

Accepted Manuscript

Title: Your Retirement and My Health Behavior: Evidence on Retirement Externalities from a fuzzy regression discontinuity design

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PII: S0167-6296(16)30141-2

DOI: <https://doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.jhealeco.2017.10.005>

Reference: JHE 2070

To appear in: *Journal of Health Economics*

Received date: 18-8-2016

Revised date: 9-8-2017

Accepted date: 17-10-2017

Please cite this article as: Tobias Mddotuller, Mujaheed Shaikh, Your Retirement and My Health Behavior: Evidence on Retirement Externalities from a fuzzy regression discontinuity design, *Journal of Health Economics* (2017), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhealeco.2017.10.005>

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Your Retirement and My Health Behavior: Evidence on Retirement Externalities from a fuzzy regression discontinuity design*

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August 9, 2017

Abstract

This paper presents evidence on intra-household retirement externalities by assessing the causal effect of spousal retirement on various health behaviors and health status across 19 European countries. We identify partner's and own retirement effects by applying a fuzzy regression discontinuity design using retirement eligibility as exogenous instruments for spousal and own retirement status. We find significant increases in the frequency and intensity of alcohol consumption combined with a significant decrease in moderate physical activities as a response to partner's retirement. In line with the existing literature, we find that own retirement has significant positive effects on engaging in moderate and vigorous physical activities but also leads to a significant increase in the frequency of alcohol intake. Overall, subjective health is negatively affected by spousal retirement and positively by own retirement.

JEL Classification: J26; I12; C26

Keywords: Retirement Externalities, Health behavior, Fuzzy Regression Discontinuity Design

**Acknowledgments:* We are grateful to Stefan Boes, Markus Reisinger, Marisa Miraldo, Michael Gerfin, Matteo Galizzi, Simone Ghislandi, Renata Kosova, Kaspar Wüthrich, Sonja Kassenboehmer, Ines Berniell, and Eugenio Zuchelli for helpful comments at an early stage of this paper. We also thank participants at the Royal Economic Society Junior Researcher Symposium, Health Economists' Study Group meeting, Australian Health Economics Society doctoral workshop, and the Center for Health, Policy and Economics seminar (University of Lucerne), Frankfurt School of Finance and Management doctoral workshop. This paper won the best paper prize at the Portuguese health economics association conference and it was conceived and largely written when MS was a doctoral student at the Frankfurt School of Finance & Management.

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