

Sources of job stress amongst paramedics

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Summary:

Introduction: Paramedic speciality is defined to be as one of the most stressful as well as stressogenic. The time pressure, often uncomfortable conditions hinders paramedics of giving the accurate medical help in severe acute cases when needed. The main aim of work: This paper work is our trial to set up the sources and reasons of stress in the speciality of paramedics.

Materials and methods: Screen tests were done in the period from 1st of January 2012 up to December 2012, in these screen tests a group of 362 paramedics working as EMS was taken into consideration, questionnaires were held amongst this group.

Results: Paramedics endure stress at work due to: 1-low payments 97%, 2-time stress factor 99% 3-near approach to death factor 90%, 4-over work time factor 90%, 14 stressogenic factors were set. Out of them, 3 were correlated with gender, 4 with age the rest were correlated with education level and place of living of paramedics.

Conclusions: the main stressogenic factors amongst paramedic specialists are due to: low payments, lack of time and pressure from the surrounding while offering medical help in severe cases, there exists a real correlation amongst the factors: age, gender, level of education amongst paramedics or place of work

Key words: stress, paramedic, speciality.

Introduction

Stress is component in medical specialists fields like nurse, doctor and paramedics. Positive stress has sort endurance, works like a push, allows for positive thinking and efficient results, but this type of stress is not common in EMS. EMS deals with long term stress, tough conditions, the results of such a stress are felt during as well as after the shifts. It touches both the physical and psychological aspects [5,6,7]. Symptoms like headache, stomach, cardiac discomfort, digestive disease are only some of the

symptoms observed among specialist enduring a long term stress.

Physical discomfort can be tuned or cured pharmacologically, a worse element is the psychological one.

Psychological element can enhance bigger and more complicated unites that can affect not only work life but as well private life.

Here, its important to emphasise, that people enduring a long term stress try to find a solution

in an improper way by themselves. Related to the above, an earlier recongnition is a very important element to find a solution for this problem among specialists.

The aim of work

To find out some stress factors amongst paramedics.

Materials and methods

This work included 362 paramedics working as EMS the major group was identified as a men gender—244 people (67.4%), 118 were women (32.6%) in paramedics group the average age ranged 20-29 years old (43%) whereas aged above j 40 years old (8,0%). age average ranged as 27±9,7 years. Paramedics still on process of self education 186 (51,38%), with higher education 176(48.62%) to achieve this work paper, we questioned a group in the term 01.2012 to 09.2012. The question contained 15 questions characteristically conservative or liberal with much attention to the stressors present at work .

This work had been performed using program Excel, using STATISTICA 8.0 in analyzing we used program Statistica 8 (StatSoft®, Tulsa, USA).

The normality of distribution of variables was tested by the significance level p of the Shapiro-Wilk test. In the case of normal distribution of mean differences were tested by Student’s t-pairs. Investigating the relationship between the frequency of occurrence of the variables tested in the analyzed sections were tested by chi-square independence of the adopted significance level of p = 0.05. For arrays two-way strength of the relationship between the variables examined further factor V-Cramer.

RESULTS

Figure 1 represents a collection of stressors pointed by the screened paramedic group. Figure 1. Stressogenic factors indicated by screened paramedicsAs is apparent from the above figures shown the biggest stressors in the opinion of the respondents were low salaries (97%), followed by haste and time pressure during rescue operations (95%), contact with death (90%), a large number of working hours (90%). At least as stressors

paramedics indicated unpleasant working conditions (58%), underestimated by the physician (54%) and too many duties (43%) (p < 0.001).

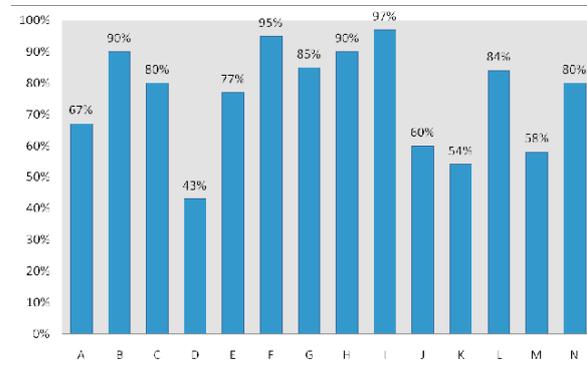


Figure 1: Stressogenic factors indicated by screened paramedics

Legend:

- A – personal unsafty ,
- B – dealing with death issue,
- C – watching others in pain,
- D – exceed of responsibilites,
- E – lack of personel,
- F – pressure on lack of time,
- G – night shifts ,
- H – number of work hours,
- I – low payment,
- J – no chance of promotion,
- K – lack of respect from the doctors side,
- L – personal bad relations,
- M – bad work conditions,
- N – limits in pharmacotherapy.

Stressors shown in the above figure were analyzed on the basis of socio-demographic factors such as gender, age, level of education (medical study of post-secondary education, higher education) and place of work (emergency department, a team of medical emergency exit). The correlation between the stressors and sociodemographic factors are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The correlation coefficients between stressors and demographic variables

Stressor	Gender	Age	Level od educaton	Working place
Personal unsafty	0.28*	0.08	-0.11	-0.27*
Contact with death	0.21*	0.18	-0.09	-0.23*
Pain as-sociation	0.05	-0.13	0.07	-0.21*
Exceed of responsibilites	0.19	0.07	0.21*	0.17

Stressor	Gender	Age	Level of education	Working place
Lack of personnel	0.1	0.21*	0.24*	-0.27*
Hurry and time limitation	-0.25*	-0.27*	-0.22*	-0.29*
Night shifts	0.06	0.23*	0.27*	0.13
Number of work hours	0.12	0.13	0.23*	0.12
Low payment	-0.06	0.09	0.28*	-0.22*
Lack of promotion chances	0.1	0.21*	0.29*	0.16
Underestimation from doctors side	0.16	-0.08	0.23*	0.17
Interpersonal problems	0.17	-0.08	-0.15	0.28*
Bad work conditions	-0.18	-0.16	0.19	-0.27*
Limited pharmacotherapy	-0.13	0.19	0.26*	-0.29*
* $p < 0,05$				

Analysis presented research material revealed a statistically significant correlation between the threat to personal safety, contact with death and the rush and pressure of time and gender. Hurry and time pressure were more stress-factor for men and for women more stressors were a security risk and personal contact with death. With age, the intensified stress factors showing a statistically significant correlation was shortage of staff, night shifts, and limited opportunities for advancement. For young stressful factor was the rush and pressure of time. In the case of the demographic variable “education”, it significantly correlated with such factors as excess duties, shortage of staff, rush, time pressure, night shifts, a large number of working hours, low wages, limited opportunities for advancement, underestimation by a doctor and restrictions on the use of drug therapy. All these stressors outside the rush and pressure of time more correlated with higher education. Hurry and time pressure were more

stressful factor for people who have completed post-secondary study medicine. Furthermore, the analysis showed significant correlations with respect to the variable “place of work”. In view of those working in the emergency department was an important factor in stressful personal game. The work in the emergency medical teams away correlated significantly following actors: the risk of personal safety, contact with death, the association of pain, lack of staff, the rush and pressure of time, low wages, unpleasant working conditions, and restrictions on the use of drug therapy.

Discussion

In the present study attempts to picking the biggest stressors among paramedics. Paramedic profession is one of the professions related to the mission, servitude and requiring a personal commitment to the values of the parent, is therefore consistent with the nature of their work profession “stressor” [8].

Medical rescuers working both in hospital emergency departments, as well as in medical rescue teams away unequivocally determined the stressors in their work. These were mainly: financial remuneration received for the work, time pressure during medical procedures performed or contact with death and suffering. An important factor stressful for paramedics was also a factor referred to as “personal game”. These results confirm studies carried out on Gugały nurses working in departments of cardiology and cardiac intensive care units, the most stressful factors associated with them in the workplace were considered: rush, staff shortages, limited opportunities help some patients, direct contact with death, responsibility for the lives of others and low wages. [9] The problem of low wages as a stressor also raised the research team led by Joško that among 154 physicians found that 97.4% of respondents indicated low wages as a stressor [10]. This is especially a problem that requires attention, since, according to a study conducted by Bartkowiak confirmed on the example of nurses that low wages have a significant impact on the emergence and development of professional burnout syndrome [11]. The problem of low wages as the stressor reported by other authors [12]. Conflicts with co-workers and health risks were significant stressors for research Czabak-Garbacz *et al* [13]. In our study, personal conflicts as

a stressor were indicated in 84%. This result was lower than in studies Zielinska-Więczkowskiej, which showed that in a group of nurses, it is the contact with the doctors were the most important stress factor [14].

The effect of stress on health is undisputed, as confirmed by the results of many years of research. Stress can cause adverse health effects such as heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, cardiac arrhythmia [15]. The increasing number of people who complain of psychosomatic diseases as a direct result of occupational stress. The deterioration of health and well-being of practitioners paramedic after prolonged exposure to stressors may be due to the inability to cope with the direct reaction of stress. Just such a situation

can transform over time in physical illness [16]. Left untreated, can permanently affect the personality, and may be a factor in the deteriorating quality of life [17]. Therefore, this study is the beginning of our research on the occurrence of stressful situations and how to deal with them in the work of paramedics.

Results

- 1) The most important and most indicated stresogenic factors amongst paramedics are low payments, time pressure factors .
- 2) There is a common relation between gender and felt stress, age, level of education and place of work of paramedics.

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