

A healthcare professional, likely a veterinarian, is shown in a clinical setting. They are wearing blue scrubs and a white surgical cap. They are sitting on a surface, possibly a table or a bench, with their hands clasped together in front of them. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a white cabinet or wall. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

Mental health of healthcare and veterinary professionals

jean-pierre.michel@unige.ch

Mental health of healthcare and veterinary professionals



Enlarging the perspective of « Mental Health »

Facing the reality of mental health disorders

Addressing mental health needs among front-line healthcare workers

Before ending: Creating and sustaining a positive daily work environment

Take home messages

Mental health

“state of well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community”

WHO, 2022

Moral Injury

Anxiety disorders

“Health workers”

Compassion fatigue

Burn out

Heart
of the
Healthcare

Psychological
stressors

Organizational
stressors

Environmental
stressors

Psychological stressors

- Work-life imbalance
- Fear of being infected
- Isolation/stigmatisation
- Lack of social support
- Feeling obliged to work
- Extenuating working conditions & (...)

Organizational stressors

- Increased job demand, irregular shifts
- Role conflicts / role shiftings
- Low wages
- Workplace harassment
- Unclear workplace policy
- Poor human and resource management

Altered Health Workers
outcomes: poor mental health

Decreased health care
performances

Environmental stressors

- No virus free physical environment
- Frequent human interactions
- Exposure to infected patients/animals
- Inadequate personal protective equipment
- (...)

Mental health of healthcare and veterinary professionals

Enlarging the perspective of « Mental Health »

Facing the reality of mental health disorders

Addressing mental health needs among front-line healthcare workers

Before ending: Creating and sustaining a positive daily work environment

Take home messages



Mental health problems, before the COVID-19 pandemic

**Around 84 million people were affected in the EU
(one in six people),
at a cost of EUR 600 billion or more than 4% of GDP,
with significant regional, social, gender and age inequalities**

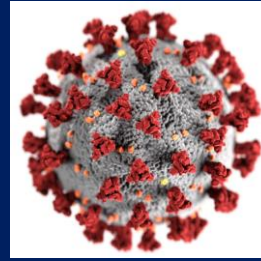
Health at a Glance: Europe 2018

**At the workplace,
27% of EU workers have reported experiencing
work-related stress, depression, or anxiety
during the previous twelve months,
which increases the chances of absenteeism
with serious impact on workers' lives and business organization**

Health at a Glance: Europe 2018

Psychological stressors

- Work-life imbalance
- Fear of being infected
- Isolation/stigmatisation
- Lack of social support
- Feeling obliged to work
- Extenuating working conditions & (...)



Organizational stressors

- Increased job demand, irregular shifts
- Role conflicts / role shiftings
- Low wages
- Workplace harassment
- Unclear workplace policy
- Poor human and resource management

Altered Health Workers
outcomes: poor mental health

Decreased health care
performances

Environmental stressors

- No virus free physical environment
- Frequent human interactions
- Exposure to infected patients/animals
- Inadequate personal protective equipment

Lack of care of the population and lack of health care workers during the COVID pandemic

Months of resource triage, economic torpor, and social distancing



Damage resulting from

Postponed treatment of health

Poor management of chronic conditions

Disruptions to diet, exercise, and drug regimens

Postponement of screening

Postponement of other preventative health measures

Increased anxiety of the whole population and health care workers

Aggravation of preexisting mental health

HCWs experienced uncertainty

Own safety
Safety of the loved ones
Co-workers deaths
Working too many hours
Worrying about their home supplies



Lack of information regarding infection risk
Prevention and effective treatment pathways
Personal protective equipment availability
Rapidly changing guidelines and protocols



Burn Out of Health workers

USA 2017-19

Burn out is the
result of prolonged, unresolvable stress at work
and
is fundamentally caused by a chronic mismatch
between
the demands of the job
and
the resources of the worker

Veterinary	50%
Mds	54%
Nurses	56%
Pharmacists	60%
Residents	61-75%

4, 6 Billion/year

Michele A. Steffey et al *Front. Vet. Sci.* 10:1184525. doi: 10.3389/fvets.2023.1184525

Jones *Hospital Pharmacy* 2017; 52: 742-51

National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25521>

Volk JO et al *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* (2020) 256:1237-44

Results of high demand and low control

Physical fatigue

Compassional fatigue

Emotional exhaustion

Isolation

Moral distress

Traumatic stress disorder

Women's extra
family charges



Staff shortage
Work burden
(...)

Health workers
of color

Bullying

Harassment


Threats

Violence

(physical & online)

Mental health of HCWS during COVID

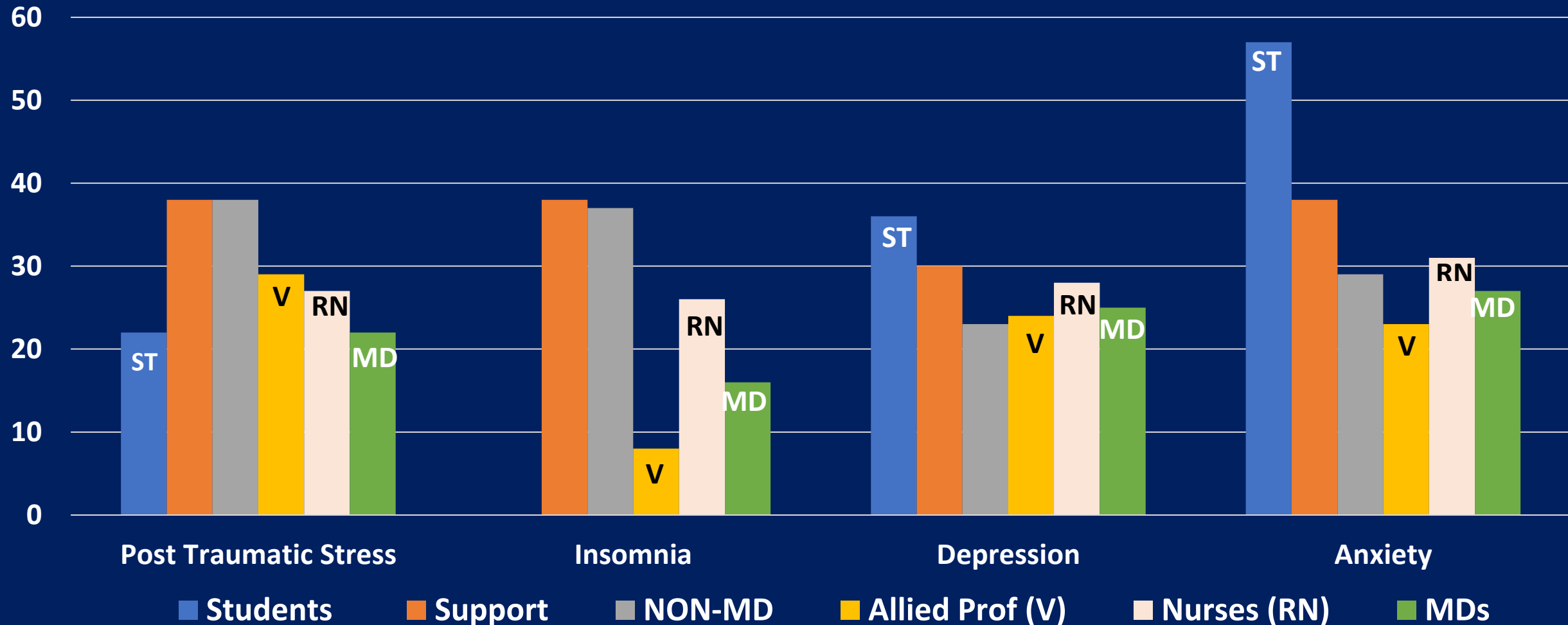
44 meta-analyses from 1'298 individual studies were included in the final analysis, encompassing the prevalence of 16 mental health symptoms



Low overall wellbeing	42.6% to 58.9%
Combined psychological symptoms	34.0% to 39.3%
Stress	29.1% to 66.6%
<u>Insomnia or sleep disturbances</u>	23.1% to 64.3%
Psychological distress	16.9% to 57.5%
<u>Anxiety symptoms</u>	15.9% to 71.9%
<u>Depressive symptoms</u>	12.8% to 65.5%
<u>Post-traumatic stress</u>	7.7% to 49.0%
Suicidal thoughts/ideation	5.8% to 6.9%

Mental health of HCWS during COVID

The meta-analysis included 401 studies, representing 458,754 participants across 58 countries.



Consequences of Burn Out in USA

(2017-19)

- **Veterinary** **50%**
- **Mds** **54%**
- **Nurses** **56%**
- **Pharmacists** **60%**
- **Residents** **61-75%**

4, 6 Billion/year

Willing to leave up the profession (2021-2023)



- **Mds** **20%**
- **Nurses** **40 %**
- **Veterinary** **40%**

**Employees of public health department
20% did it
50% would like to do the same**

*Jones Hospital Pharmacy 2017; 52: 742-51
National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25521>
Volk JO et al J Am Vet Med Assoc. (2020) 256:1237-44*

*Abbasi J JAMA 2022; 327: 1435-7. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2022.5074>.
Bain B et al Am Vet Med Assoc Schaumbg IL (2021)*

Mental health of healthcare and veterinary professionals



Enlarging the perspective of « Mental Health »

Facing the reality of mental health disorders

Addressing mental health needs among front-line healthcare workers

Before ending: Creating and sustaining a positive daily work environment

Take home messages

EU Commission Principles

All EU Citizens

Health care professionals

1) To have access to adequate and effective prevention

2) To have access to high quality and affordable

healthcare and treatment

3) To be able to reintegrate society after recovery

Addressing Mental Health (MH) needs

For the critical front-line workers

- 1) Distinguish psychiatric illness from normative distress
by a psychiatrist or a trained physician
- 2) Assure supportive care interventions
- 3) Provide resources for normative distress

These interventions may include:

psychological first aid (PFA)

individual or group counseling

broadening the pool of front-line workers, and buddy systems

Support mental health and reduce stigma

**Assure
availability
accessibility &
confidentiality
of
Mental Health
services**

**Encourage access to Mental Health resources
for all health care professionals / learners**

**Reduce all stigma and barriers to disclose
Mental Health issues**

**Ban punitive or unnecessary actions against
Health care professionals
seeking for Mental Health services**

Gaps between HCWs' self-identified concerns and offered support

Direct psychological support is only one element the mental health support of health care professional



Literature reviews on mental health impacts of pandemics have concluded that social and practical support

are important mechanisms for alleviating psychological distress and may be preferred to professional psychological support

provision of food, flexibility around work, clear communications, being consulted regarding their need

Mental health of healthcare and veterinary professionals

Enlarging the perspective of « Mental Health »

Facing the reality of mental health disorders

Addressing mental health needs among front-line healthcare workers

Before ending: Creating and sustaining a positive daily work environment

Take home messages



Create and sustain a positive work and learning environment

- Recognize all the members of the workforce
- Establish an equity, just and trust work climate
- Reduce turn over and favour retention of the health workers

Address compliance, policy barriers for daily work

Decrease time of documentation
Focus on patients quality of care
Ease work-life integration

**Institutions
must plan
for a
future crisis**

Engage effective and friendly technology tools

Favour interdisciplinary
communication
Improve provider-patient
communication and care

Institutionalize well-being as a long term value

Prioritize well-being as a core value for health workers
Create an accessible Mental Health path to support workers

Mental health of healthcare and veterinary professionals



Enlarging the perspective of « Mental Health »

Facing the reality of mental health disorders

Addressing mental health needs among front-line healthcare workers

Before ending: Creating and sustaining a positive daily work environment

Take home messages

**“ Knowing is not enough;
we must apply
Willing is not enough;
we must do ”**

GOETHE

Mental health of healthcare and veterinary professionals



I do thank you for your attention