

Occupational stress and its management among health care workers in the University of Port Harcourt teaching hospital.

Amaka Ogba¹

¹Center for occupational health and safety University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria



Abstract

Background: The concept of occupational stress and its causes have been downplayed in developing countries hence making their effect to be poorly understood even though it has been declared an endemic problem in the health sector.

Statement of the problem: In spite of the available evidence, it seems that the creation of a safe and healthy work environment has not been high on the agenda of employers in the health sector especially in Nigeria. High patient load, burgeoning new diseases and viruses, poor working conditions are a few of the stressors faced by health care workers in the state.

Materials and Methods: Stratified random sampling and self-administered questionnaires were used to select 337 health care workers from different cadres and departments in the hospital. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential tools.

Result: From this study it was identified by health care workers that inadequate staffing levels (82%), extremely long working hours (78.4%), absence of shift work (70.1%) and caring for difficult patients (69.1%) are the major stressors experienced by respondents in the study area. Various coping strategies were employed by different cadres of health care workers, Doctors and nurses come to work with a positive mindset, prioritize and focus on what's important at work and with support from colleagues and family, they are able to manage their stress levels. Laboratory scientist have conditioned their minds into believing that things will get better in time to come, Pharmacist ensure proper division of work and effective supervision, Administrative staff prioritize their work in order of importance while others take breaks to listen to music and chat with colleagues.

CONCLUSION: The high prevalence of occupational stress in the study area has potentials of reducing the quality of services rendered in the hospital which can produce a domino effect if not checked.

Biography:

B.sc Human Anatomy, M.sc Occupational Health And Safety, PhD Occupational Health And Safety (in view).

Born in Rivers State Nigeria in 1990. I received my first degree in Human Anatomy from the University of Port Harcourt in 2010 after which I decided to explore other relevant fields which lead to my pursuing a Master of Science degree in Occupational Health and Safety in 2014. Being a dedicated reader, academic success wasn't difficult for me as I was able to graduate with excellent grades at each level. My marriage has been blessed with two beautiful daughters who light up my world.

In 2015, I became an administrator in a privately owned hospital in the heart of Port Harcourt city, a job that exposed me to the knowledge of the hazards and risks health workers are faced with on a daily basis. This exposure prompted my pursuit of a PhD In Occupational Health and safety with a focus on Occupational stress and its positive/negative impact on the health of workers.

When humans are exposed to uncontrolled stressors, it is not uncommon for their lives to upturn. I have a passion of helping people who are going through traumatic or stressful experiences feel better to restore their mental health. Currently an assistant lecturer in one of the Universities in Rivers State, I intend to educate and reach out to many young ones using all available means.

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