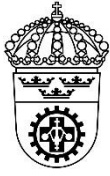


Inspections of female and male dominated municipal activities, home care services and technical administration

Report 2014:3



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Inspections of female and male dominated municipal activities, home care services and technical administration

A drive within the government assignment about women's work environment

REPORT 2014:3

Summary

In this project, the Work Environment Authority inspected the work environment and studied work relationships in general in 59 municipalities' home care services and technical administrations, during 2013. We have made demands for work environment improvement measures and we can state that the prevailing gender pattern in society and in working life, i.e. that the man is the norm and that women's work is assigned a lower value, is also found in the two activities we investigated. This gender pattern influences the preconditions for a good work environment for the managers and staff in the home care sector. That the Social Services Act in practice tends to be given precedence in relation to the Work Environment Act in the care of patients also tends to contribute. Both laws apply in parallel and neither of them has precedence over the other.

Those who have employer responsibility in the municipalities want the work environment to be good, for both managers and staff. But there are many different demands that need to be dealt with and unified in the activities, and this can be an explanation for the work environment shortcomings we have found.

A comparison between home care services and technical activities shows that in the home help sector:

- the managers have more staff
- the work situation for both managers and staff is more pressured.
- the possibilities of influencing their own work situation are fewer
- the resources are fewer

The similarities between the activities are that the systematic work with the work environment has shortcomings, that knowledge about work environment is insufficient, and that incident reporting needs to be improved.

Continued efforts are required. Those who have the ultimate responsibility, the elected representatives and managers, need to see the operation's prerequisites and conditions, and organise and lead the work so that women and men receive as equivalent and good work environment as possible, irrespective of whether the task is to take care of people or of material objects. The positive is that in the follow ups which we have done thus far in the municipalities, we see that there is an ambition to demand changes in the basic prerequisites for the work environment as well as in the organisation, the management and in resource allocation in the activities.

Background – an assignment from the government to improve women’s work environment

In 2013 the Work Environment Authority received the assignment from the government to develop and carry out special efforts to prevent women from being knocked out of working life because of work environment related problems. The effort encompasses knowledge acquirement, information, the education of inspectors and the implementation of national supervision activities. The task was been carried out during the period 2011 – 2014. The result of the activities will thereafter be integrated in the Work Environment Authority’s ordinary activities.

Comparison as a tool

Women work to a high degree within the public sector, and we have inspected and made demands many times within female-dominated activities such as the health care and social care sectors, but the problematic picture remains. More women than men are sick-listed from work and more women are forced to end their working lives early for health reasons. When we received the government assignment we asked how we could reach out to those who have the power to influence basic prerequisites for work environment in an activity when it applies to organisation, management and resource allocation. We decided to use the comparison as a tool. Through reflecting and comparing work environment relationships in a female-dominated activity to relationships in a male-dominated activity, the preconditions and differences that affect work environment appear clearly. They are clearer than when doing what we usually do, which is to only inspect the different operations individually and in such a way, follow the pattern in the gender-segregated division of the labour market.

Inspections in female-dominated home care services and male-dominated technical units.

During 2013 we inspected municipal activities - female-dominated home care services and male-dominated technical units. Home help service is a female dominated health care and social care activity with a high rate of ill health. The activities within technical administration also have work environment problems, but partly in other areas. Occupational injury statistics show that there is, in principal, just as great a relative risk of injury within home care services as in technical administration (Brief occupational injury facts number 2/2013). Home care service activities are similar to some of the technical units’ activities inasmuch as home help service personnel carry out their work in different places and move between these places. There are also significant differences between activities. An obvious difference is that in home care services it is a person the staff have to take care of, while within technical activities the focus is on material objects.

Research about different preconditions in municipal activities

An important reason for us choosing this direction during our inspections was that we have taken part of the research about municipal activities from a gender perspective. During the period 2008 – 2012, Professor Annika Härenstam and her research group carried out the CHEFiOS project, which was about finding out how a municipal organisation should look in order to create good preconditions for working as a manager. The project highlighted similarities and differences depending on the municipality's size and female or male dominated administrations. One of the researchers in the project was Dr Tina Forsberg Kankkunen Ph.D. In her doctoral thesis 'Two municipal rooms: Management work in gender branded technical and social care and education activities', and in Working Life Report 2006:43 'Gendered activities' she highlights how different preconditions for management and different action strategies in male and female dominated municipal activities respectively, affect the working conditions of managers and staff.

The Aim of the Inspection

The aim of the inspection effort was to increase knowledge and awareness among administration managers and representatives for boards and municipal leadership how the management and steering they practise influence the work environment for unit managers (first line managers) and for the employees, women and men.

We did this by:

- identifying work environment shortcomings in the activities
- discovering and revealing differences and similarities which exist in working relationships for staff and unit managers in female and male dominated activities, in this case home care services and units in technical administrations.
- comparing how it looks in administrations when it comes to organisation, leadership and steering in work with the work environment.

Carrying out the inspections

Figure 1 gives a schematic picture of the setup of the inspection efforts.

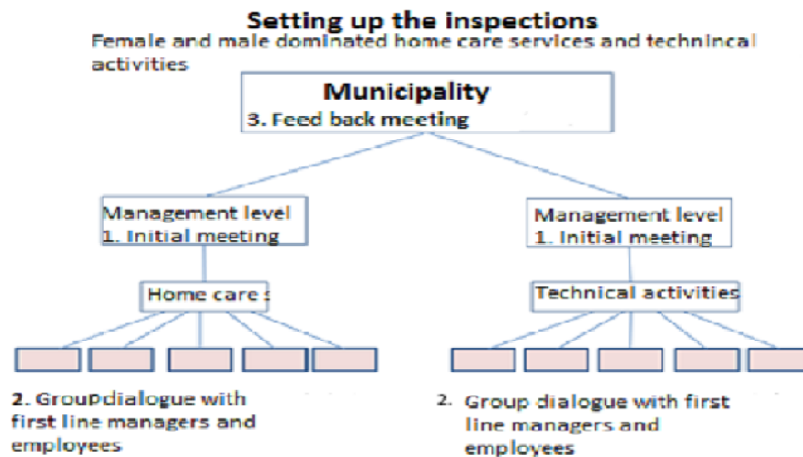


Figure 1. Setting up the inspection

Initial meetings at administrative level

The inspectors having separate meetings with the administrative manager and others from management for the respective activities, introduced the efforts in a municipality. The head safety representative also participated during these meetings.

Group dialogue with unit managers and staff

The inspections of the operations occurred in the form of group dialogue with unit managers, and group dialogue with staff from home care services and units within technical administration respectively. There were two to four group dialogues with staff in the respective operations.

As a rule, a group dialogue was carried out with unit managers (first line managers) from home care services and a group dialogue with unit managers (first line managers) from the technical activities.

After the group dialogue the inspectors provided feedback to the respective immediate superior about what had been discovered.

A questionnaire about work environment relationships

In connection with group dialogues with managers and employees, each participant had to individually answer a questionnaire about work environment relationships. The answer created a background document for the group dialogue. The questions dealt with four areas:

- Goals for the work and working tasks; for example goals for what needed to be achieved in the work, the working tasks which should be carried out, the prioritisation of tasks during work backlog.
- Work demands and workload; for example time pressure in the work, the possibility of rests and breaks, perception about health difficulties as a result of the work.
- Resources; for example access to work equipment and technical aids.
- Support in the work; for example support and help from the immediate superior and from work colleagues.

Information about gender, form of employment (full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary) and the number of staff per manager was also collected via the questionnaire.

Demand for measures

The inspectors' assessment of work environment relationships presupposed contexture and analysis of information from administrative level as well as from group dialogue with unit manager and with staff. If there were work environment shortcomings, the inspectors described these in inspection messages and encouraged the employer to, by a certain point in time, present to us what they had done to fix the work environment shortcomings. Some of the shortcomings will take time to correct and then we would like the employer to present a clear and time bound action plan. We showed the administration management and head safety representative which shortcomings we had found and which demands we intended to make.

Feedback meetings at administration, board and municipal leadership levels

We presented the compiled results of all inspections in home care services and the technical activities to the administration managers and representatives from board and municipal management level at a joint feedback meeting. The head safety representative also participated. The aim of the meetings was to reveal differences and similarities in work environment relationships and preconditions in the work for staff and managers in the activities.

Two inspectors inspected together

The inspections were carried out by two inspectors together – an inspector with sector knowledge of technically oriented activities and an inspector with sector knowledge of the health care and social care sector, with the advantage of being a man and a woman. In this way we also had an internal gender perspective in the inspections.

Results

59 municipalities, ranging in size from about 7 000 inhabitants to approximately 310 000 inhabitants, were encompassed by the effort. Almost 70 of the Work Environment Authority's approximately 250 inspectors participated. They carried out approximately 900 inspections in the municipalities and made 3294 demands for measures to remedy shortcomings - on average 3,6 demands per inspection. All municipalities received demands. There were municipalities where demands were only made towards one operation.

Information about staff and management

Information about the staff and managers we met during group dialogues comes from 36 municipalities. Three municipalities are missing because they were pilot schemes where material and questionnaires were tested and not compiled because of the adjustments we made thereafter.

Table 1 presents how many staff members we met within home care services and technical activities respectively, how many of these were women, how many worked full time or half time respectively and the number of temporary and permanently employed respectively. The information was provided in writing in the questionnaire background. The number that has not answered is presented.

Table 1: Information about staff

	Home care services, staff	Technical activities, staff
Number of staff we met	1 004	852
Women	92 %	21 %
Part-time	42 % ¹	4 % ³
Full-time	55 % ¹	94 % ³
Temporary employment	4 % ²	4 % ⁴
Permanent employment	92 % ²	90 % ⁴
	¹ 3 % did not answer ² 4 % did not answer	³ 2 % did not answer ⁴ 6 % did not answer

Table 2 shows how many managers we met within home care services and technical activities respectively, how many of these were women and how many

staff the managers said that they have. The number who did not answer is stated.

Table 2: Information about managers

	Home care services, managers	Technical activities, managers
Number of managers met	228	215
Women	94 %	24 %
< 20 staff/manager	4 %	65 %
21-30 staff/manager	23 %	21 %
31-40 staff/manager	39 %	6 %
> 40 staff/manager	34 %	4 %
		(4 % did not answer)

Work Environment Shortcomings in the operations

The meetings with the respective administration managers and head safety representatives, and the group dialogue with the staff and managers mean that the inspectors received comprehensive information about work environment relationships in the activities that were inspected. Based on this information, the inspectors assessed that there were shortcomings in the work environment going from what the Work Environment Act and provisions say about how the work environment should be and what the employer has to do. In table 3 the number of shortcomings per inspection case in the home care services and technical administration for staff and managers respectively, is presented. An inspection case corresponds often to a group dialogue but in a number of cases, several group dialogues have been registered in one and the same inspection case. The number of shortcomings per inspection case on average for all municipalities was 7,1. The range between municipalities ranged from, on average, 2 to 20 shortcomings per inspection case.

Table 3: Number of shortcomings per inspection case

Staff category	Home care services	Technical activity
Staff	8,2	5,6
Managers	6,8	4,2

There were differences when it applied to the main work environment shortcomings. By main work environment shortcoming is meant shortcomings that, in number, reached, on average, one shortcoming per inspection case.

In table 4 is presented the main work environment shortcomings for staff in home care services and technical activities.

In home care services, the main work environment shortcomings were:

- Work demands and workload: mainly high work demands (many working tasks, large workload) in relation to staff resources.
- Resources and work equipment: mainly insufficient knowledge about work environment risks in the work as well as shortcomings when it applied to vehicles or cars (for example an insufficient number).
- Systematic work with the work environment: investigations and risk assessments of work relationships was not carried out or had shortcomings, above all else work environment relationships at the homes of individual patients.

For staff in technical activities it was about:

- Systematic work with the work environment: investigations and risk assessments of work relationships were not carried out or had shortcomings. Furthermore, documented action plans for work environment measures did not exist or were insufficient.

Table 4: Main shortcomings in the work environment for staff, the number of shortcomings per inspection case.

Shortcomings applicable to:	Home care services, staff	Technical activity, staff
Work demands and workload	1,7	0,5
Resources and equipment	1,8	0,9
Systematic work with the work environment	2,8	2,5

In table 5 is presented the main work environment shortcoming for managers in the home care services and technical activities.

For managers in home care services, the main work environment shortcomings related to:

- Work demands and workload: mainly high work demands (many tasks, great workload) in relation to staff resources, insufficient investigations and risk assessment of managers' workload, large amount of work due to many employees.
- Resources and equipment: insufficient knowledge about work environment risks in the activity as well as shortcomings when it comes to vehicles and cars (for example an insufficient number), IT systems (for example not easy to use) and premises/personnel space (non-existent or too far away).
- Systematic work environment: investigations and risk assessments of work relationships were not carried out or were lacking, particularly working relationships at the homes of individual patients.

For managers in the technical activities the main work environment shortcomings related to:

- Work demands and workload: above all else high work demands (many working tasks, great workload) in relationship to the personnel resources, deficient investigations and risk assessments of the managers' workload.
- Systematic work with the work environment: investigations and risk assessments of working relationships were not carried out or had deficiencies, procedures for a systematic work environment were missing.

Table 5: The main shortcomings in work environment for managers, the number of shortcomings per inspection case

Shortcomings applicable to:	Home care services, managers	Technical activities, managers
Work demands, workload	1,8	1,0
Resources, equipment	1,2	0,2
Systematic work with the work environment	2,1	1,8

Result according to size of municipality

The 59 municipalities were divided into three group sizes, 7 000 – 29 999 inhabitants (21 municipalities), 30 000 – 79 999 (25 municipalities) and 80 000 –

311 999 (13 municipalities). This comparison between municipalities shows the same pattern when it comes to the results that are presented above. There are minor differences but these can be to do with the source of error which exists, see further in chapter 6. 'Reliability of the results'. When the material was distributed, the results become more sensitive to the effects of error source.

Staff and managers in home care services state more problems in the work environment

Staff and managers' perception of the work environment relationships in the form of their answers to the yes and no questions in the background material for the group dialogue, is presented in the diagram in figure 2 and 3. The bars in the diagram show how many stated that there were problems in the work environment related to the respective area (goal for the work/working tasks, work demands/workload, resources and support)

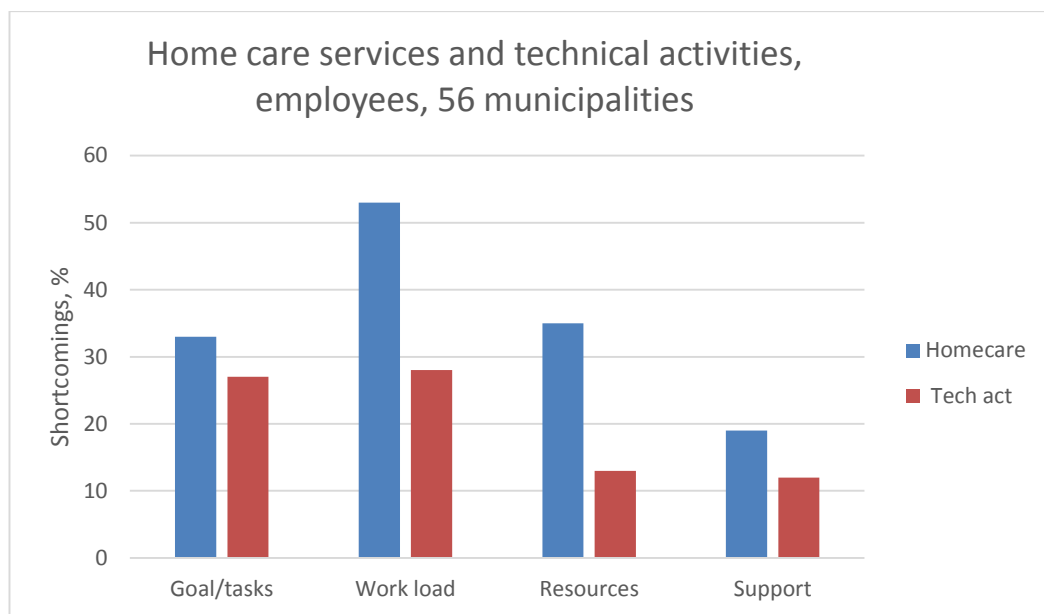


Figure 2: Staff perception of work environment relationships

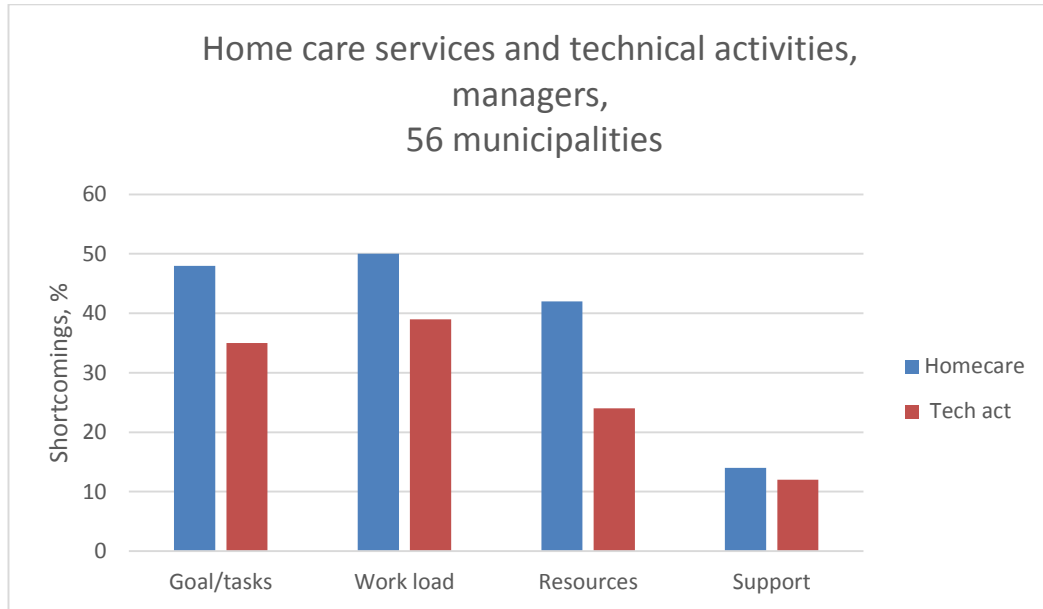


Figure 3: Managers' perception of work environment relationships. Two of the questions were whether the individuals had difficulties during the most recent six months that they connected to their work. In table 6 is presented the staff answers to these questions and in table 7, the managers'.

Table 6: Ailments during the most recent six months that are seen to be connected to work, the staff answers.

Question	Home care services, staff	Technical activities, staff
Sleep problems, stomach ailments, palpitations, high blood pressure, dizziness, depression?	56 % answered yes	28 % answered yes
Pain in back, shoulders, arms, hands, knees, hips etc.?	74 % answered yes	55 % answered yes

Table 7: Ailments during the most recent six months that are seen to be connected to work, the managers' answers.

Question	Home care services, managers	Technical activities, managers
Sleep problems, stomach ailments, palpitations, high blood pressure, dizziness, depression?	60 % answered yes	45 % answered yes
Pain in back, shoulders, arms, hands, knees, hips etc.?	37 % answered yes	26 % answered yes

Another question was whether the working conditions were such that the individuals believed they would be able to work until retirement age. In table 8 are the staff and managers' answer to the question.

Table 8: Answers whether working conditions that were such that one believes one would be able to work at the same job until retirement

Staff category	Home care services	Technical activity
Staff	47 % answered yes	82 % answered yes
Managers	64 % answered yes	83 % answered yes

A fourth question was whether the atmosphere and cooperation at one's own workplace was good. How staff and managers answered this question is shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Questions as to whether the atmosphere and cooperation at the workplace was good.

Staff category	Home care services	Technical activities
Staff	80 % answered yes	90 % answered yes
Managers	90 % answered yes	90 % answered yes

In appendix 1 of this report, we have made a summarised comparison of the work environment and the studied working relationships in the 59 municipalities' home care services and technical activities.

Reliability of the results

There are several factors that have affected the reliability of the results.

- There is a variation in the assessment of the shortcomings in the activity. The inspectors could perceive and evaluate differently the information that has come up. There are also differences in the level of detail. Some gather several shortcomings together to form a main shortcoming while others detail the shortcomings individually.
- The ways the cases have been registered vary. Often, each group dialogue has been registered as a case. This can, for example, depend on the fact that one has assessed that the shortcomings were the same and therefore collected them together in one inspection case. It is important to emphasise that one has done the same in both home care services and technical activities.
- The staff and managers' own perception of the work environment, in the form of the answers to the yes and no questions in the background material for the group dialogue is influenced by, among other things, how they interpreted the questions, which expectations they had of their working relationships and how their work situation looked just then. In the compilation for all 56 municipalities, the answer material is comprehensive for both staff and managers, which means that individual variations have essentially less influence on the results than they can have had in individual municipalities.

Follow up in the municipalities

There are on-going follow-up inspections in municipalities to see which measures employers have taken due to the mentioned shortcomings and demands made. We have stated that a great number of the shortcomings have been fixed or are on the way to being fixed. Others will take a longer time to deal with. This applies to, for example, high workload and shortcomings in the systematic work with the work environment. We have also seen that those who have employer responsibility in the municipalities, namely politicians and managers, have the ambition to make changes in the basic preconditions for the work environment as well as organisation, steering and resource allocation in the activities. This is positive. In several cases we have seen that the employer has contributed more resources to the activity. This has mainly been about resource addition within home care services.

Discussion from the results

In as good as all of the municipalities, irrespective of size, the pattern is the same when we compare home care services with the technical activities, The work environment, and the preconditions for this, is worse in the female

dominated activities. This mirrors the gender pattern that exists in society generally, where the man is the norm and women's work is assigned a lower value.

Some causes of differences in work demands and workload.

With comparison of work situation for staff in home care services and staff in the technical activities, the greatest difference is the time pressure and stress that home help personnel describe. The inspections show that it is harder in home care services to reach the stated activity goals because the workload, manpower and other resources are not adapted to the work one is expected to carry out. We consider this a deciding factor for the pressure staff gave witness to. Home care services activity is mainly income financed from served home help hours. Economy and manpower needs to be adapted to the changes in the activity as a result of a varying number of patients with different need of care. There is a need to be able to take in temporary staff into the activity. To take in substitutes and allocate manpower according to the continually changing needs is a task that weighs down both managers and staff. How one gets the finances to stretch was repeatedly brought up in group dialogues within home care services. It was not the same in technical activities, where the operation is mainly financed by appropriation. When there is a backlog in technical activities, one has seasonally employed staff members who can work with, for example snow removal.

The differences we see are also described in the research report 'Gendered activities' (Forsberg Kankkunen 2006). In it was stated, among other things that 'unit managers within technical administration always check that there is a balance between the tasks which need to be carried out and the time and work capacity of which the unit has command. The unit managers within the social care and education administrations work and shape the activity under the conditions that the tasks which the units have to carry out should always be able to be managed within a given resource framework.'

Steering at task level or assignment level

The differing financial forms give rise to differences in the steering of the activities. The staff described it as though in the home care services the work is task-steered while in the technical activities it is assignment-steered. In home care services, the different working tasks are time-defined, such as that the showering of a patient may take a certain number of minutes. If the activity takes, in reality, a longer time, for example because something unplanned happens, the person could for example suddenly feel ill, the time plan for the day can break down and the staff may attempt to gain the time back in another way. In the technical activity one is steered by the assignment. The assignment

can be that the streets in an area need to be cleaned by a certain date at the latest, The work is not steered and is not followed up on the basis of every working task that needs to be completed to complete the assignment 'clean the streets'. The time for each working task within the assignment is not defined.

From a work environment perspective, we see the difference between steering at task level as against per assignment level is the possibility for the staff to influence the setup and carrying out of their own work and handling the workload diminishes when the steering is task oriented. The possibility of own control in the work is vital for handling stresses and strains.

Large differences in the number of staff

There is a tangible difference between the activities when it comes to the number of staff members per manager. In home care services, 73 per cent of the managers we met had more than 30 staff. In the technical activities, 10 per cent of the managers had more than 30 staff. Are there relationships in the home care services activity that mean that managers there cope with having more staff members than managers in the technical activity? We have not found that this is the case. On the contrary. Over and above the responsibility for staff and their work environment, the managers in home care services also have responsibility for the care of the patients. This means that they have greater relationship areas in their work than managers in the technical activities have. Contact with patients and their family members is often stimulating and rewarding but can also take time and be a strain. Managers within the technical activities have more time to support their staff, be present in their work and handle problems in the activity than the managers in home care have. 'As manager one is never enough' was something one heard many times in home care services. It is important to emphasise that the workload and work demands are high even for the managers in the technical activities. The inspections show that municipal managers' work environment generally needs to be given attention. There is potential and a good basis to work from, while almost four of six managers in home care services stated that working conditions are such that they believe they will be able to do the same work until they retire. In the technical activities, five of six managers stated they will be able to do the same work until they retire.

Differences in administrative support

Managers in home care services spend a lot of time on administration, for example, working with different reports. These managers often have less access to administrative support than managers within technical activities. In one municipality the home care service personnel described that the practical and administrative handling of service cars took a lot of time and caused stress, for

example to write accident reports, take care of parking fines, book workshop time, change tyres etc. In the technical activity on the other hand the personnel had access to central support within the municipality for such handling of service cars.

Differences in the possibility of handling unplanned situations

Unplanned situations in the work arise in both activities. When we compare what came up in the group dialogue, it is clear that the possibilities of handling unplanned situations are fewer in home care services. Time for transfer between workplaces in home help services, i.e. patients' home, can be too little or not included in the timetable for the working day. It is not unusual that staff in home help services are unable to take breaks due to a backlog during the working day. 'We take a break first thing in the morning, during the rest of the day there is no time for it'. During lunch, they are interrupted by telephone calls and other alarms. In meetings with staff we have received evidence of their commitment, ability and competence in handling different complicated situations in which they find themselves in the work with the patients. But we have also received a clear picture of how wearing it can be.

It was seldom that staff in the technical activities had problems taking out their breaks. When the workload is high in a technical activity it is easier for staff to prioritise working tasks and find pragmatic solutions. Our inspections show that it is usual that there are no clear procedures for how staff in home care services should prioritise working tasks during backlog. In such cases a present and supportive manager is of great importance but because of the managers' working relationships this is missing many times to the extent to which we assess is necessary.

Work environment in relation to resources and equipment

Work environment shortcomings related to resources and equipment occur to a greater degree in home care services. This applies to both managers and staff. Equipment questions are about vehicles and cars that are used in the work, for example insufficient number of lack of possibilities to charge car warmers and batteries. Working clothes are a given in the technical activities but not always in home care services. There are no rules that say that the employer should pay for working clothes so it is not something we demand. On the other hand, the employer is responsible to provide protective clothing. Premises and staff areas that do not correspond to needs are more usual in home care services. For managers, the IT systems usability is a problem area. They do not support and make the work more effective, sometime the opposite. This applies to both home care services and in the technical activities. The difference is that in home

care services one usually has more systems to handle because of comprehensive reporting requirements.

Knowledge about work environment is an important resource that both managers and staff need to have. We found that knowledge is insufficient, for example, with respect to which

- rules have significance for work environment
- physical, psychological and social relationships which entail risks for ill health and accidents.
- risk assessments are necessary in the activities
- measures are necessary to prevent ill health and accidents.

Inspections show that staff in both home care services and the technical activities need better theoretical and practical knowledge about musculoskeletal ergonomics (for example suitable working positions and working movements), lift, transfer and other work techniques. The knowledge about hygiene and risk of infection needs to be better.

The systematic work with the work environment needs to be improved

In both home care services and the technical activities, the systematic work with the work environment needs to be improved. Investigations and risk assessments of work relationships are not carried out or are insufficient. In home care services it is, to a high degree, about the work relationships at the homes of the patients. In the aid assessments of what a person needs, the work environment of the staff in the individual home is not sufficiently taken into account. This leads to the home care services staff carrying out work under conditions that have not been prepared from a work environment perspective. The Work Environment Act and the Social Services Act apply in parallel without one of them having precedence. Through the inspection we have, however, been able to state that the Social Services Act is often given precedence in home care activities. The perspective of the person being cared for dominates.

Procedures so that the systematic work with the work environment should work in practice is missing or lacking. This applies to both activities.

Incident reporting is another improvement area. To report and investigate the incidents that occur in the activity is important, because incidents can be a sign of different serious situations and could lead to accidents.

The usual causes of the often serious shortcomings in the systematic work with the work environment are:

- insufficient understanding of and insight about the fact that the systematic work with the work environment is a quality and leadership system which needs to be integrated in the daily activities.
- missing of follow-up at central management level to see that the systematic work with the work environment is driven and functions at all levels in the activity.
- Knowledge deficiencies of the scope of the employer's responsibility for the work environment, what the work environment rules demand and which risks exist in the activities.

Gender patterns in work environment

The inspections of home care services and the technical activities has shown that managers and staff in home care services have a worse work environment than their colleagues in the technical activities. Why is it so? That there are differences between the activities when it comes to work content, work tasks, financing forms and so on, is obvious. These differences give different prerequisites and conditions that can result in several of the differences the inspections have revealed. But are there also explanations? Are there differences in traditions, approaches and values that are related to gender patterns, women dominate in home care services and men in the technical operations, and which could have significance for differences in work environment relationships. We consider that we have seen examples that it is so. We claim, for example, that such structural patterns partly lie behind the fact that managers in home care services have many more staff in comparison with managers in the technical activities.

That gender patterns have significance for work environment relationships in the activities is not unexpected, because such patterns to varying degrees exist in, and affect, all parts of our society. In work environment legislation there are more rules that apply to the activities where men traditionally dominate than there are for activities usually dominated by women. Our working method of operating in pairs during this inspection activity has resulted in that we have revealed our own gender pattern in traditions and approach which influences how we inspect. It is important for us to be more aware of how the differences look and what they mean, because we can then change and develop our activity. The same applies in the municipalities we have inspected – and in other municipalities. During one of the feedback meetings with political elected representatives, board representatives, managers and head safety representatives, one of the participants said 'now it is us, who are responsible for the activities, who are going to take care of the information and the image of the work relationships which you (The Work Environment Authority) have presented. We need to analyse what causes the differences, what can be linked

to the activities themselves and what can be connected to the traditions, approach and values we have and which can be typical for female-dominated and male-dominated activities respectively. We will work with measures in different ways, going from what we decide.'

The differences in work environment relationships, which we have established need to be repeatedly questioned because the structures that exist are strong and entrench the ruling order, where the man is the norm. It is an order that contributes to women having higher ill health than men and to a greater extent leaving working life early.

Organise for a sustainable work environment for both women and men

To create a work environment which is sustainable for all employees, those who have the ultimate responsibility for work environment, politically elected representatives and managers, need to see the activities' prerequisites and conditions, and organise and lead the work so that women and men receive as equivalent and good work environment as possible. This is a prerequisite for high quality and efficacy in the activity, irrespective of whether the task is to take care of people or material objects.

Important areas in which to invest in:

- Managers' work relationships and creating preconditions for an active leadership in the daily activities.
- measures which reduce workload in home care services for staff
- developing the systematic work with the work environment and from central leadership level following up that it is run and functions on all levels in the activities.
- improving knowledge about the work environment, what the rules say and how one investigates and assesses the consequences of different measures and changes in the activities.
- A gender integration work where the staff perspective and prerequisites for a good and equivalent work environment are included.

Appendix 1

Table 1: Summarised comparison of work environment and the work relationships studied in the 59 municipalities' home help service and technical activities

Home Care Service	Technical Activity
Mainly income-financed	Mainly appropriation-financed
Task-steered	Assignment-steered
Workload, staffing and other resources not adapted to what one is expected to achieve	Workload, staffing and other resources fairly well adapted to what one is expected to achieve
Equipment not available to the necessary extent, for example too few vehicles, insufficient premises	Equipment usually available to the necessary extent
<u>Staff</u> Very little self monitoring and acting space in the work. Difficult to handle the high work pressure Nearly always stressed	<u>Staff</u> Fairly good self monitoring and acting space in the work Can handle the work pressure Sometimes stressed
<u>Managers</u> 73 per cent of the managers have more than 30 staff Lack of time, much administration, many different relationships, difficult to be present in the operation and support the staff Very pressured managers	<u>Managers</u> 10 per cent of the managers have more than 30 staff Fairly good time to support staff, can be present and deal with problems in the daily activities. Pressured managers
Systematic work environment deficiencies	Systematic work environment deficiencies
Inadequate work environment knowledge	Inadequate work environment knowledge
Deficient incident reporting	Deficient incident reporting

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Our vision: *Everyone wants, and everyone is able, to create a goodwork environment*