

Half of emergency care doctors prone to burn-out

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One in two emergency care doctors is prone to burn-out, suggests a representative survey of French physicians, published online in *Emergency Medicine Journal*.

The tension between home and working life and poor teamwork are key factors, the findings suggest.

Some 3000 salaried doctors completed an online survey, designed to assess working conditions, [job satisfaction](#), and health and wellbeing, using a five point scale for more than 250 questions.

Of these, 538 were emergency care specialists, and of the remainder, just under 2000 were randomly selected to match the age, gender, and regional profile of France's physicians and their distribution by specialty, so as to provide a representative sample.

The specialties represented included [intensive care](#) and anaesthetics, medicine, surgery, psychiatry, geriatric medicine, radiology, [preventive medicine](#) and pharmacy.

The responses showed that the prevalence of burn-out was high, with one in two (51.5%) emergency care doctors identified as having this, compared with more than four out of 10 of the representative sample.

Poor work-life balance and dysfunctional teams were most strongly associated with burn-out, both of which were more common among

emergency care doctors than other types of medical practitioner.

There were fewer women among the emergency care respondents, and they were also younger, than the doctors in the representative sample. But more of the women doctors were burnt-out than the men.

The tension between home and working life was more than four times as likely to feature in the responses of burnt-out physicians, but it was more than six times as likely to be a factor for emergency care doctors who were burnt-out. And the greater the tension, the greater was the degree of burn-out.

Similarly, poor teamwork more than doubled the risk of burn-out among the representative sample, but it increased this risk more than fivefold among emergency care doctors.

Burnt-out emergency care doctors tended to have a less active social life, to smoke more, eat a less healthy diet and to skip meals during the day more than the sample. Higher burn-out scores were also associated with less time for continuing professional development.

The results showed that 17% of the sample intended to leave medicine, rising to more than one in five of [emergency care](#) doctors (over 21%).

Burn-out more than doubled the risk of wanting to leave the profession altogether, while dysfunctional teams more or less quadrupled it.

Provided by British Medical Journal

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