only ask for an accommodation if it is “mission critical,” and choose potentially to participate in an internal competition in pain rather than ask and face a negative reaction from a manager and/or co-workers. Employees with disabilities may not be allowed to apply for a promotion or be overlooked for or experience a rescinded promotion as they could not be accommodated in the potential promotion position.

4. We found that when FPS employees have to prove their disabilities and fight for their testing accommodations every time they enter an internal competition for a promotion or lateral move, even when they show a doctor’s note, they tend to feel punished and threatened.

5. Similar to previous research, we found the general feeling that employees with physical disabilities are the priority for accommodations. Managers seem able to accommodate employees who use wheelchairs but not as comfortable accommodating employees with invisible disabilities.

“ My disability is visible, which is lucky in the government because invisible disability in the government is not given the same level of respect as others, their disability is doubted. I saw people ask for similar accommodations to myself and they were rejected because people don’t believe their disability which leads to horrible consequences. I will say it has been obvious that identifying yourself with an invisible disability is not handled well within the public service ”

(current employee with a visible disability).

It was also clear from our research that employees are unsure how the FPS accommodates each type of disability, especially invisible disabilities, with the result that employees with disabilities do not know what they can ask for.

“ The only people I know who have accommodations are people with physical disabilities, which is like a completely different thing. I’m not really sure what it looks like for something like a cognitive disability ”

(recent employee with a nonvisible disability).

As well as not knowing what they can ask for, they have to know what accommodations they need, and this was also perceived as a barrier to making a request. This is because they often do not know what accommodations they will need if the tasks of the new position are not clear, and they feel the FPS does not have enough expertise to suggest appropriate accommodations.

Internal competition process barriers for a promotion or lateral transition

We found that internal competitions are often a standardized process (including application, interview, and exam) that are not fully accessible nor always an accurate measure of job success:

- For example, as exam formats do not tend to abide

by universal design (whereby extra time, large print or audio options, etc. have to be requested rather than offered to everyone) they tend to filter out employees with certain disabilities, such as those persons with nonvisible learning disabilities or who identify themselves as neurodiverse, who may require different time/task expectations.

- Elements of the internal competition process are sometimes not disclosed, so employees with disabilities cannot know what accommodations to request for the competition process when they are asked, as they do not know what they will be asked to do (similar to above when the tasks of a new position are not clear).

ii) Impacts on employees of barriers to promotions and lateral moves

We found that key impacts of experiencing accessibility barriers to and during promotions and lateral transitions, in the last 5 years, was feeling overlooked due to their disability in terms of not being asked to apply for a transition opportunity and/or feeling overlooked during the transition competition process. Feeling overlooked, though, was not indicated as much by those current employees whose disabilities impact them mildly at work¹¹.

Other key impacts of experiencing accessibility barriers included:

- Feeling “stuck in limbo,” unable to make a desired career transition due to discrimination due to disability;
- Feeling discrimination due to disability during a career transition with respect to professional development opportunities;
- Feeling discouraged through having to justify themselves and prove their disability (often to more than one person), which could be psychologically exhausting;
- Negative impacts on self-image, performance,

and career advancement which could lead to self-selecting out of internal competitions, so it becomes difficult to reach their full potential;

- Utilizing strategies to fit in such as hiding their disability, making their disability visible, and/or working within a non-accommodative system (rather than fighting it);
- Feeling forced to transition to another job away from an unaccommodating manager (as a result, though, the manager avoids being held accountable for their behaviour); and
- Negative psychosocial and mental health effects, and exacerbation of mental health conditions.

“I think ... it [transition barriers] can affect the mental health. It can be very frustrating and make me question my self-worth, like is my place really at the federal government if I can't navigate within it as an employee? It made me feel stuck, so very frustrated, very angry at the system. And I think it kind of creates a feeling of distrust in your employer”
(current employee with disabilities).

iii) Facilitators to accessibility of promotions and lateral moves

Despite the many accessibility barriers that employees with disabilities described, there were some employees who experienced accessibility facilitators to and within promotion and lateral transitions.

Similar to previous research, we found employees experienced the following transition facilitators:

- Good relationship with a manager who is supportive and accepting and who holds conversations about accessibility needs with all employees (not just employees with disabilities) thus enabling important opportunities for disclosure and/or accessibility discussions. Such managers also provide training, advancement, and advocacy opportunities, and understand about barriers. Some study participants said they had experienced managers who are disability confident

11 'Mildly impacted at work' employees made up 26.9% of our 290 survey participants who were current employees who answered this survey question (other impacts include moderate, severe, and a combination of mild, moderate and severe).

and great allies and this meant the world to them but they acknowledged that these managers are “very rare.”

- Accessible onboarding to the culture of the new work location and accessible training for the new position.
- Transitioning from and/or to a manager with disabilities or a manager that has/had other employees with disabilities can mean the transition is smooth and supported as the manager is likely to be empathetic to the barriers that employees with disabilities can experience and works to reduce or eliminate barriers.
- Transitioning from and/or into a department or program that works on accessibility-related initiatives (such as the Office of Public Service Accessibility) can mean a smooth and supported transition experience.
- Transitioning from and/or into a small team with a collaborative environment can mean being accommodated organically and informally as the team works together to ensure that all members have what they need to work effectively.
- Having sponsorship through the Mentorship Plus program (as described in the Environmental Scan section of this report), as a sponsor is a member of the executive team in the FPS who is paired with an employee to help them find their way through the career advancement system, introduce them to and within informal networks, and to ensure opportunities to build executive skills are accessed.
- Experiencing social support and feedback from coworkers during a career transition.
- Accessibility, Accommodations, and Adapted Computer Technology (AACT) team – helpful, efficient, inclusive.

iv) Impacts on employees of facilitators for promotions and lateral moves

Key impacts on employees of experiencing accessibility facilitators included:

- Feeling comfortable and happy;
- Feeling treated fairly (perceiving organizational

fairness);

- Feeling supported emotionally;
- Feeling more comfortable to self-identify in accessibility-focused positions;
- Receiving mentorship from manager;
- Being in a position that plays to their strengths;
- Feeling encouraged, realizing potential;
- Feeling connected to new job;
- Feeling at home and welcome;
- Being myself rather than proving myself; and
- Feeling part of team - valued and that contributions matter.

Case story: Recent employee experiencing an accessible work environment

Participant C is a fictitious character whose story is a composite of the actual experiences of our study participants who are recent employees with disabilities who have worked at the FPS for 5 years or less and who have had a positive and accessible employment experience.

C is a recent employee at the FPS and joined her team in early 2020. She has an invisible disability and is also a member of another employment equity group and had self-identified during the application process as she wanted to be understood and open about her situation. C had a positive hiring experience whereby she felt welcomed and supported. The manager, in the early stages of the application and the interview process, communicated with her proactively to ask her if she needed any accommodations for the hiring process. The manager also made sure that the accommodations she asked for were implemented fully in a timely manner.

After receiving the job offer, C attended onboarding courses and her new manager provided her with all the accessibility resources she might need for her job related to her disability.

Interestingly, though, she found that her manager did not seem to know how to support her as a person who identifies with another employment equity group as well as disability as there was no discussion about the supports available to persons in that other equity group. C felt that the FPS needs greater awareness of intersectionality.

C is enjoying her current job and is receiving support from her colleagues and being recognized for her work skills by the management team.

C is planning to stay with the FPS because, despite the negative stories that she has heard from longer-serving employees with disabilities, she thinks she is receiving the support she needs to advance in her career and is optimistic about her future. She is hoping to join the Mentorship Plus program for employees in employment equity groups to accelerate her career, but she feels it would have been helpful to have a peer mentor who identifies with the same equity groups as herself from the start of her new job to complement the support she received from her manager.

v) Self-identifying and trust - impact on career advancement

In our research, we found that some participants felt that whether a person self-identifies or not depends on how much they trust their manager, human resources staff, and co-workers (greater trust reduces feelings of vulnerability involved in disclosure) and the balance between whether they are able to hide their disability and/or self-accommodate. When there is a lack of trust, for example, some employees label themselves as self-denying, whereby they actively hide or suppress their disability for various reasons (such as the work environment not feeling safe enough for self-identification and/or it would be embarrassing to self-identify certain invisible disabilities). Interview participants indicated that there are informal support groups of peers who hide their disabilities.

Case story: Employee who hides some of their disabilities

Participant A is a fictitious character whose story is a composite of the actual experiences of our study participants who are current employees with multiple disabilities, some of which they hide, and that impact them mildly, moderately, and/or severely at work.

A is a motivated and dedicated public servant, who was onboarded into the Canadian FPS in 2008. A has a visible and an invisible disability and he tends to hide the invisible disability as it is episodic, but it can have a moderate impact on his work and daily life. He has chosen not to disclose this disability because he has been told by many other employees with disabilities that employees with invisible disabilities tend to experience more stigma and discrimination if they self-identify than employees with visible disabilities.

In 2008, A's first job was a casual position at the government. After that, he was able to secure a permanent full-time job in the same department. Two years ago, he applied for another position with more responsibility within his department. During the hiring process for this position, A felt afraid to disclose his invisible disability as he was concerned such a disclosure would impact the hiring decision negatively. If he had felt that the hiring manager would be supportive and open about his invisible disability, he would have disclosed it because, ideally, he would have liked to have had it accommodated. He did, though, disclose his visible disability so that this could be accommodated for the interview. This accommodation was implemented fully and in a timely manner. He managed to do well in the interview, despite having to expend lot of energy to keep his invisible disability hidden and was awarded the new position.

Unfortunately, A found that his new manager was not very supportive with respect to being open to accommodating his visible disability and he was asked to provide medical evidence to prove

the severity of this disability. This made A feel vulnerable and disrespected. In addition, this new position was going to be more demanding and cause his invisible disability to impact him more. He was afraid to disclose it to this new manager as he did not feel she would understand what accommodations he might need. As a result, A undertook a lateral transition to escape this unsupportive manager only to find that the next manager also lacked understanding and flexibility and seemed to perceive accessibility as an extra duty for which there was no time. A is now struggling without the necessary accommodations to do the best work he can and has joined an informal support group of other employees with disabilities who are also hiding their invisible disabilities due to fear of negative attitudes from managers and co-workers if they disclose.

As a result of his experiences A has started to self-advocate, pushing for his rights and accommodations and the rights of others, even though he feels this may negatively impact his career advancement as he knows of other employees with disabilities who have been branded troublemakers for advocating and “rocking the boat.” Despite this career journey, A is going to stay with the public service to fight to try to make it more accessible as he does find the work very rewarding.

When there is trust between the employee and manager, self-identifying can feel like a “protective element” to receive accommodations, and a “relief,” as one current employee stated: *“Self-identifying meant I didn’t have to stay in the shadows, it was a relief and emotionally I felt freer as I could talk about my disability as a challenge rather than something I had to hide. Declaring gave me a certain amount of power, if they are asking me this question, I am going to have a better chance of getting other positions in the service.”*

Similarly, another current employee said: *“Self-identifying in the interview to my future boss, felt like a weight lifted off, boss was so professionally understanding, I felt straight*

away I would be welcomed and not judged. This was important as I have an invisible disability. Want people to know me for me, give my best shot and be open and honest about the situation or perspective I’m coming from. I try my best to own my full self.”

vi) Managers’ challenges to implementing and improving accessible promotion transitions

Managers with and without lived experience of disabilities shared with us the key challenges they feel they face to implementing and improving accessible promotion transitions.

- Information – they need more information specifically about who to reach out to for support when an employee with a disability transitions into their department, and more information on how they can better help employees with disabilities who do not make transitions or get promotions.
- Training and development – they need more training and development to help them understand persons with disabilities and what accommodations are and why they are needed, and there needs to be more of a focus on reducing unconscious bias.
- Support - they need more support to have accessibility conversations with employees with disabilities, as many of them are “burning out right now”; they feel they have the desire to have these conversations but the energy and space to create the time for employees with disabilities is not there.
- Policies and practices – seem to be set currently by people who do not have lived experience of disability as these policies and practices tend to be perceived as making employees with disabilities “jump through hoops,” and making managers’ jobs more difficult. For example:

- o Duty to Accommodate policy framework – managers said that this is in place but employees with disabilities are still made to prove their disability.
- o Accommodation Passport (currently being piloted) – managers feel that the onus will still be on the employee with disabilities to initiate the accommodation process as it will not be a formal document that managers can request. Employees will have to hand it to their manager, and then their manager, who may not be trained, will have to figure out what to do with this document. The Passport will be received differently by different departments, some will embrace it and others will ignore it, so it could give employees a false sense of security that it is going to open all the doors for them.
- o Self-identifying for an internal transition hiring competition – managers said this needs more attention to prevent employees having to self-identify three different times during a competition.

“ I've worked in [a number of] departments over [a long tenure] and it [knowing how to work with employees with disabilities] all comes from my personal experience as a person with disabilities and the struggles I have had throughout the system. Unfortunately, we as an employer have a very large hole to fill. We are starting to get there; people are willing to start discussing. But there's nothing, even in the checklist world, to say if you are hiring somebody new [with disabilities] these are the groups in your organization that you should reach out to in order to start to get that support on the way”
(current manager with disabilities).

vii) Human resources staff perspectives on the challenges managers face to implementing and improving accessible career transition practices

Human resources staff with and without lived experience of disabilities shared with us the key challenges they feel managers face in implementing and improving accessible promotion transitions.

- Education - managers need enhanced education to be more forward-thinking, flexible, and understanding with respect to looking externally or internally to hire employees with different capabilities into a role. However, the structure in which managers work can make this difficult as it tends to be focused on hiring specific capabilities.
- Resources – it can be difficult to get information about how to best support employees with disabilities and the best course of action, as accessibility information tends to be scattered.
- Communication - managers need to be open to active and proactive communication with employees about, for example, how they need to be accommodated. Dialogue and collaboration are key.
- Support - managers need support from human resources staff as they can feel uncomfortable in employee transition accommodation situations.
- Accommodation process - when a manager wants to promote employees with disabilities who need accommodations the managers own work can suffer as delays and other barriers in the accommodation process require all of their focus. This is especially the case when a multitude of units are involved in the accommodation process. In addition, when accommodation delays are very long, the employees could have decided to leave the FPS or are no longer able to work or be considered for the promotion due to the delay.
- Employee disclosure – once an employee discloses, managers can become incapacitated about what to do; they can worry that whatever they do, such as providing accommodations, might set a precedent for other employees who might stir up resentment in a team.

- Time – managers often have to complete processes as quickly as possible and may not consider, for example, if a qualification for an internal staffing process is necessary or if it is posing a barrier (they may be using an old statement of merit or an old assessment tool without considering if this is limiting to persons with disabilities).
- Bureaucracy - if managers want to make improvements at their level there is room to manoeuvre, but if they want to make change that involves other teams and needs broader approvals, there can be complications to make the FPS machine itself, and all its working pieces, change.

d) Our findings: Return-to work (RTW) transition

We suggest from our research that enhancing the accessibility of the RTW transition, as well as the promotion and lateral move transitions, could have implications for improving retention. This is because a high percentage of current and former employees indicated that the RTW transition process throughout the FPS needs to be more accessible.

i) Barriers to accessibility of RTW transitions and their impacts on employees

In our research, employees with disabilities explained how they experience the following barriers, some of which are associated with low job control, and the impact these barriers have on them as shown in table 5:

Table 5: Barriers to RTW transition accessibility and their impact on employees

Barriers to RTW transition accessibility	Impact on employees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived lack of management training, understanding, empathy around the RTW transition. • Lack of structured RTW protocol and dialogue with manager, as such, sensitive information shared widely. • Long, complicated process to put doctor’s instructions in place and receive (sometimes limited) accommodations. • Long-term disability (LTD) leave encouraged by managers instead of RTW, seemingly in some cases to avoid having to accommodate the employee on their RTW; employees fight going on LTD if they want to return to work. • Feeling forced to self-identify on RTW as needed to show doctor’s letter. • Forced to take specific job offered after Health Canada’s Fitness to Work Evaluation, this can sometimes mean a demotion. • Lack of communication about accommodations needed by employee on their RTW between disability management staff (such as a RTW Coordinator) and employee’s manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel unsupported by manager • Feel discriminated against and harassed • Have to fight to return to work to avoid going on long-term disability leave • Feel could be demoted or fired • Feel like a burden and a problem • Feel isolated and ostracised • Mental and physical health conditions exacerbated • Feel that performance and career advancement will be negatively impacted • Feel punished if file a grievance about an inaccessible RTW transition

ii) Facilitators to accessibility of RTW transitions

We found that key factors that facilitated employees participating fully in the RTW transition without barriers included:

- Supportive manager, team, disability management, and labour relations staff;
- Supportive union representative;
- Sponsorship through the Mentorship Plus program;
- Accommodation process facilitated in a timely manner (such as through access to Accessibility, Accommodation, and Adaptive Computer Technology (AACT) team, Personnel Psychology Centre or ergonomic assessment); and
- Accommodations implemented fully and in a timely manner (such as flexible schedule for a gradual return to work, accessible workspace).

iii) Self-identifying during the RTW transition and its impact on employees

Similar to previous research, we found that if FPS employees with disabilities have not already self-identified prior to going on their leave, self-identifying during the RTW transition can have negative impacts. These impacts can include feeling that their manager will now be thinking of demoting them if their accommodations are no longer deemed reasonable for that position, and feeling treated with kid gloves, feeling isolated, and worried that they may not be given enough opportunities to develop new skills to advance in their career following the leave.

e) Our findings: Systemic and cultural factors that impact career transition accessibility across the FPS

From our interviews and focus groups, the following key systemic and cultural factors were perceived by employees with disabilities, and managers and human resources staff with and without disabilities to impact career transition accessibility.

1. A disconnect between what is said about accessibility and what is actioned, as well as a lack of accountability measures.
2. A check box, bureaucratic mentality whereby there is a focus on employment equity quotas, statistics, and processes rather than a focus on the experience of persons. For example:
 - o The current focus on hiring 5000 new employees with disabilities by 2025, as stated in the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada*, seems to be taking away from retaining, promoting, and cultivating the skills of those currently employed. As such, current employees with disabilities explained how they feel their needs are not being met and they lack opportunities to grow.
3. Departments are perceived to be silos, with different ways of operating, that are “reinventing the wheel everywhere.” As such when employees change departments, they are subject to a different administration and file in terms of waiting for accommodations and there is not enough communication and collaboration about career transition accessibility initiatives between departments.
4. Central agencies, the Public Service Commission and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, which guide each department, put accessibility policies in place that blanket all departments, but they are not necessarily aware of the pressures within each department. As such, these blanket policies may not be perceived as a pressing reality for each department so they may not act to change their processes to enable accessibility.
5. Managers can feel over-burdened to the point that they feel dread and fear about the amount of work involved in including and accommodating employees with disabilities, especially those with invisible disabilities. Our participants felt that this is the mentality for about 95% managers in government.

6. Policies and processes are perceived to be biased towards the average person, a form of systemic ableism, because accessibility is not necessarily understood to be part of the system or culture; it is not normalized. This can mean accessibility is perceived as extra work which can deter employees from asking for support for career transitions and can deter managers from providing it.
7. Disability disclosure (or self-identifying) is currently perceived differently across the FPS by human resources staff, managers, and employees.
 - o Human resources staff – some want more self-identification so managers can be aware and can enhance accessibility practices, whereas others emphasise the importance of employees disclosing their need for an accommodation rather than disclosing their disability.
 - o Managers – some fear disability disclosure, especially disclosure of invisible disabilities due to its perceived increase on their workload.
 - o Employees - tend to perceive self-identifying as leading to negative outcomes, and some of those that do self-identify feel they are discriminated against (e.g., not believed they have a disability, thought to be lazy, etc.). Also, some find self-identifying has no impact on obtaining accommodations, supports, or how a manager operates.

Despite these seemingly negative systemic and cultural impacts on career transition accessibility, there is a general sentiment from our study participants that the FPS is going in the right direction with respect to enhancing accessibility and that accessibility concerns are starting to be addressed. Recent surveys in particular the 2019 Benchmarking Study for Workplace Accommodations, as well as the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada*, launched in 2019, were perceived by some as helping to guide change. However, some of the managers and human resources staff in

our focus groups, who work in diversity and inclusion settings, were not aware of the details of the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada* and felt it has not been promoted widely nor socialized within the FPS – they are not sure of its implications nor how they can be part of the solution. These managers were very aware of the goal to hire 5000 persons with disabilities by 2025, as this has been promoted widely, but they did not associate that goal with the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada*.

f) Our findings: Enhancing accessibility of career transitions within the FPS – the ideas of employees with disabilities, managers, and human resources staff

Our research participants provided many ideas about how the FPS could enhance career transitions for persons with disabilities working in the FPS. We provide a list of these ideas for thought and discussion.

Employees with disabilities' ideas

- Transition Resource/Specialist as a neutral resource throughout FPS – expert who:
 - o Provides a comfortable and safe environment for employees to discuss issues – provides a sense of confidentiality as arm's length from the FPS. Transition Resource is not there to do the manager's work, the manager is still the main person working with employees and organizing transition accommodations, accessible practices, etc.
 - o Provides a space to talk safely about problems related to work situations, such as accommodation process issues.
 - o Facilitates navigation of career transitions (arm's length) to ensure employees are treated fairly (similar to an Ombudsperson) – separate from

- managers and human resources staff.
- o Collaborates with employees and managers throughout the accommodation process.
- o Trains employees with disabilities in self-advocacy to be proactive through their communication in handling other staff biases or stereotypes.
- o Has expertise in disability, disability rights and accessibility law, accommodations, accessibility, career development and transitions, knows how the FPS operates, understands and knows how to engage in a union environment – works with all organizations and departments – facilities, procurement, IT, payroll, etc.
- Mentorship and buddy (peer) systems in place for onboarding to new positions and career development - to speak to others about an employee with disabilities skill sets and to motivate the employee.
- Senior leadership and managers are held accountable for fostering and enhancing accessibility, not just for meeting employment equity group quotas.
- Universal design for learning (UDL) – through collaboration with employees with disabilities so that accommodations, supports, and equity resources are accessible and offered to everyone (“gold standard”).
- Managers, Directors, and Director Generals who are disability champions and/or are themselves disabled to destigmatize disability.
- Managers are mandatorily trained and educated about disabilities, accessibility and accommodation processes; they are kind, compassionate, empathetic, and flexible.
- Managers work with employees with disabilities to come up with accommodation options; there is a respectful relationship.
- Managers are open-minded about and believe accommodation requests.
- Accommodation Passport is in place, so employees do not have to start from scratch with the accommodation process when they change positions, departments and/or managers.
- Accommodations in place (well) before a new position begins.
- Internal competition process – inclusive job postings, and assessments less standardized to be inclusive to neurodiversity.

Managers’ ideas

- Culture change is needed towards accessibility that starts at the top with senior leadership leading and promoting systemic change. They say that hiring, promoting and retaining persons with disabilities is the right thing to do, putting it into managers’ performance agreements, and developing global accessibility standards centralized for the whole of FPS and for management to be held accountable for meeting these standards.
- Efforts need to be leveraged across departments to work together to create a new culture across the board; there needs to be a focus on helping everyone, including persons with disabilities, succeed and to move away from “sink or swim” and “trial by fire” mentalities when an employee starts a new job.
- A hub of internal accessibility experts/resources, as well as mandatory accessibility training, who can support managers through facilitation of all career transitions including the accommodation processes.
- A team of disability experts (like the neutral transition specialist mentioned by employees) that can dedicate themselves to the lifecycle of an employee with a disability in the organization to become an accessible and inclusive organization.

Human resources staff ideas

- Senior managers (Ministry leaders, etc.) need to reinforce and push down the values of accessibility and inclusion and drive change so it is clear that

this is a priority. Need direction from the top to know where we are going in order to move forward with change.

- Senior managers need to implement mandatory training for managers on accessibility awareness, unconscious bias, understanding different abilities, and on where they can turn for help implementing accessible practices.
- Promote culture of inclusion by managers demonstrating that it is a priority for them,
- Human resources staff need to reach out to other organizations in the FPS already working with persons with disabilities to see how it works in the long term, and to understand how their processes can differ to be accommodating, and more open and inclusive.
- Neutral subject matter experts in each department who live accessibility and deal with issues on a daily basis from whom human resources staff can get advice as this would give human resources staff more confidence to pass on information and support managers knowing the information comes from such an expert. Currently human resources staff do not have the most robust supports to help them engage with managers; the information to share with managers is available but it is hard to locate and navigate.
- A support office for managers which is a one stop shop so that the information about accessibility and accommodations is in one place. Human resources staff then support managers with what to do with all the information.
- Full-time people to support the career transitions of persons with disabilities without creating an extra layer of bureaucracy to slow down what is already in place. The key is the relationship and dialogue the employee will eventually have with the manager. Transition specialists/resource staff can accompany managers in the process to facilitate dialogue taking place as such dialogue can take a lot of awareness about disability and accessibility.

- Consultation with persons with disabilities specifically for feedback regarding accommodations as this is the best way to innovate.

g) Key issues from our findings and their implications for transitioning within the FPS

Considering all the findings from the research regarding within-FPS transitions for people with disabilities, five key issues stood out that have the potential for negative implications for the FPS: 1) unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes; 2) managers' lack of accessibility-related skills and knowledge; 3) low level of employee confidence in accessibility policies and practices; 4) inconsistent processes; and 5) low level of employee confidence in management. Each of these are discussed in detail below.

1: Unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes

Employees with disabilities and the managers and human resources staff with and without disabilities noted that many managers seem to have unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes towards accommodation and disabilities, especially towards nonvisible disabilities. These are significant barriers to the accessibility of promotions, lateral moves, and return-to-work transitions.

Why is this important: When high quality education regarding accessibility-related skills and knowledge is integrated, managers' views are less likely to be constrained by unconscious bias about disability. They are more likely to trust employees with disabilities and realize their contribution to the workplace because incorrect assumptions about persons with disabilities and career advancement have been challenged and dispelled (Strindlund et al., 2019; Telwatte et al., 2017). This, in turn, creates a more inclusive environment in which all employees, including those with disabilities, can thrive.

Potential negative implications: If unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes within management remain unchecked, then employees with disabilities will continue to experience stigmatization, prejudice, and discrimination that can deter them from self-identifying, requesting accommodations, self-advocating, and/or making career advancement transitions. Fear of the potential negative impacts of unconscious bias can result in employees having low satisfaction and/or making the decision to separate, which increases the likelihood of losing high potential employees.

2: Managers' lack of accessibility-related skills and knowledge

Employees with disabilities and managers and human resources staff with and without disabilities indicated that managers often lack accessibility-related skills and knowledge, which also emerged as a significant barrier to the accessibility of promotions, lateral moves, and return-to-work transitions.

Why this is important: If managers are given the opportunity to improve their skills and knowledge regarding the work needs of persons with disabilities, it can lead to more supportive and accessible work environments that enable employees with disabilities to transition and advance in their careers (Copeland et al., 2010; Lindsay et al., 2018c).

Accessibility-related skills and knowledge can be enhanced when there is regular mandatory accessibility training, ongoing professional development, and resource support for managers (Enayati et al., 2019; Schur et al., 2017). With respect to resource support, a transition resource person to whom employees and managers can turn for accessibility-related advice and problem-solving can enhance the disclosure and accommodation processes and help build a more inclusive work environment (Denton et al., 2010; Erickson et al., 2014; Swenor & Meeks, 2019). In addition, accessibility accountability measures ensure that managers are implementing and improving accessible work environments and engaging in inclusive leadership due to their training and the resources to which they have access.

Potential negative implications: A lack of accessibility-related skills and knowledge amongst managers can prevent accommodation during promotions, lateral moves, and return-to-work transitions and negatively impact employee self-identification and self-advocacy (von Schrader et al., 2014). While there are some highly skilled managers in the FPS engaging in inclusive leadership, this is not yet common. This can create barriers whereby employees may not pursue promotions, or interesting work through lateral moves, if there is the possibility that a new manager will not be as inclusive and supportive as their current manager.

3: Low level of employee confidence in accessibility policies and practices

In our research, employees with disabilities, as well as managers and human resources staff with and without disabilities, indicated accessibility policies and practices can be very bureaucratic and impersonal and can be experienced by some as de-humanizing. They noted concerns around the privacy, transparency, and competency in the implementation of existing policies and practices.

Why this is important: Policies and practices actualized with high levels of competency and respect of privacy, while remaining somewhat flexible to individual differences, can instill a greater sense of confidence and facilitate more effective collaboration between managers and employees on accessibility-related issues (Denton et al., 2010; Nevala et al., 2014). In addition, transparent, clearly outlined accessibility policies and practices that are available to everyone and widely publicised as a normed resource can reduce co-workers' perceptions that employees with disabilities are receiving 'unfair' advantages (Bonaccio et al., 2020; von Schrader et al., 2014).

Potential negative implications: When there is a low level of confidence in the implementation of accessibility policies and practices, employees with disabilities are less likely to engage with them. This can lead to employees not accessing accommodations that could potentially support them to better thrive in the workplace.

4: Inconsistent processes

In our research, employees with disabilities and managers and human resources staff with and without disabilities indicated that there is inconsistency in the quality and availability of accessibility supports with respect to promotions, lateral moves, and return-to-work transitions across the FPS. Some employees experience mostly barriers whereas others reported their processes were well facilitated. This inconsistency depends on 1) the attitude of the manager and their experience working with employees with disabilities; 2) the culture of the department, organization, or agency with respect to accessibility; 3) the type of job; and 4) the type(s) of disability with which employees identify (visible and/or nonvisible).

Why this is important: It is important to have consistency within career transitions with respect to quality, availability of accessibility support, and attitudes regarding disability and accessibility across the FPS because such consistency implies fairness. Fairness is positively associated with inclusive workplace cultures and is a key predictor of an employee with disabilities feeling socialized into the workplace culture and feeling like a valued member of the organization (Clark, 2001; Rogers & Ashforth, 2017). Consistency can be enhanced when the organization's leadership makes accessibility a priority and sets organization-wide standards that everyone is accountable to uphold.

Potential negative implications: If inconsistency in career transition accessibility experiences continues across the FPS, whereby an employee's experience depends on whether or not managers and/or departments, organizations, and agencies choose to buy-in to accessibility, then employees will be unlikely to make career advancement transitions for fear of finding themselves in an unsupportive work environment. Consequently, separation intention will increase, and it will be more difficult to achieve diversity at the top of the FPS.

5: Low level of employee confidence in management

When employees with disabilities encounter managers who are not open to or knowledgeable about accommodations for people with visible and invisible disabilities, who do not apply the accommodations policies consistently, or who display unconscious bias, stigmatizing or stereotyping behaviour, their confidence in those managers is impacted negatively.

Why this is important: A sense of confidence in management's knowledge, competency, and attitude related to accessibility is important because this enables dialogue between managers and employees with disabilities about the accommodation process and enhances the likelihood of self-identification (Nevala et al., 2014). Employees tend to feel less vulnerable sharing personal information when they have a sense of confidence and trust in their manager (St-Arnaud & Pelletier, 2014).

Potential negative implications: If employees with disabilities, especially those with invisible disabilities, are not able to have confidence or trust in their managers then they are less likely to self-identify, request accommodations, self-advocate, and/or seek career growth. These can present barriers to them performing to their full potential.

In summary, a sense of confidence and trust can be enhanced when there is supportive and inclusive leadership, when there is transparency and consistency around policies and practices, when there is respect for privacy, and when there are readily available accessibility resources to facilitate transitions.

4.4 Out of the FPS - Exploring the separation transition and its reasons

a) Introduction

In this section a review of previous research findings about separation are presented. This is followed by a description of our research findings¹² including the reasons employees with disabilities think about leaving the FPS, reasons they choose to stay, and the reasons they give for choosing to separate. Barriers and facilitators to an accessible separation process, particularly for separating for long-term disability leave, are also described as well as the perspectives of former employees on self-identifying. This section also includes one case story of a fictitious character that reflects the actual experiences of a specific sub-population of our study participants. This case story describes the essential components of transitions that reflect key issues from our findings. This section concludes with the implications of our findings for transitioning out of the FPS.

b) Literature Review

i) Separation or turnover intention

The literature on separation from a workplace focuses primarily on turnover intention and ways to prevent separation (retention strategies) rather than on the separation transition itself and employees' experiences of this transition. For example, a recent study by Chordiya (2020) with federal employees with disabilities in the United States, concluded that, compared to employees without lived experience of disabilities, federal employees with disabilities have lower job satisfaction, lower organizational inclusion, and higher turnover intentions, with disability status significantly increasing the odds of turnover intentions. However, perceived organizational fairness, empowerment, and cooperativeness lowered turnover intentions for employees with disabilities and an organizations' openness to diversity contributed significantly to lower turnover intentions. Also, Romeo et al. (2020), investigated the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention among workers with disabilities and concluded that perceptions of better treatment by management and coworkers predict lower turnover intentions.

Canadian studies which focused on the disabled proportion of the population employed either in the public or the private sector have noted that persons with disabilities are at increased risk of early retirement from the labour force and cascading job change (job changes resulting in lower wages) (Campolieti, 2009), relative to their counterparts without lived experience of disability (Denton et al., 2010). Also, Laaksonen and Gould (2015) found that employees with mental health related disabilities are less likely to return to work after a leave (so more likely to separate) than employees with musculoskeletal diseases, injury, and other disabilities or diseases.

Although voluntary retirement is the most common form of retirement, a sizeable proportion of workers with disabilities experience involuntary retirement (Denton et al., 2010). Early retirement and cascading job change have negative effects on the worker, the employer, the labour force, the economy, and society as a whole (Campolieti & Krashinsky, 2006; Jones et al., 2018; Ng & Sears, 2015).

When employers are willing and able to make accommodations for workers with disabilities, this can be effective in preventing loss of workers to other jobs or to retirement, because accommodations offset the financial burden for employees of premature retirement and job change due to disability (Burkhauser, Butler, & Kim, 1995; Campolieti & Krashinsky, 2006). Empirical evidence supports the contention that with specific preventative actions from employers,

12 The data sources for these findings are shown in Appendix 7.2.

the rate of the premature and unnecessary loss of employees with disabilities can be meaningfully reduced (Burkhauser et al., 1995; Campolieti, 2009).

c) Our findings: Reasons for separation and the separation transition

i) Reasons for thinking of separating, staying, and deciding to separate

In this section, prior to exploring our research findings regarding the accessibility barriers and facilitators for the separation transition, we provide reasons employees give for thinking of separating from the FPS (about 40% of current employees we interviewed indicated that they were currently thinking of separating or had thought of separating), the reasons they give for staying, and the reasons they give for deciding to separate. These are described in the following table.

Table 6: Reasons for thinking of separating, reasons for staying, and reasons for deciding to separate from the FPS

Reasons for thinking of separating from the FPS	Reasons for staying with the FPS	Reasons for deciding to separate from the FPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling pushed out, to quit, retire, or take a leave, by being made to feel they do not fit their job because of their disability • Feeling work environment is toxic – “old boy’s club,” abuse of authority by some • Tired of fighting and struggling to receive workplace accommodations – worn out, angry • Ineffectual and untimely workplace accommodations • Feeling disrespected, unchallenged, stuck – not utilized to full potential • For mental health reasons and stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job security – excellent pay, benefits, pension • Impactful work • Private sector seen as less accommodating • Too old to find another job • To fight and tell their stories to help other employees with disabilities <p>This shows that the FPS is not starting from scratch as persons with disabilities view the job security and impactful work as worth staying for despite the reasons for separating, and they view the FPS as ahead of the private sector with respect to accommodations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological well-being • Experience of discrimination due to disability • Unmet workplace accommodation needs • Retirement • Feeling “stuck in limbo,” unable to make desired career transitions and meet personal career goals • Overlooked for or denied promotion • Improve work-life balance • Changing to another job outside of the FPS

“... they ask you over and over again, on a monthly basis or over a few months, are you thinking of retiring, which is sort of a passive aggressive way. They don't ask anybody else. They just come to your desk out in the open ... and ask you when you're going to retire”
(current employee with disabilities)

Case story: Recent employee who is thinking of leaving

Participant B is a fictitious character whose story is a composite of the actual experiences of our study participants who are recent employees with disabilities who have worked at the FPS for 5 years or less and who are thinking of leaving.

B joined the public service in 2017 after several experiences in the private sector. B has extensive experience in the accounting and finance fields and earned the Certified Public Accountant CPA certificate in 2019.

B has multiple nonvisible disabilities associated with mental health and back pain issues but during interviews does not usually self-identify her disabilities as she feels she can mitigate these issues while at work. She feels that if she did self-identify she will be perceived by a manager as problematic and less than competent, and that co-workers may perceive her as receiving unfair advantage if she were to be accommodated.

After starting her new job with the public service, B realized that she could no longer hide her disabilities, and that she required flexible work hours and an ergonomic chair and desk to perform her job effectively. B decided to self-identify to her manager because she had a positive hiring process experience with the public service and read about the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada* and other initiatives to enhance accessibility; she thought that the manager would be supportive and accommodating. The manager approved her ergonomic desk and chair. However,

the manager was not understanding about flexible work hours to accommodate her mental health issues as she believed that B was faking her disability to avoid coming to the office every day.

B continued to work regular hours and implemented her own strategies to cope, but she realized that since she self-identified to her manager, the work environment had changed dramatically; she started experiencing harassment from co-workers and feeling that her manager was pushing her to move to a different department. B applied to be promoted to a manager's position in a different department to advance in her career and escape the unsupportive environment. However, B was not granted the higher position due to her accommodation needs as she was told that managers have to be in the office during regular work hours. B had not self-identified before or during this interview, so she wondered how the interview panel knew she might request accommodations. This made her concerned about the privacy of her personal information and with how many people it was shared without her knowing.

B is now disillusioned and disheartened and feels the public service is not serious about enhancing accessibility and is currently thinking of leaving the public service to go back to the private sector. She feels her career is “stuck in limbo” and that she can no longer handle the level of stress she is dealing with on a daily basis. If she leaves, the public service will lose a highly skilled and valuable employee. B's peers with disabilities, though, are encouraging her to stay as they feel that the new accessibility initiatives will gradually start to make a positive difference to the work culture.

The project participants who were current employees in the process of separating and former employees **were mainly persons with nonvisible disabilities (single and multiple) whose disabilities impact them severely and/or chronically at work. Also, they had all left or were leaving involuntarily.**

For former employees, we found that a higher percentage indicated that they would not apply again to work at the FPS, compared to those that would apply again for the following reasons.

Table 7: Former employees' reasons for and for not applying again to work at the FPS

Former employees - reasons for applying again	Former employees - reasons for not applying again
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances • Pension • Previous experience of support and accommodation <p><i>*But would choose not to disclose their disability again if re-hired*</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination and unsupportive management • Stress • No possibility of career progression Retirement

ii) Accessibility of the separation process for transitioning out of the FPS

In terms of transitions that need to be more accessible to employees with disabilities, we found that the separation process was the least selected FPS transition. It fell after, in descending order, promotions, RTW transitions, lateral moves, onboarding into the FPS, and downward moves. This could imply either that the separation process is already accessible or that other transitions are perceived to be more important for enhanced accessibility. Although employees do think about leaving the FPS, for reasons described above, the general sentiment from our research is that employees with disabilities would rather stay working at the FPS than leave. The separation transition then, perhaps, is not seen as important a focus for accessibility enhancement as other transitions (promotions, lateral moves, and RTW) that could improve career advancement, workplace inclusion, and retention.

However, it is still important to explore the accessibility of the separation transition as it is a transition that all employees will have to go through at the end of their career with the FPS or, that some will have to go through if they go on long-term disability (LTD) or another long-term leave. We found from our interviews, survey, and a focus group the following barriers and facilitators to separation transition accessibility.

iii) Barriers to accessibility of the separation transition

- Long and complicated process lacking transparency with much paperwork.
- Separating for LTD leave - bureaucratic, impersonal, and unfriendly process.
- Separating for LTD leave - lack of support due to managers and human resources staff perceived lack of accessibility-related knowledge and skills on how to help persons with disabilities feel supported (support should be more than giving out forms and sending a person to a website).
- Separating for short or long-term disability leave - unwritten rules that rely on management discretion in often confusing policies about short-term and long-term disability leaves (for example, employees may have to use sick leave if they are on short-term disability leave, so once they are back at work, they have no sick days left in their bank to rely on).

iv) Impacts on employees of barriers in the separation transition

- Feel isolated and on their own
- Feel humiliated, disrespected, and discriminated against
- Feel overwhelmed and embarrassed

“There is an amount of shame with reaching the end of your career, you want to contribute and be a part of the team but the ability to do so is diminishing ... when you are a previous high performer and things start to go down, when we leave it's like we were never there because people are afraid to reach out when you go on disability, there is no recognition of your previous work and it's isolating”
(current employee with disabilities).

v) Facilitators to accessibility of the separation transition and their impact on employees

Generally, supports for the separation transition were not experienced. The few that were reported made the employees feel supported and not alone. These included:

- Supportive manager and director – helping to find answers to employee's questions, and communicating effectively about the transition process in terms of the forms and bureaucratic process;
- Supportive manager who goes outside of the FPS to bring in someone trained about disability issues to facilitate transitions (this is a standard practice in some departments);
- Human resources staff support about pension issues; and
- Supportive union staff and co-workers.

vi) Self-identification while working in the FPS – perspectives of former employees

Former employees who self-identified while working in the FPS indicated the following reasons for doing so: to receive workplace accommodations, to be open about who they were, they thought it would be helpful for the employer to know, they felt comfortable, and because they were informed about their rights to workplace accommodation. However, most of these former employees indicated that self-identifying their disability had a *negative* impact on their work at the FPS and that if they did apply again to work at the FPS some of them would choose not to disclose their disability again.

Former employees who chose not to self-identify while working in the FPS indicated the following reasons: they felt uncomfortable, wanted to maintain their privacy, worried about a negative reaction from co-workers and their manager, worried about a negative impact on their employment and on their long-term career prospects, and they did not know to whom, or where and when, to disclose their disability. However, these former employees indicated that *not* self-identifying their disability had a *neutral* (neither negative nor positive) impact on their work at the FPS.

d) Key issues from our findings and their implications for transitioning out of the FPS

Considering all the findings from the research regarding out-of-FPS transitions for persons with disabilities, two key issues stood out that have the potential for negative implications for the FPS: 1) lack of effective employee support for the separation transition; and 2) separation intention related to unsupportive workplace environments. Both are discussed in detail below.

1: Lack of effective employee support for the separation transition: In our research, employees with disabilities (some of whom were currently on long-term disability leave) indicated that employees tend not to receive enough effective and proactive support when they separate, whether it is a permanent separation or a separation for a long-term (LTD) leave. Support tended

to be impersonal and limited to giving out forms and directions to websites. Respondents indicated that there tended to be little consideration of the impact of this particularly challenging transition on the employee. A lack of management support can be due to unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes towards disabilities or a lack of education and awareness of the level of support required for someone going through this process.

Why this is important: It is important for employees with disabilities, as with all employees, to be supported during their separation from an organization whether it is a permanent separation or a separation for a long-term leave. Effective separation support may be even more important for a long-term leave whereby the employee with disabilities is likely to return to the organization at some point in the future. An accessible and smooth separation can enhance the employee's confidence that their eventual return-to-work transition might also be accessible, positively impacting the likelihood to return to work (Burkhauser et al., 1995; Romeo et al, 2020).

Potential negative implications: When the separation transition is approached in a highly procedural and bureaucratic way and ignores the challenge inherent in this type of transition, employees with disabilities may report feeling isolated, embarrassed, overwhelmed, and unsure of their separation process (the process differs depending on the nature of the separation: retirement, LTD leave, maternity leave, job outside the FPS, etc.). In addition, if the separation process leaves them feeling unrecognized and unacknowledged for their work at the FPS, once they leave, these former employees may be less likely to recommend the FPS as a workplace to other persons with disabilities.

2: Separation intention related to unsupportive workplace environments: In our research, a significant percentage of current employees with disabilities indicated they were thinking of separating or had thought of separating from the FPS. The key reasons given by employees included: feeling pushed out, tired of fighting for accommodations, unchallenging work, unable to transition to other roles, and experiencing a toxic work environment.

Why this is important: It is important for employees with disabilities, as with all employees, not to have to work in an unsupportive environment. Rather, employees need to perceive the organization as fair, empowering, cooperative, and open to diversity because such perceptions are related to lower separation intentions for employees with disabilities (Chordiya, 2020; Romeo et al., 2020). Unsupportive workplace environments are addressed in part when, as discussed earlier, unconscious bias and negative attitudes are tackled, and inclusive leadership is present.

Potential negative implications: If unsupportive environments continue, then the FPS's separation rate for employees with disabilities will continue to be higher than its hiring rate, and it will lose skilled workers with disabilities prematurely and unnecessarily.

In summary, attending to and improving the accessibility of the separation transition and listening to the reasons for separation can have the effect of improving attraction and retention based on learning from the experiences and feedback of these current and former employees with disabilities.

5. Key Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

In this section we provide five key higher order recommendations for enhancing career transition accessibility in the FPS: 1) address managers' unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes about disabilities, particularly nonvisible disabilities; 2) improve the implementation of accessibility policies to bolster employee confidence that they will be effectively applied; 3) address the inconsistency in the quality of key transition accessibility practices; 4) streamline onerous policies and procedures that create barriers to effective transitions; and 5) support effective transitions by creating accessibility-related Transition Resource positions and implementing more mentorship programs.

These recommendations resulted from an integration of the results of our interviews, survey, and focus groups with FPS applicants and employees with disabilities

and with FPS managers and human resources staff with and without disabilities, in addition to a review of the academic literature on career transition accessibility for persons with disabilities. These five recommendations encompass enhancing the accessibility of the career transitions from the external hiring process, to onboarding, promotions, lateral moves, return-to-work, and separation from the FPS. They all address the inclusiveness of the FPS in order to enhance retention of employees with disabilities as they are built on our findings and implications that we drew from our research which adds another layer to the value our study provides.

From our research, we found that the tackling of unconscious bias and negative attitudes, refining management support of employees' accessibility needs, and improving the accessibility of the accommodation and disability disclosure processes are key factors to reducing the barriers in each of the FPS career transitions discussed in this report and enhancing their accessibility.

Recommendation 1: Address managers' unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes about disabilities, particularly nonvisible disabilities, through enhanced training and support of managers

To address managers' unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes so they can manage, support, and accommodate employees with disabilities more effectively, especially those with invisible disabilities, we recommend:

1. Supporting the development of manager skill sets by implementing regular mandatory education and training and ongoing professional development for managers to enhance inclusive leadership about:
 - o accessibility,
 - o disability awareness (what it means to have different types of disability),
 - o ableism and disability advocacy,
 - o disability legislation and human rights for persons with disabilities,

- o sensitivity and how to have effective conversations about disability,
- o accommodations (including duty to accommodate), especially around mental health and other invisible disabilities, and
- o diversity management.

2. Improving communication about the resources available through the Office of Public Service Accessibility, such as the Accessibility Hub website launched in 2020 (a central repository for information) which provides departments and agencies guidance, tools, and best practices around accessibility. It is noted that not one participant in our study mentioned this website even though they uniformly expressed a need for such a hub, which implies either that there has been insufficient information about the Accessibility Hub or that the Hub was not mentioned as it is not effective.
3. Building capacity, competence, and expertise within the FPS to be able to suggest accommodations through hiring Transition Resource staff for employees and managers to help build this capacity (see Recommendation 5 for more details), as well as creating a centralized hub of transition accessibility information.
4. Enhancing the FPS's support of managers to address their unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes towards disabilities, especially invisible disabilities. This will increase the number of supportive, flexible, accommodating managers across the FPS that will facilitate employees with disabilities making career development and/or advancement transitions.
5. Implementing activities across the FPS that address unconscious bias and/or negative attitudes generally such as concrete, strategic planning around making enhanced accessibility a priority for action within each department, organization, and agency and increased promotion and socialization of the *Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada*.

Recommendation 2: Improve the implementation of accessibility policies and practices in order to bolster employee confidence that such policies and practices will be effectively applied across the FPS

To facilitate an enhanced sense of employee confidence in management and the implementation of accessibility policies and practices we recommend:

6. Ensuring that managers have the time, space, and resources within their roles to make accessible career transitions a priority for which they are held accountable.
7. Creating a transparent self-identification process that describes its benefits so that employees with disabilities know where their personal information goes within the FPS and understand the benefits of self-identifying.
8. Educating managers about employee self-advocacy and its benefits to create an expectation that self-advocacy will occur and that it is positive as it can lead to workplace enhancements.
9. Making it an expectation of the manager skill set that they are capable of holding conversations about accessibility needs with all employees (not just employees with disabilities), so addressing issues of the stigma around such conversations. In this way, accessibility practices are transparent and consistent for all employees.
10. Addressing privacy concerns around the accommodation process for external and internal competitions by making it clear as to where the applicants' or employees' personal information goes.
11. Addressing the transparency concerns of the accommodation process by developing a process indicating how each type of visible and invisible disability can be accommodated, with some room for new, creative accommodations, so that the onus for accommodations solutions is shared.

Recommendation 3: Address the inconsistency in the quality of key transition accessibility practices

To enhance the consistency in the quality of into, within, and out of transition accessibility practices we recommend:

12. Setting organizational wide standards for transition quality and availability of supports with respect to accessibility that senior leadership and managers are accountable to uphold.
13. Ensuring that the accommodation process and practices are consistent and clear across the FPS (and that there is not the perception that they are just available to persons with physical disabilities); accommodations are a key ingredient for transitioning effectively for many employees with disabilities and as such they need to be accessible and of the highest quality.
14. Ensuring that there is communication between hiring and onboarding managers that maintains confidentiality and privacy about new employee's self-identification and/or accommodation needs.
15. Working to understand further the implications of self-identification to gain a consistent perspective on it across the FPS amongst human resources staff, managers, and employees with disabilities.
16. Ensuring that the return-to-work transition protocol is consistent and transparent so that employees with disabilities are less likely to experience low job control.

Recommendation 4: Streamline onerous policies and procedures that create barriers to effective transitions

To modify existing and avoid the development of further onerous policies and procedures that affect transition accessibility we recommend:

17. Collaborating with employees with disabilities from the start of the development or updating of a policy or procedure related to career transitions to ensure that accessibility is enhanced for all.
18. Ensuring the input of employees with disabilities is integrated into all decisions related to accessibility.
19. Using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to design policies and procedures for all as well as ensuring that they are informed by persons with lived experience of disability.

Recommendation 5: Support effective transitions by creating accessibility-related Transition Resource positions and implementing more mentorship programs

This recommendation facilitates the other four recommendations.

To reduce unconscious bias, support the development of accessibility-related skills and knowledge, and enhance a sense of employee confidence in the accessibility expertise of the FPS and the value it places on accessibility, we recommend:

20. Hiring Transition Resource staff (who are ideally persons with disabilities) across the FPS to facilitate the accessibility of all career transitions from onboarding to separation who are:
 - o at arm's length from human resources staff with no role in performance assessment,

- o a 'go to' person for managers to help resolve accessibility issues and a 'safe' person with whom employees can discuss accessibility issues,
- o experts in accessibility, accommodations, and disability rights, and they understand how the FPS works, and
- o a mix of an Ombudsperson, university accessibility/disability support centre resource person, occupational therapist, case manager, and guidance counsellor.

21. Increasing the number of mentorship programs across the FPS to complement the work of the Transition Resource staff by facilitating career transitions to increase the likelihood of employee disclosure and retention:

- o Mentors facilitate employees with disabilities feeling wanted and valued at work and focus on advancing employees' careers from onboarding through promotion and/or lateral move transitions, and after a return-to-work transition.
- o Mentors inform employees of the supports available to them and their workplace rights and foster their self-advocacy skills to facilitate employees self-identifying and a supportive environment.
- o Mentors are assigned to applicants in the external hiring process and those who are in applicant pools, if an applicant requests one to help guide them through the process and to make them aware of the career development and advancement opportunities available once they become an employee.
- o Mentors can be co-workers/peers or higher-level managers or senior managers with or without lived experience of disability, depending on the employee's goals.

22. Highlighting career development and mentoring opportunities (including employee resource groups) during onboarding and other career transitions, including to new employees with invisible disabilities, to facilitate opportunities for career advancement.

6. References

Accessible Canada Act S.C. 2019, c. 10 (Can). Retrieved from <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/page-1.html>

Alaszewski, A. (2009). Working after a stroke: Survivors' experiences and perceptions of barriers to and facilitators of the return to paid employment. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 29(24), 1858–1869. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638280601143356>

Allen, S. A., & Carlson, G. (2003). To conceal or disclose a disabling condition? A dilemma of employment transition. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 19, 19–30.

Barclay, L. A., & Markel, K. S. (2007). Discrimination and stigmatization in work organizations: A multiple level framework for research on genetic testing. *Human Relations*, 60(6), 953–980.

Beatty, J. E., & Kirby, S. L. (2006). Beyond the legal environment: How stigma influences invisible identity groups in the workplace. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 18(1), 29–44

Beauchamp-Pryor, K. S. (2013). Purpose, process, and future direction of disability research. Sense Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-422-2>

Bonaccio, S., Connelly, C. E., Gellatly, I. R., Jetha, A., & Martin Ginis, K. A. (2020). The Participation of People with Disabilities in the Workplace Across the Employment Cycle: Employer Concerns and Research Evidence. *Journal of business and psychology*, 35(2), 135–158. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-018-9602-5>

Brannigan, G. (2016). Barriers and facilitators associated with return to work after stroke: A qualitative meta-synthesis. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 39(3), 211–222. <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638288.2016.1141242>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(77). <http://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a>

Bruyère, S. M., Erickson, W. E., & Looy, S. V. (2005). Information Technology and the Workplace: Implications for persons with disabilities. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 25(2). <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v25i2.548>

Burkhauser, R. V., Butler, J.S., Kim, W. Y. (1995). The importance of employer accommodations on the job duration of workers with disabilities: A hazard model approach. *Labour Economics*, 2, 109-130. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0927-5371\(95\)80049-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0927-5371(95)80049-4)

Campolieti, M. (2009). Worker adaptation and the desire for accommodations after the onset of a disability. *Industrial Relations*, 48(2), 329-349. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-232X.2009.00560>

Campolieti, M., & Krashinsky, H. (2006). Disabled workers and wage losses: Some evidence from workers with occupational injuries. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 60(1), 120-138. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001979390606000107>

Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (2015). Employee Resource Groups: Toolkit for Diversity and Inclusion Practitioners. Retrieved from <https://ccdi.ca/media/1073/20150716-ccdi-report-erg-toolkit.pdf>

Canadian Human Rights Act 1985 R.S.C., c. H-6 Stat. (Can). Retrieved from <https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/H-6/rpdc.html>

Cavanagh, J., Bartram, T., Meacham, H., Bigby, C., Oakman, J., & Fossey, E. (2017). Supporting workers with disabilities: A scoping review of the role of human resource management in contemporary organisations. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 55(1), 6–43. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12111>

Centre on Diversity & Inclusion, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/corporate/organization/centre-diversity-inclusion.html>

- Chordiya, R. (2020). Organizational inclusion and turnover intentions of federal employees with disabilities. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X20942305>
- Clark, S. (2001). Work cultures and work/family balance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58, 348–365.
- Colella, A. (2001). Co-worker distributive fairness judgments of the workplace accommodation of employees with disabilities. *The Academy of Management Review*, 26(1), 100–116. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2001.4011984>
- Colella, A., Denisi A., & Varma, A. (1999). A model of the impact of disability on performance evaluations. *Human Resource Management Review*, 7, 27-53.
- Copeland, J., Chan, F., Bezyak, J., & Fraser, R. T. (2010). Assessing cognitive and affective reactions of employers toward people with disabilities in the workplace. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 20(4), 427-434. <https://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1007/s10926-009-9207-y>
- Corbière, M., Villotti, P., Toth, K., & Waghorn, G. (2014b). Disclosure of a mental disorder in the workplace and work accommodations: Two factors associated with job tenure of people with severe mental disorders. *Encephale-Revue De Psychiatrie Clinique Biologique Et Therapeutique*, 40, 91–102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.encep.2014.04.006>
- Denton, M. A., Chowhan, J., & Plenderleith, J. (2010). Retirement decisions of people with disabilities: Voluntary or involuntary. SEDAP Research Program.
- Dong, S., Fabian, E., & Xu, J. (2016). Requesting workplace accommodations: Impact of self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, and positive affect. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 61(4), 371-379. <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1037/rep0000102>
- Dubois, D.L., Holloway, B.E., Valentine, J.C., & Cooper, H. (2002). Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 30, 157–197. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1014628810714>
- Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN) (2021). Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). Retrieved from <https://askearn.org/topics/retention-advancement/employee-resource-groups-ergs/>
- Enayati, H., von Schrader, S., Erickson, W., & Bruyère, S. M. (2019). Minimizing discrimination and maximizing inclusion: Lessons from the federal workforce and federal subcontractors. In S. M. Bruyère (Ed.), *Employment and disability: Issues, innovations, and opportunities* (pp. 34-63). Champaign, IL: Labor and Employment Relations Association.
- Erickson, W., von Schrader, S., Bruyère, S., & Vanlooy, S. (2014). The employment environment: Employer perspectives, policies, and practices regarding the employment of persons with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 57(4), 195–208. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0034355213509841>
- Employment & Social Development Canada (2018). Federal Accessibility Legislation – Technical analysis report. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-canada/reports/consultations-findings/page01.html>
- Employment & Social Development Canada (2021). Making an accessible Canada for persons with disabilities. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-canada.html>
- Evans, C. (2018). Analysing semi-structured interviews using thematic analysis: Exploring voluntary civic participation among adults. SAGE Publications, Ltd. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526439284>.
- Garcia, M., Paetzold, R., & Colella, A. (2005). The relationship between personality and peers' judgments of the appropriateness of accommodations for individuals with disabilities. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 35(7), 1418–1439.
- Gignac, M. A. M., Cao, X., & McAlpine, J. (2015). Availability, need for, and use of work accommodations and benefits: Are they related to employment outcomes in people with arthritis? *Arthritis Care & Research*, 67(6), 855–864. <https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.22508>

- Gold, P., Oire, S., Fabian, E., & Wewiorski, N. (2012). Negotiating reasonable workplace accommodations: Perspectives of employers, employees with disabilities, and rehabilitation service providers. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 37*(1), 25–37. <https://doi.org/10.3233/JVR-2012-0597>
- Gupta, A., & Priyadarshi, P. (2020). When affirmative action is not enough: challenges in career development of persons with disability. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion an International Journal, 39*(6), 617–639. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-05-2019-0146>
- Hemphill, E., & Kulik, C. T. (2016). Shaping attitudes to disability employment with a national disability insurance scheme. *Australian Journal of Social Issues, 51*(3), 299–316. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1839-4655.2016.tb01233.x>
- Hunt, C. S., & Hunt, B. (2004). Changing attitudes toward people with disabilities: Experimenting with an educational intervention. *Journal of Managerial Issues, 16*(2), 266–280.
- Institute for Work & Health (2008). Low job control has negative effect on health. Retrieved from <https://www.iwh.on.ca/summaries/research-highlights/low-job-control-has-negative-effect-on-health>
- Jans, L. H., Kaye, H. S., & Jones, E. C. (2012). Getting hired: Successfully employed people with disabilities offer advice on disclosure, interviewing, and job search. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, 22*(2), 155–165.
- Jetha, A., Bowring, J., Furrie, A., Smith, F., & Breslin, C. (2019). Supporting the transition into employment: A study of Canadian young adults living with disabilities. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, 29*(1), 140–149.
- Jones, A. M., Finkelstein, R., & Koehoorn, M. (2018). Disability and workplace harassment and discrimination among Canadian federal public service employees. *Canadian Journal of Public Health, 109*(1), 79–88. <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.17269/s41997-018-0022-0>
- Kaye, H.S., Jans, L.H. & Jones, E.C. (2011). Why don't employers hire and retain workers with disabilities? *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, 21*, 526–536. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-011-9302-8>
- Kensbock, J., Boehm, S., & Bourovoy, K. (2017). Is there a downside of job accommodations? An employee perspective on individual change processes. *Frontiers in Psychology, 8*, 1536–1536. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01536>
- Kim-Rupnow, W., & Burgstahler, S. (2004). Perceptions of students with disabilities regarding the value of technology-based support activities on postsecondary education and employment. *Journal of Special Education Technology, 19*, 43–56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016264340401900204>
- Kosny, A., Lifshen, M., Pugliese, D., Majesky, G., Kramer, D., Steenstra, I., Soklaridis, S., & Carrasco, C. (2013). Buddies in bad times? The role of co-workers after a work-related injury. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, 23*(3), 438–449.
- Krause, N., Frank, J. W., Dasinger, L. K., Sullivan, T. J., & Sinclair, S. J. (2001). Determinants of duration of disability and return-to-work after work-related injury and illness: Challenges for future research. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine, 40*(4), 464–484. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajim.1116>
- Kristman, V. L., Shaw, W. S., Boot, C. R., Delclos, G. L., Sullivan, M. J., & Ehrhart, M. G. (2016). Researching complex and multi-level workplace factors affecting disability and prolonged sickness absence. *Journal of occupational rehabilitation, 26*(4), 399–416. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-016-9660-3>
- Kulkarni, M., & Gopakumar, K. (2014). Career management strategies of people with disabilities. *Human Resource Management, 53*(3), 445–466. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21570>
- Kulkarni, M., & Lengnick-Hall, M. (2011). Socialization of people with disabilities in the workplace. *Human Resource Management, 50*(4), 521–540. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20436>

- Kulkarni, M., & Lengnick-Hall, M. (2014). Obstacles to success in the workplace for people with disabilities: A review and research agenda. *Human Resource Development Review*, 13(2), 158–180. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484313485229>
- Laaksonen, M., & Gould, R. (2015). Return to work after temporary disability pension in Finland. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 25(3), 471–480. <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1007/s10926-014-9554-1>
- Lahelma, E., Laaksonen, M., Lallukka, T., Martikainen, P., Pietiläinen, Saastamoinen, P., Gould, R., & Rahkonen, O. (2012). Working conditions as risk factors for disability retirement: a longitudinal register linkage study. *BMC Public Health*, 12, 309–319. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/12/309>
- Lauber, C., Nordt, C., Braunschweig, C., & Rössler, W. (2006). Do mental health professionals stigmatize their patients? *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 429, 51–59.
- Lee, M., Storey, K., Anderson, J., Goetz, L., & Zivolich, S. (1997). The effect of mentoring versus job coach instruction on integration in supported employment settings. *The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 22(3), 151–158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/154079699702200303>
- Li, J., Zhu, X., Li, X., Chattopadhyay, P., & George, E. (2017). Gain or pain: How disability severity affects the impacts of climate for inclusion. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 1, 14998. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMBPP.2017.4>
- Lindsay S. (2011). Discrimination and other barriers to employment for teens and young adults with disabilities. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 33(15–16), 1340–1350.
- Lindsay, S., Cagliostro, E., Albarico, M., Mortaji, N., & Karon, L. (2018a). A systematic review of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 28(4), 634–655. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-018-9756-z>
- Lindsay, S., Cagliostro, E., Leck, J., Shen, W., & Stinson, J. (2018b). Disability disclosure and workplace accommodations among youth with disabilities. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 41(16), 1914–1924. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2018.1451926>
- Lindsay, S., Cagliostro, E., & Carafa, G. (2018c). A systematic review of workplace disclosure and accommodation requests among youth and young adults with disabilities. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 40(25), 2971–2986.
- Lindsay, S., Hartman, L. R., & Fellin, M. (2015). A systematic review of mentorship programs to facilitate transition to post-secondary education and employment for youth and young adults with disabilities. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 38(14), 1329–1349. <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638288.2015.1092174>
- Lock, S., Jordan, L., Bryan, K., & Maxim, J. (2005). Work after stroke: Focusing on barriers and enablers. *Disability and Society*, 20(1), 33–48.
- Louis, M. R. (1980). Career transitions: Varieties and commonalities. *Academy of Management Review*, 5(3), 329–340. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1980.4288836>
- Magnussen, L., Nilsen, S., & Råheim, M. (2007). Barriers against returning to work—as perceived by disability pensioners with back pain: A focus group based qualitative study. *Disability and Rehabilitation: An International, Multidisciplinary Journal*, 29(3), 191–197. <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1080/09638280600747793>
- McCary, K. (2005). The disability twist in diversity: Best practices for integrating people with disabilities into the workforce. *The Diversity Factor*, 13, 16–22.
- Mcdowell, C., & Fossey, E. (2015). Workplace accommodations for people with mental illness: A scoping review. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 25(1), 197–206. <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1007/s10926-014-9512-y>

- Morris, S. (2019). Canadian survey on disability reports: Workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities in Canada, 2017. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2019001-eng.htm>
- Nelissen, P. T., Hülshager, U. R., Ruitenbeek, G. M. V., & Zijlstra, F. R. (2015). How and when stereotypes relate to inclusive behavior toward people with disabilities. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(14), 1610–1625.
- Nelissen, P. T. J. H., Vornholt, K., Van Ruitenbeek, G. M. C., Hülshager, U. R., Uitdewilligen, S. (2014). Disclosure or nondisclosure - Is this the question? *Industrial and Organizational Psychology - Perspectives on Science and Practice*, 7, 231–235. <https://doi.org/10.1111/iops.12138>
- Nevala, N., Pehkonen, I., Koskela, I., Ruusuvaori, J., & Anttila, H. (2014). Workplace accommodation among persons with disabilities: A systematic review of its effectiveness and barriers or facilitators. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 25(2), 432–448. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-014-9548-z>
- Ng, E. S., & Sears, G. J. (2015). Toward representative bureaucracy: Predicting public service attraction among underrepresented groups in Canada. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 35(4), 367–385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X14544546>
- Nieuwenhuijsen, K., Verbeek, J. H., de Boer, A. G., Blonk, R. W., & van Dijk, F. J. (2004). Supervisory behaviour as a predictor of return to work in employees absent from work due to mental health problems. *Occupational and environmental medicine*, 61(10), 817–823. <https://doi.org/10.1136/oem.2003.009688>
- Powers, L., Geenen, S., Powers, J., Pommier-Satya, S., Turner, A., Dalton, L., Drummond, D., & Swank, P. (2012). My Life: Effects of a longitudinal, randomized study of self-determination enhancement on the transition outcomes of youth in foster care and special education. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(11), 2179–2187. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.07.018>
- Prince, M. J. (2017). Persons with invisible disabilities and workplace accommodation: Findings from a scoping literature review. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 46(1), 75–86. <https://doi.org/10.3233/jvr-160844>
- Rogers, K. M., & Ashforth, B. E. (2017). Respect in organizations: Feeling valued as “We” and “Me.” *Journal of Management*, 43(5), 1578–1608. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314557159>
- Romeo, M., Yepes-Baldo, M., & Lins, C. (2020). Job satisfaction and turnover intention among people with disabilities working in Special Employment Centers: The moderation effect of organizational commitment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1–8. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01035>
- Rössler, W. (2016). The stigma of mental disorders: A millennia-long history of social exclusion and prejudices. *EMBO reports*, 17(9), 1250–1253. <https://doi.org/10.15252/embr.201643041>
- Salkever D. S., Shinogle J.A., & Howard G. (2002). Return to work and claim duration for workers with long-term mental disabilities: Impacts of mental health coverage, fringe benefits, and disability management. *Mental Health Services Research*, 5(3), 173–186.
- Santuzzi, A. M., Waltz, P. R., Finkelstein, L. M., & Rupp, D. E. (2014). Invisible disabilities: Unique challenges for employees and organizations. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology - Perspectives on Science and Practice*, 7, 204–219. <https://doi.org/10.1111/iops.12134>
- Scheid, T. (2005). Stigma as a barrier to employment: Mental disability and the Americans with Disabilities Act. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 28(6), 670–690. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijlp.2005.04.003>
- Scherbaum, C. A., Scherbaum, K. L., & Popovich, P. M. (2005). Predicting job-related expectancies and affective reactions to employees with disabilities from previous work experience. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 35(5), 889–904.
- Scholl, L., & Mooney, M. (2004). Youth with disabilities in work-based learning programs: Factors that influence success. *Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education*, 26, 4–16.

- Schultz, I. Z., Duplassie, D., Hanson, D.B., & Winter, A. (2011). Systemic barriers to job accommodations in mental health: Experts' consensus. In I.Z. Schultz & E.S. Rogers (Eds.), *Work Accommodation and Retention in Mental Health* (pp. 353- 372). New York, NY: Springer
- Schur, L., Han, K., Kim, A., Ameri, M., Blanck, P., & Kruse, D. (2017). Disability at work: A look back and forward. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 27(4), 482–497. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-017-9739-5>
- Schur, L., Kruse, D., & Blanck, P. (2005). Corporate culture and the employment of persons with disabilities. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 23(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.624>
- Schur, L., Kruse, D., Blasi, J., & Blanck, P. (2009). Is disability disabling in all workplaces? Workplace disparities and corporate culture. *Industrial Relations (Berkeley)*, 48(3), 381–410. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-232x.2009.00565.x>
- Schwarz, C. (2017). Meta-synthesis of qualitative research on facilitators and barriers of return to work after stroke. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 28(1), 28–44. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-017-9713-2>
- Semmer N., & Zapf D. (1996). Shared job strain: A new approach for assessing the validity of job stress measurements. *Journal of Occupational Organizational Psychology*, 69, 293-311.
- Shem, K., Medel, R., Wright, J., Kolakowsky-Hayner, S., & Duong, T. (2011). Return to work and school: A model mentoring program for youth and young adults with spinal cord injury. *Spinal Cord*, 49, 544–548. <https://doi.org/10.1038/sc.2010.166>
- Shier, M., Graham, J., & Jones, M. (2009). Barriers to employment as experienced by disabled people: A qualitative analysis in Calgary and Regina, Canada. *Disability & Society*, 24(1), 63–75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590802535485>
- Snyder, L., Carmichael, J., Blackwell, L., Cleveland, J., & Thornton, G. (2009). Perceptions of discrimination and justice among employees with disabilities. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 22(1), 5–19. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10672-009-9107-5>
- St-Arnaud, L. & Pelletier M. (2014). Guide to an integrated practices program for supporting a return to work and promoting job retention: Facilitating an employee's return to work following an absence for a mental health problem. Institut de Recherche Robert-Sauvé en Santé et an Sécurité du travail, 1-38.
- Stainback, K., Ratiff, T., & Roscigno, V. (2011). The context of workplace discrimination: Sex composition, workplace culture, and relative power. *Social Forces*, 89, 1165–1188.
- Strindlund, L., Abrandt-Dahlgren, M., & Ståhl, C. (2019). Employers' views on disability, employability, and labor market inclusion: A phenomenographic study. *Disability and Rehabilitation: An International, Multidisciplinary Journal*, 41(24), 2910-2917. <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1080/09638288.2018.1481150>
- Sullivan, S. E., & Al Ariss, A. (2019). Making sense of different perspectives on career transitions: A review and agenda for future research. *Human Resource Management Review*, (September). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.100727>
- Swenor, B., & Meeks, L. (2019). Disability inclusion-moving beyond mission statements. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 380(22), 2089–2091. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmp1900348>
- Syma, C. (2019). Invisible disabilities: Perceptions and barriers to reasonable accommodations in the workplace. *Library Management*, 40(1/2), 113–120. <https://doi.org/10.1108/lm-10-2017-0101>
- Telwatte, A., Anglim, J., Wynton, S. K. A., & Moulding, R. (2017). Workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities: A multilevel model of employer decision-making. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 62(1), 7-19. <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1037/rep0000120>

- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2018). What We Heard: First Survey on the Draft Public Service Accessibility Strategy - Canada.ca. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/diversity-inclusion-public-service/accessibility-public-service/accessibility-strategy-public-service-toc/what-we-heard-first-survey-draft-public-service-accessibility-strategy.html>
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2019a). Employment: Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/diversity-inclusion-public-service/accessibility-public-service/accessibility-strategy-public-service-toc/accessibility-strategy-public-service-employment.html>
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2019b). What We Heard: Second Survey on the Draft Public Service Accessibility Strategy. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/diversity-inclusion-public-service/accessibility-public-service/accessibility-strategy-public-service-toc/what-we-heard-second-survey-draft-public-service-accessibility-strategy.html>
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2019c). Employment Equity in the Public Service of Canada for Fiscal Year 2017–2018. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/tbs-sct/documents/employment-equity-report/20190315-eng.pdf>
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2019d). Benchmarking study of workplace accommodations. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/diversity-inclusion-public-service/accessibility-public-service/benchmarking-study-workplace-accommodations.html>
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2021). Employment Equity in the Public Service of Canada for Fiscal Year 2019-2020. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/diversity-inclusion-public-service/employment-equity-annual-reports/employment-equity-public-service-canada-2019-2020.html>
- Villanueva-Flores, M., Valle, R., & Bornay-Barrachina, M. (2017). Perceptions of discrimination and distributive injustice among people with physical disabilities. *Personnel Review*, 46(3), 680–698. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-04-2015-0098>
- von Schrader, S., Malzer, V. & Bruyère, S. (2014). Perspectives on disability disclosure: The importance of employer practices and workplace climate. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 26(4), 237–255. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10672-013-9227-9>
- Vornholt, K., Uitdewilligen, S., & Nijhuis, F. J. (2013). Factors affecting the acceptance of people with disabilities at work: A literature review. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 23(4), 463–475.
- Vornholt, K., Villotti, P., Muschalla, B., Bauer, J., Colella, A., Zijlstra, F., Van Ruitenbeek, G., Uitdewilligen, S., & Corbière, M. (2017). Disability and employment – overview and highlights. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 27(1), 40–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432x.2017.1387536>.
- Yang, D. (2016). How multiple identities of employees with disabilities affect their voice behavior. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2016(1). <https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2016.16055abstract>
- Young A., & Russell J. (2008) Demographic, psychometric and case progression information as predictors of return-to-work in teachers undergoing occupational rehabilitation. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 5(4), 219-234.
- Young, A. E., Wasiak, R., Roessler, R. T., Mcpherson, K. M., Anema, J. R., & Poppel, M. N. M.V. (2005). Return-to-work outcomes following work disability: Stakeholder motivations, interests and concerns. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 15(4), 543-556. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-005-8033-0>

7. Appendix

7.1 Interview, Survey, and Focus Group Demographic Data

Demographics	Interviews – into FPS	Interviews – within FPS	Interviews – out of FPS	Surveys – into FPS	Surveys – within FPS	Surveys – out of FPS	Focus Groups – Total	HR Focus Groups – Total
Total Numbers	8	69	1	13	373	21	30 (n=9 are managers)	10
Gender	Female (n=4; 50%) Male (n=4; 50%)	Female (n=39; 56.5%) Male (n=28; 40.6%) Gender fluid, and non-binary, and/or two spirit (n=1; 1.4%) Other (n=1; 1.4%)	Female	Only 10 reported their gender: Female (n=6; 60%) Male (n=4; 40%)	Only 371 reported their gender: Female (n=266; 71.7%) Male (n=97; 26.1%) Non-binary gender fluid/ two spirit (n=3; 0.8%) Prefer not to answer (n=5; 1.3%)	Female (n=15; 71.4%) Male (n=5; 23.8%) Gender-fluid/ non-binary/ two spirit (n=1; 4.8%)	Female (n=19; 63.3%) Male (n=9; 30%) Genderfluid/ non-binary/two spirit (n=2; 6.7%)	Female (n=8; 88.9%) Male (n=1; 11.1%)
Member of LGBTQ2+ community	No Data	n= 12; 17.4%	No Data	Only 10 responded to LGBTQ2+: Yes (n= 1; 10%)	Only 371 responded to LGBTQ2+: Yes (n=35; 9.5%)	n=3; 14.3%	Only 28 responded to LGBTQ2+: Yes (n=3; 10.7%)	n=1; 10%
Indigenous Person	n=1; 12.5%	n=3; 4.3%	No Data	No Data	Only 371 responded: Yes (n=24; 6.5%)	n=2; 9.5%	Only 29 responded: Yes (n=1; 3.3%)	No Data

Demographics	Interviews – into FPS	Interviews – within FPS	Interviews – out of FPS	Surveys – into FPS	Surveys – within FPS	Surveys – out of FPS	Focus Groups – Total	HR Focus Groups – Total
Member of a Visible Minority (Other than Indigenous)	n=3; 37.5%	n=7; 10.1%	Prefer not to answer	Only 10 responded: Yes (n=6; 60%)	Only 371 responded: Yes (n=50; 13.5%)	n=3; 14.3%	Only 29 responded: Yes (n=4; 13.8%)	n=2; 20%
Age Range	26-30 (n=3; 37.5%) 38 (n=2; 25%) 51-55 (n=3; 37.5%)	25-29 (n=5; 7.1%) 31-37 (n=12; 17.3%) 40-49 (n=19; 27.2%) 50-59 (n=23; 33.1%) 61-64 (n=8; 11.4%) No age provided (n=2; 2.9%)	46 years old	10 only identified their age: 18-24 (n=1; 10%) 25-34 (n=3; 30%) 35-44 (n=5; 50%) 45-54 (n=1; 10%)	Only 355 identified their age: 18-24 (n=5; 1.4%) 25-34 (n=42; 11.8%) 35-44 (n=94; 26.5%) 45-54 (n=141; 39.7%) 55-64 (n=68; 19.2%) 65 or older (n=5; 1.4%)	Only 19 identified their age: 45-54 (n=6; 31.6%) 55-64 (n=9; 47.4%) 65 or older (n=4; 21.1%)	Only 29 responded: 25-34 (n=2; 6.9%) 35-44 (n=7; 24.2%) 45-54 (n=15; 51.7%) 55-64 (n=3; 10.3%) 65 or older (n=2; 6.9%)	25-34 (n=5; 50%) 35-44 (n=3; 30%) 45-54 (n=2; 20%)

Demographics	Interviews – into FPS	Interviews – within FPS	Interviews – out of FPS	Surveys – into FPS	Surveys – within FPS	Surveys – out of FPS	Focus Groups – Total	HR Focus Groups – Total
Type of Disability (participants could choose more than one answer; total percentage exceeds 100)	Learning (n=5; 21.7%) Pain (n=3; 13%) Autism Spectrum (n=2; 8.7%) Seeing (n=2; 8.7%) Mobility (n=2; 8.7%) Dexterity (n=2; 8.7%) Mental Health related (n=2; 8.7%) Executive Functioning (n=1; 4.3%) Hearing (n=1; 4.3%) Memory (n=1; 4.3%) Communication (n=1; 4.3%) Sensory (n=1; 4.3%) Flexibility or Intellectual Disability (n=0)	Mental Health related (n=30; 17.6%) Mobility (n=24; 14.1%) Pain (n=24; 14.1%) Flexibility (n=15; 8.8%) Learning (n=15; 8.8%) Memory (n=14; 8.2%) Executive Functioning (n=11; 6.5%) Dexterity (n=11; 6.5%) Seeing (n=10; 5.9%) Sensory (n=6; 3.5%) Autism Spectrum (n=4; 2.4%) Hearing (n=3; 1.8%) Communication (n=2; 1.2%) Prefer not to answer (n=1; 0.6%) Intellectual Disability (n=0)	Learning, Intellectual, Memory, and Mental Health related	Learning (n=6; 54.4%) Pain (n=4; 36.4%) Mobility (n=4; 36.4%) Dexterity (n=3; 27.3%) Sensory (n=3; 27.3%) Executive Functioning (n=2; 18.2%)	Mental Health related (n=146; 39.4%) Pain (n=126; 34%) Mobility (n=106; 28.6%) Memory (n=57; 15.4%) Flexibility (n=57; 15.4%) Dexterity (n=52; 14%) Cognitive (n=50; 13.5%) Learning (n=49; 13.2%) Hearing (n=43; 11.6%) Executive Functioning (n=31; 8.4%) Sensory (n=29; 7.8%) Seeing (n=28; 7.5%) Communication (n=19; 5.1%) Autism Spectrum (n=15; 4%) Intellectual (n=4; 1.1%) Prefer not to answer (n=13; 3.5%) No disability selected (n=15; 4%)	Pain (n=11; 52.4%) Mental Health related (n=10; 47.6%) Mobility (n=7; 33.3%) Memory (n=5; 23.8%) Hearing (n=5; 23.8%) Dexterity (n=3; 14.3%) Cognitive (n=3; 14.3%) Flexibility (n=2; 9.5%) Executive Functioning (n=2; 9.5%) Seeing (n=2; 9.5%) Sensory (n=1; 4.8%) Communication (n=1; 4.8%) Autism Spectrum, or Learning, or Intellectual (n=0)	Pain (n=10; 34.5%) Dexterity (n=10; 34.5%) Learning (n=9; 31%) Mobility (n=9; 31%) Mental Health related (n=7; 24.1%) Memory (n=7; 24.1%) Hearing (n=6; 20.7%) Flexibility (n=6; 20.7%) Cognitive (n=5; 17.2%) Seeing (n=3; 10.3%) Sensory (n=3; 10.3%) Communication (n=3; 10.3%) Executive Functioning (n=2; 6.9%) Prefer not to answer (n=2; 6.9%) No disability specified (n=1; 3.3%)	Learning (n=1; 11.1%) Mental Health related (n=1; 11.1%) Memory (n=1; 11.1%) Prefer not to answer (n=1; 11.1%) Not Applicable (n=6; 66.7%)

Demographics	Interviews – into FPS	Interviews – within FPS	Interviews – out of FPS	Surveys – into FPS	Surveys – within FPS	Surveys – out of FPS	Focus Groups – Total	HR Focus Groups – Total
Number of Disabilities	Single Disability (n=3; 37.5%) Multiple Disability (n=5; 62.5%)	Single Disability (n=22; 31.9%) Multiple Disability (n=46; 66.7%)	Multiple Disability	Single Disability (n=3; 23.1%) Multiple Disability (n=8; 62.6%)	Single Disability (n=161; 43.2%) Multiple Disability (n=197; 52.8%)	Single Disability (n=8; 38.1%) Multiple Disability (n=13; 61.9%)	Single Disability (n=9; 30%) Multiple Disability (n=20; 66.7%)	Single Disability (n=1; 33.3%) Multiple Disability (n=2; 66.6%)

7.2 Data Sources for Into, Within, and Out of the FPS Transitions

Into FPS

Total	Demographic Information	Interviews	Survey	Focus Groups
		8	71 (increased sample size)	3 Focus Groups
Transitioning into the FPS- External Hiring Process	Number of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied and unsuccessful n=1 • Applied and accepted a job offer n=1 • Currently in the process of applying n=6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied and unsuccessful n=1 • Applied and accepted a job offer n=2 • Currently in the process of applying n=10 • Recent current employees with disabilities who have applied to work at FPS in or since 2017 n=58 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Focus Groups on “Applying to Work at the Federal Public Service from Outside the FPS” (English and French) for current employees with disabilities who would have been hired in 2017 or after and for persons with disabilities in the process of applying, or who had recently applied, to work at the FPS • n= 5 participants (3 in English one and 2 in French) • 1 Focus Group on “Hiring Process for Persons with Disabilities into the FPS” in English (French focus group was cancelled due to low registration) for current managers involved in external hiring • n=2 managers
	Departments that these applicants had applied to or were currently applying to for mostly full time work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Service Commission - National Research Council - Office of the Auditor General - Canada Revenue Agency - Statistics Canada - Treasury Board - Agriculture Canada 	No Data	No Data
	Number of application trials	Average of 10 times	No Data	No Data
	Previous FPS experience	Worked before at the FPS n=4	No Data	No Data

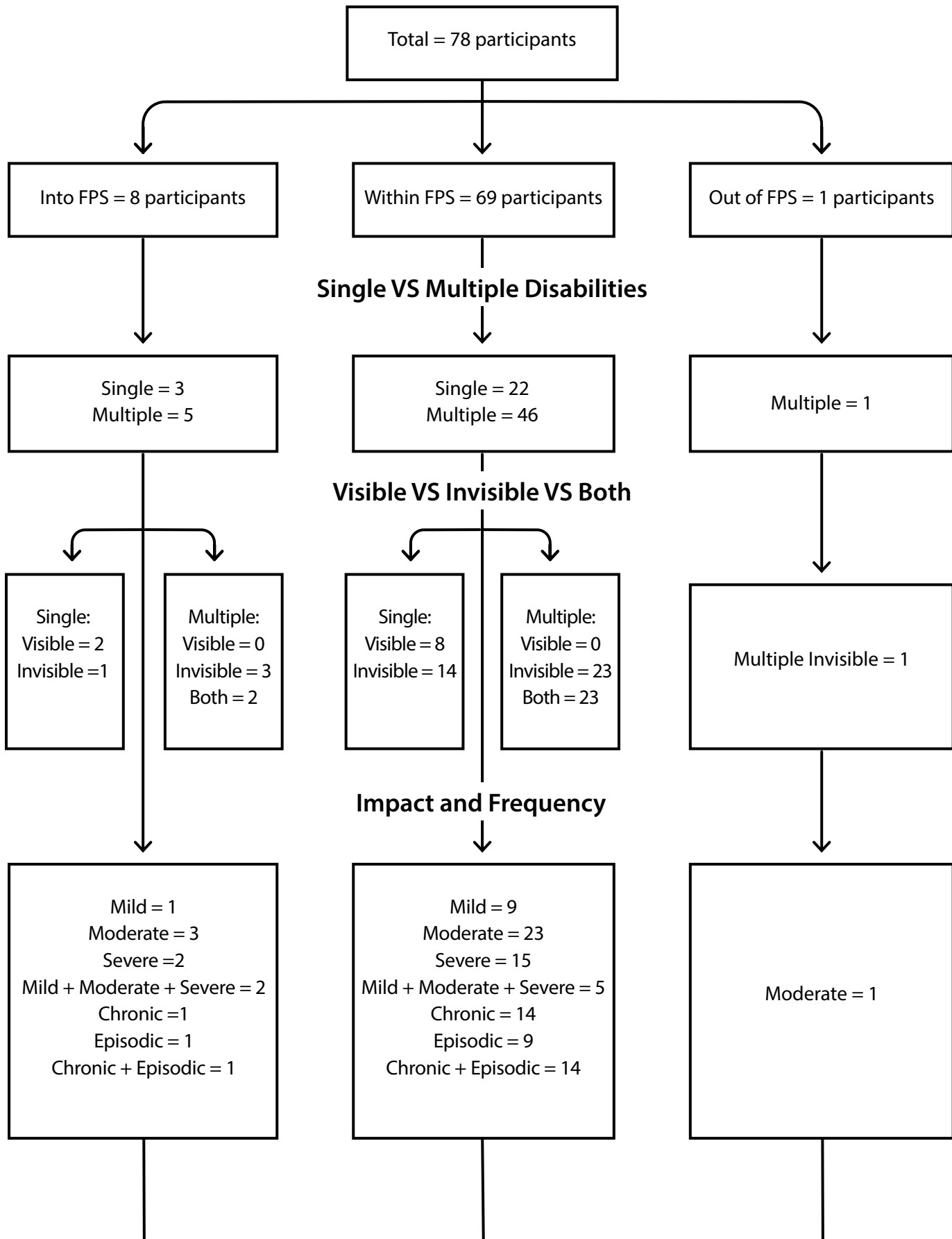
Within FPS

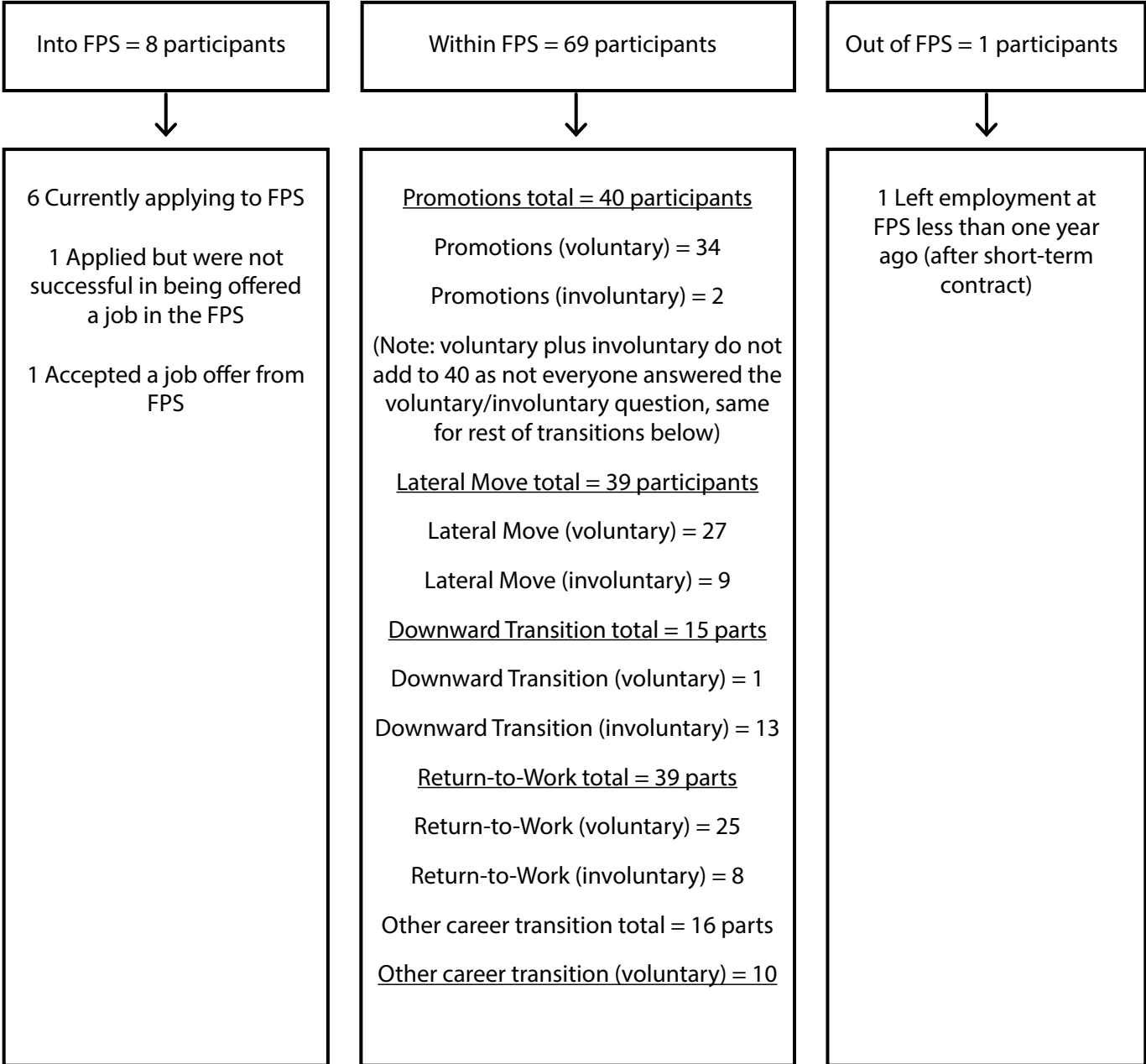
Total	Demographic Information	Interviews	Survey	Focus Groups
Transitions within the FPS- onboarding, promotion, lateral move, return-to-work	Demographic Information	<p>69</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority located in the National Capital Region Average pay level 03-05 Average time working at FPS 14 years Average time working in current department 10.8 years Average time working at current job/position 5.7 years Majority are full time, permanent (intermediate) employees 52.2% indicated their disability was identified before they started working in the FPS Had on average 5 different jobs in the FPS during their careers including their current one Have been through on average 10 FPS hiring processes during their careers 	<p>373</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority located in the National Capital Region Average pay level 03-05 (47%; n=156) Average time working at the FPS 15.2 years Average time working in current department 10.72 years Average time working at current job/ position 5.97 years Majority are full time, permanent (intermediate) employees 52.6% indicated that their disability was identified while working at the FPS 	<p>6 Focus Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Focus Groups on "Promotions within the Federal Public Service: A discussion about accessibility" for current employees with disabilities (2 in English and one in French) n=13 participants 1 Focus Group on "Promoting Employees with Disabilities within the Federal Public Service: A discussion about accessibility" for current managers with and without lived experience of disability (1 in English; French one had to be cancelled due to low registration) n= 7 participants 2 Focus Groups on "Supporting managers in the hiring and career transitions of employees with disabilities in the Federal Public Service: The views of Human Resources Advisors and Generalists on accessibility" for current Human Resources Advisors and Generalists who work in the disciplines of Staffing and Resources, Performance and Talent Management, Occupational Safety and Health, Disability Management and Duty to Accommodate, and Diversity, Inclusion and Employment Equity (one English and one French) n=10 participants

Out of FPS

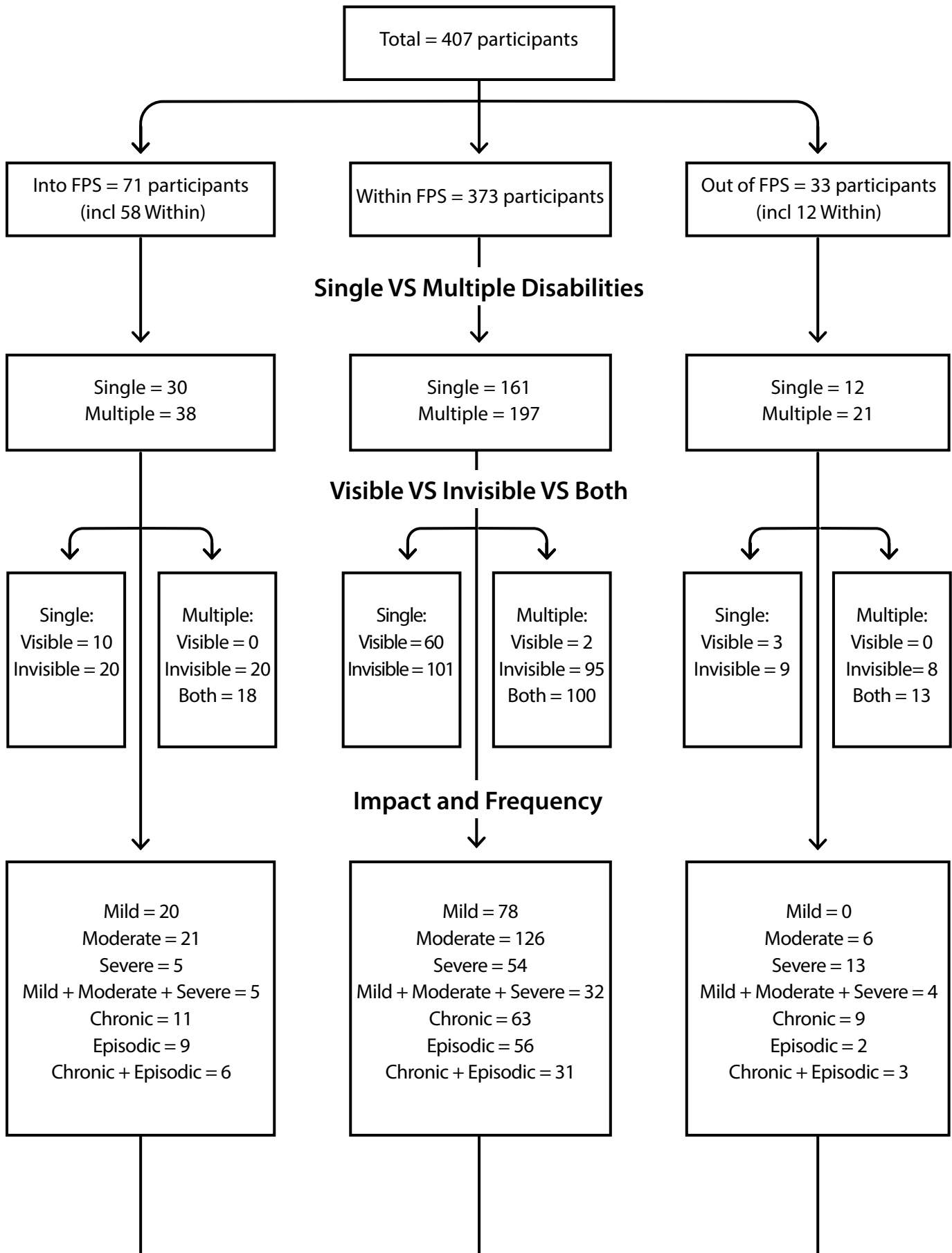
Total	Interviews	Survey	Focus Groups
Transitioning out of the FPS	<p data-bbox="289 289 313 321">1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="329 296 565 562">• 1 interview conducted with a person with disability who had separated from the FPS after a short-term contract <li data-bbox="329 583 565 1161">• Another interview was conducted with a currently working participant who indicated they are in the process of separating (this interview participant was the only current employee in the process of separating out of 69; 1.4%) <li data-bbox="329 1182 565 1822">• Sections from interviews with current employees with disabilities who have thought about leaving during their careers (42 of 65; 46.6% currently working participants who answered the question: "Have you ever thought about leaving the FPS?") 	<p data-bbox="581 289 605 321">21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="621 296 1239 359">• 19 out of 21 indicated how long they worked at the FPS before leaving <li data-bbox="621 380 1239 443">• Average number of years of those 19 participants for employment at FPS is 23.2 years <li data-bbox="621 464 1239 590">• Equal number of respondents indicated that they left voluntarily (42.9%; n=9) and involuntarily (42.9%; n=9) and 3 respondents (14.3%) preferred not to answer <li data-bbox="621 611 1239 737">• The length of how long ago they left employment at FPS ranged from less than a year to 15 years ago with an average time of 3.4 years ago <li data-bbox="621 758 1239 842">• Average time of after how many years of working with the FPS they started thinking about leaving is 19.2 <li data-bbox="621 863 1239 926">• Average number of jobs during their career is 3.5 <li data-bbox="621 947 1239 1010">• Average of longest time they spent in one job is 15.9 years <li data-bbox="621 1031 1239 1157">• Work locations of the last job (top 3): British Columbia (n=5; 23.8%), National Capital Region (n=4; 19%), Ontario excluding the National Capital Region (n=4; 19%) <li data-bbox="621 1178 1239 1209">• Most indicated pay level of 03-05 <li data-bbox="621 1230 1239 1430">• Most participants (n=14; 66.7%) indicated that their disability was identified while working at the FPS, (n=6; 28.6%) indicated that their disability was identified before they started working at the FPS; (n=1; 4.8%) preferred not to respond <li data-bbox="621 1451 1239 1713">• 12 survey participants who were current employees were in the process of separating from the FPS at the time of participating in the survey. To increase the sample size for analysis, data from the already "separated" participants and "currently working" participants were merged on questions that overlapped with respect to the separation process: <li data-bbox="621 1734 1239 1797">• Total number: 21 "separated" + 12 "currently working but in the process of separating" = 33 	<p data-bbox="1263 289 1450 321">1 Focus Group</p> <p data-bbox="1263 342 1515 972">Focus Group on "Separating from the Federal Public Service permanently or for Long-Term Disability Leave: A discussion about accessibility." For employees with disabilities who are currently separating from the Federal Public Service either permanently or to go on Long Term Disability leave and for former employees with disabilities.</p> <p data-bbox="1263 1056 1466 1087">n=4 participants</p>

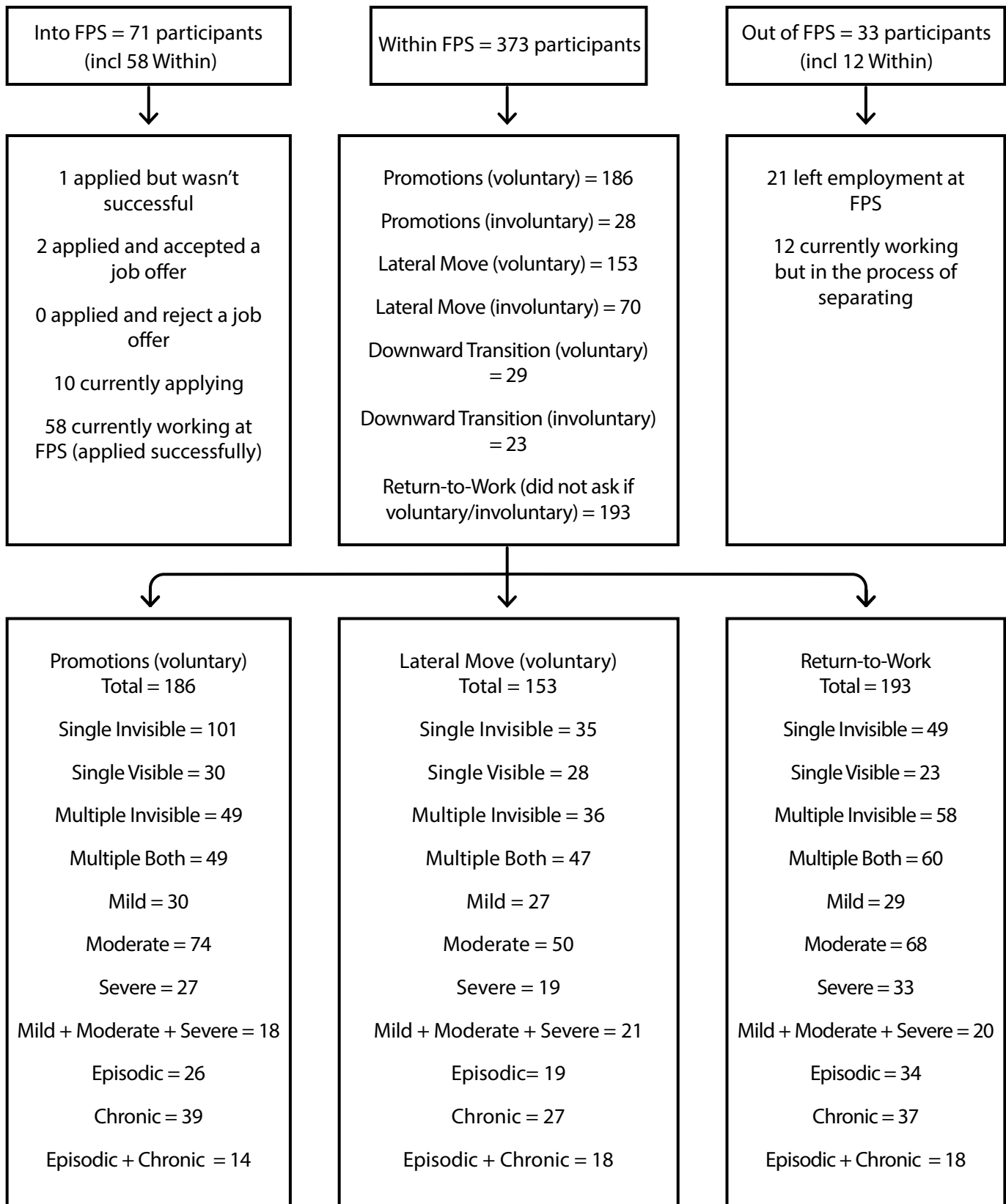
7.3 Flow charts showing Disability Type and Impact Interview Demographics





Survey Demographics





Focus Group Demographics

