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Prevalence and Associated Factors of Burnout among Doctors Working in Hospitals with COVID-19 Treatment Units in Anuradhapura District, Sri Lanka during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Descriptive Cross-Sectional Study

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an enormous burden on the already compromised health system, particularly in remote areas of the country. Evaluation of the rate of burnout among doctors working in COVID-19 units is important to understand the extent of the issue and for planning interventions.

Objectives

To estimate the prevalence and associated factors of burnout among doctors working in hospitals with COVID-19 treatment units in Anuradhapura district.

Methods

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among doctors working in hospitals with COVID-19 treatment units in Anuradhapura District of Sri Lanka during the third wave of the pandemic. The calculated sample size was 383. Self-administered data collection form was designed as an online and printed forms. Burnout was assessed using the Professional Fulfilment Index. Prevalence rates and associated factors for burnout were evaluated, and the binary logistic regression method was used to identify the risk factors of burnout.

Results

The prevalence of burnout was 41.6% (95%CI:36.6-46.7). Binary logistic regression analysis showed lack of professional fulfilment (OR=2.79,95%CI:1.69-4.65,p=0.0001), excessive workload (OR=3.87,95%CI:2.30-6.62,p=0.0000), lack of psychological support from services (OR=1.86,95%CI:1.07-3.30,p=0.0300), lack of psychological support from family (OR=1.95,95%CI:1.14-3.37,p=0.0159), being an intern house officer (OR=4.06,95%CI:1.27-13.45,p=0.0193), and less number of years of work experience (OR=3.52,95%CI:1.54-8.62,p=0.0040) as risk factors for developing burnout in this study population.

Conclusions

The prevalence of burnout was high among doctors working in hospitals with COVID-19 units in rural Sri Lanka. Addressing this important issue is vital to improving the quality of life of doctors and the services they rendered during any crisis situation such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key words: *burnout, medical officers, stress, professional fulfilment index, pandemic*