A small health disadvantage could cause a big employment disadvantage in a competitive labour market

# Introducton

## Para 1: Despite working age health improving in the UK, rates of working age inactivity due to ill health have increased.

## Para 2: Explanations as to why this has occurred have been very politicised.

# Methods

## Para 1: We developed a simple mathematical model that indicates how this could have occurred due to labour markets becoming more competitive.

## Para 2: The model formalises a number of assumptions and shows what they imply if combined

## Para 3: There is the assumption that getting a job is basically a winner-takes-all process

## Para 4: There is the assumption that people have an average level of fitness and there is some variation between these levels.

## Para 5: There is the assumption that if a person’s employment level is below a certain level they are effectively ‘unemployable’ and it may be rational for them to ‘choose’ economic inactivity over job seeking

## Para 6: The model takes the following form

## Para 7: The model was tested with various combinations of d and k

# Results

## Para 1: The relationship between p(job) and d is as follows

## Para 2: The relationship between p(job) and k is as follows

## Para 3: The relationship between p(job) and (d, k) jointly is as follows

## Para 4: What is unemployable

## Para 5: Unemployability as a threshold

## Para 6: Example of how proportion of working age population could become unemployable with even slight changes in labour market

## Para 7: Summary of what has been shown

# Discussion

## Summary of what found

Found that more competitive labour markets can be expected to lead to more working age inactivity relating to ill health despite no worsening in population ill health

## Shortcomings

The lack of empirical ‘calibration’ Assumption about Normal stochastic term. Assumption of equal variance in populations. Not incorporating ‘staying power’ issues (well enough one day to get a job, mot enough every day to keep a job). Discrete/categorical issues/handing

## How relates to other findings

Beatty & Fothergill

Mine

Two/three others.

## Implications for research

Adding complexity and empirical calibration

Survey research on number of jobs applied for per success

Survey into possible class disparities in health of women of working age who don’t work

Application of approach to other forms of disadvantage 9e.g. employment, qualifications

## Implications for practice

Recognition that once someone of poor health becomes unemployed it may be very difficult for them to get a job again.

Consideration of sheltered employment schemes to keep people in labour market

Recognition that efficient and accessible labour markets may be mutually incompatible.