

# Perceived health, perceived social support and professional quality of life in hospital emergency nurses

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## **Abstract**

**Background:** Emergency department nurses are continually exposed to distressing experiences that can lead to burnout, compassion fatigue, and compassionate satisfaction, thus could affect the professional quality of life. The aim of this study was to analyse professional quality of life in hospital emergency department nurses based on perceived health, social support and a series of socio-demographic and sociooccupational variables. **Methods:** This descriptive cross sectional study involved nursing professionals working at hospital emergency departments in Andalusia, Spain. Professional quality of life, perceived health, socio-demographic and occupational variables, and perceived social support were measured. A descriptive and multiple regression analysis was performed. **Results:** A total of 253 nursing professionals participated, of which 62.5% had high levels of compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction (45.1%). Burnout levels were medium (58.5%). Perceived health significantly influenced on compassion fatigue and burnout. Perceived social support was found to be significantly related to all three dimensions of professional quality of life, but it had the greatest influence on the occurrence of burnout. **Conclusions:** Emergency department nurses in public hospitals are emotionally drained. Healthcare systems must develop intervention strategies to increase the quality of life of nursing professionals, which would lead to improved patient care. The promotion of compassion is a key element. © 2021 The Author(s)

## **Author keywords**

Burnout; Compassion fatigue; Compassion satisfaction; Emergency services; Nursing; Perceived health; Professional quality of life; Social support