

# Stressful factors for nurses in the emergency and emergency unit

## *Fatores desencadeantes de estresse do enfermeiro na unidade de urgência e emergência*

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### ABSTRACT

The Emergency and Emergency unit is a unit in which clients with different diseases arrive and with diverse needs, whether they are emergency or not, it is up to the professionals who work within the unit to know how to identify and attend to patients according to their needs. It is an integrative review, with a temporal cut between 2011 and 2016, accessible electronically. Conflicts of functions lead to job dissatisfaction and interpersonal relationships, professional devaluation can lead to demotivation and abandonment of work, causing high rates of absenteeism, also to the unhealthy environment, which generates, in most cases, work overload for some and prioritizing others. The Nursing Professional in the emergency sector perceives the stress factors in which they are involved, and it is of great value the stimulus as a solution for a better quality of life of the nursing professional, when the institution in which the worker is linked has a career plan, adequate salary for their level of study, democratic and non-punitive leadership, as well as a sustainable environment, contributing to the professional quality of life.

**Keywords:** Nurse; Emergency; Professional stress.

### RESUMO

A unidade de Urgência e Emergência é uma unidade na qual chegam clientes com diversas doenças, e com necessidades diversificadas, sendo elas emergenciais ou não, cabendo aos profissionais que atuam dentro da unidade saber identificar e atender os pacientes mediante suas necessidades. Trata-se de uma revisão integrativa, com recorte temporal entre 2011 a 2016, acessíveis eletronicamente. Os conflitos de funções levam à insatisfação no trabalho e relações interpessoais, a desvalorização profissional pode levar à desmotivação e abandono do trabalho, ocasionando altas taxas de absenteísmo, também ao ambiente insalubre, o que gera, na maioria das vezes, sobrecarga de trabalho para uns e priorizando outros. O Profissional Enfermeiro no setor de emergência percebe os fatores de estresse nos quais está envolvido, e é de grande valia o estímulo como solução para melhor qualidade de vida do profissional de enfermagem, quando a instituição na qual está o trabalhador vinculado dispor de plano de carreira, aumento salarial adequado para seu nível de estudo, liderança democrática e não punitiva, assim como um ambiente sustentável contribuindo para que este profissional tenha qualidade de vida.

**Palavras-chave:** Enfermeiro; Emergência; Estresse Profissional.

### NOTA

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## INTRODUCTION

The Emergency unit is a place in which clients with different diseases arrive and with diverse needs, whether they are emergencies or not, it is up to the professionals who work within the unit to know how to identify and attend to the patients according to their needs.

It is a place of assistance, where the professional needs to make emergency interventions, in this way, one can observe great stress in this unit of work, in which people seek immediate care. Thus, this environment becomes stressful because nurses have to identify the primary and emergency needs <sup>(1)</sup>.

Nowadays there are many health services that work around the clock, and this shows the existence of varied work schedules and night shifts. These shifts can be fixed or rotating, organized through shifts or on call scales <sup>(2)</sup>.

Due to these shifts, nursing professionals may present sleep disturbances, as well as gastrointestinal, cardiovascular and psychic disorders. Regarding the social and family life of these professionals, there is a loss of participation in social activities, school absences, and the non-participation in cultural or sporting events, which, over time, removes or hinders the integration of this professional into the social life of their community <sup>(3)</sup>.

Most healthcare service providers have two formalized employment links, because of the decrease in the recognition of society and also because they do not have the desired salary, which subjects them to the strenuous work hours and the necessity of adaptation on home chores and educational courses <sup>(4)</sup>.

The Labor Organization (ILO) recognizes that practically all professions can develop occupational stress, but that nursing is touted as the most stressful profession.

In Brazil, according to Decree 3,048 of May 6, 1999, which talks about pathogens causing occupational diseases, Burnout Syndrome is classified along with Mental Disorders and Work-related Behavior, manifesting itself with the sensation of exhaustion. In this case, Burnout Syndrome appears as a synonym of Occupational Exhaustion Syndrome, that among the signs and symptoms, the professional demonstrates the depersonalization of the psychic state, in which affective concealment or cynicism prevails and a tendency to criticize everything and everyone with who they relate to at work <sup>(5)</sup>.

Considering the diverse nursing duties that result in work overload, absenteeism may occur. This is due to the fact that emergency professionals have several duties, which permeate the clinical and functional coordination of the sector, application of continuing education to the nursing team, and articulation of the various professionals involved in assisting a client. Nurses also have the private function to perform the Nursing systematization (SAE), still need to keep up-to-date the technical-scientific

improvement, recognizing the responsibility that is essential for the development of SAE, and quality in the provision of nursing services. <sup>(6)</sup>

As justification for this work, it is considered important to identify the actual knowledge of the nurses to act in the emergency unit in the hospital environment, as well as to deal with the factors that trigger stress, and how stress interferes with the activities of the nursing professional provided to the client.

The objectives are to describe the stress factors of the nurses in the emergency sector and to identify the influence of nurses' actions as a leader in the performance of the processes of care in the emergency sector.

## METHOD

This is an integrative review, with studies from 2011 to 2016, accessible electronically. Integrative review is a method of research analysis that enables the synthesis of knowledge in a given subject. It includes studies with different methodological approaches and identifies knowledge gaps that need to be filled with further research <sup>(7)</sup>.

The search was performed in the SCIELO database and the terms used, according to the descriptors in health sciences (DECS), were: "Nurse", "Emergency", "Work-related stress". All the studies obtained from the descriptors defined in the search strategy were evaluated by the titles and abstracts. After reading the abstracts, the studies were selected following the inclusion criteria: articles available in Portuguese, available online and in accordance with the research objective. As criteria for exclusion: documents that are not articles, duplicate articles or that do not agree with the objective.

## RESULTS

The search in the abovementioned database resulted in 18 articles that were pertinent to the objectives of this study, shown in table I.

## DISCUSSION

The crisis of the healthcare system in Brazil is present every day. It can be seen through facts widely known and disseminated by the media, such as extensive lines of people in health services, broken equipment, lack of hospital beds to meet the population's demand, lack of financial resources and also scarce material resources and humans. To keep health services operating efficiently, they are shown and verified by everyone on a daily basis <sup>(9)</sup>.

The Work Quality of Life implies explicitly and explicitly three nuclear conceptions of thinking about the world of production and the role of its main protagonists: (a) an understanding of a rectified human being; (b) an instrumentalist / reductionist conception (c) a conception of human labor, of organization centered on exacerbated productivism <sup>(15)</sup>.

**TABLE 1 – Distribution of publications on Stressful Factors for nurses in the Emergency Unit. Brazil, 2017.**

Title	Author	Main Results	Year
Humanization of Health in an Emergency Service of a Public Hospital: Comparison about social representations of professionals before and after training <sup>(8)</sup> .	Andrade MAC; Artmann E; Trindade, ZA.	Effective communication in Management with humanization of work that promotes the culture of humanization as a reinforcement in the work of health professionals equally among themselves.	2011
Occupational stress of emergency nurses <sup>(9)</sup> .	Bezerra, FN.; Silva, T Marques; Ramos VP	It is related to the shortage of human resources and the work overload, physical facilities and resources of inadequate materials.	2012
Humanized in Intensive Care: A Bibliographic Review <sup>(10)</sup> .	Camponogara S, Santos TM, Seiffert MA et al.	Review on humanized care in intensive care.	2011
Early development stress: health impacts and protection mechanisms <sup>(11)</sup> .	Linhares M	Preventive interventions for stress and pain management. <sup>(11)</sup>	2016
Considerations on the concept of Human Dignity <sup>(12)</sup> .	Frias L; Lopes N	Personal autonomy and the conditions to develop and exercise them.	2015
Profile of users attended at an emergency non-hospital unit <sup>(2)</sup> .	Garcia, VM; Reis, RK.	At present there are many health services that work around the clock and this shows the existence of varied work schedules and night shifts. Such work shifts can be fixed or rotating, shifts or on call scales.	2014
Significant Work and Human Happiness: exploring approximations <sup>(4)</sup> .	Silva N, Tolfo SR	Wellness and quality of life at work. Human fulfillment through tasks constituted of importance for those who perform them.	2012
Quality of life at work (QWL) from assistance to effective promotion of borealism <sup>(13)</sup> .	Cesar FMC	Ask workers how they evaluate the quality of life at work.	2015
Discussion on the causes of Burnout Syndrome and its implications for the health of nursing professionals <sup>(5)</sup> .	Lima SJL; Campos DAR.	Main causes of Burnout Syndrome and its health implications to nursing professionals.	2012
Indicators of absenteeism and diagnoses associated with the medical licenses of service workers in an oil industry. <sup>(14)</sup> .	Oenning, NS; Carvalho FM; Lima VMC.	The importance of occupational diseases in medical absenteeism.	2012
Profile of users attended at an emergency non-hospital unit <sup>(2)</sup> .	Garcia VM; Reis RK.	the need for the implantation of reception among health professionals.	2014
From Pleasure to Suffering in Nursing Work: The Discourse of Workers <sup>(15)</sup> .	Kessler IA; Rug FBS.	Psychological accompaniment of self-help to strengthen the psychological to face the work.	2012
The issue of mental health in worker health surveillance <sup>(16)</sup> .	Leão LH.; Gomez CM.	Promote actions to negotiate changes that promote job satisfaction.	2012
Nursing work in an intensive care unit and its interface with the systematization of care <sup>(6)</sup> .	Massaroli, R. et al	Proof of analysis in the work process.	2015
Nursing scaling in an emergency room of a school hospital <sup>(17)</sup> .	Paixao T; Couto R. et al.	Employee emergency chart without matching the need for employees in the sector.	2015
Quality of life at work: perspectives and current challenges <sup>(18)</sup> .	Sampaio JR.	Perception of change is necessary and study the quality of life in the work environment that makes possible the knowledge of the variables that influence such behavior of the workers.	2013

Source: research data



Currently, some institutions have been concerned with the physical and mental health of their professionals and have been adopting strategies to overcome the problem, either through physical exercises during the work day; work gymnastics; or by the implementation of relaxation techniques and psychotherapeutic care for the professionals, because the institutions became aware that if the nursing professionals are well and in harmony with their body and mind, they will produce more, and will have fewer expenses with health problems <sup>(18)</sup>.

The authors <sup>(16-20)</sup> corroborate that leadership interferes with workers' behavior and distance, and that when there is clarity in the objectives of workers' management and participation, the perception of what is new changes. They report that there is a decrease in patients with musculoskeletal disorders in health professionals, and in the studies they show the lack of importance of managers for absenteeism rates.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research considers that the nursing professional's stress results from low remuneration, causing the worker to have more than one job, work overload and non-appreciation of their work. In order to control the stressors in the emergency sector for nursing professionals, it is necessary to value the different knowledge with an emphasis on the professionals' experiences.

Professional Nurses in the emergency sector perceives the stress factors in which they are involved, and the stimulus as a solution for a better quality of life of the nursing professional is of great value. When the institution in which the worker is linked has a career plan, an adequate salary increase for his or her level of study, democratic and non-punitive leadership, as well as a sustainable environment, contributes to the professional's quality of life. The preparation of the Nurse must be to work in diversified units, considering the humanization from the integrators to their own patients, thus seeking a better quality of life.

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