

## JOB SATISFACTION IN HEALTH CARE WORKERS

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Job satisfaction is very important factor of productivity and job quality, especially in health care workers. The aim of the paper was to assess some of the parameters of job satisfaction among health care workers. The pilot cross-sectional study conducted in the Clinical Center Nis from February to June 2007. Instrument for investigation was MM-40 EA questionnaire (Örebro University, Sweden). Interviews of physicians and nurses were conducted by the Faculty of Medicine students. 770 health care workers (209 male, 561 female) were polled, mean age 40.65±9.82 years. Most of the participants thought that their work was interesting and stimulating, but that they worked too hard. The health care workers were not satisfied with their influence on the work organization, as well as on the working environment conditions. More than half of participants had very good experiences with teamwork. The investigations in this field should have high priority in the country in transition. *Acta Medica Medianae* 2008; 47(4):9-12.

**Key words:** health care workers, job satisfaction, questionnaire

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### Introduction

Job satisfaction in workers is a very important parameter that influences productivity as well as quality of work. This complex phenomenon is an attitude towards one's job that has an impact not only on motivation, but also on career, health and relation with co-workers (1-3).

Previous studies (4,5) show that job satisfaction depends not only on nature of work, but on one's expectations regarding that work. Generalisation always brings some risks since there are different subjective factors and expectations in different professions important for job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction in health care workers has a great impact on quality, effectiveness and work efficiency and at the same time on health-care costs. Besides its importance for patients and health care system as a whole, professional satisfaction in health care workers is directly connected with absence from work, human relations and

organisation of work (6-8). In a lot of countries, job satisfaction survey is regularly conducted, and by monitoring obtained data it is possible to notice omissions in organisation of work.

Health care workers face increased risk for work discontent. Stress, burnout and complex shift work are important determinants of health care workers' well-being and they also influence their professional satisfaction (9,10).

Worldwide, studies showed that many factors have impact on job satisfaction in health care workers, such as: gender, age, level of education, work experience, way of organisation of work, working conditions, payment, working hours, promotions and so on (11-15).

In our country, surveys on job satisfaction have been scarcely done so far. The Ministry of Health in Serbia intensified surveys on satisfaction of health-care users, as well as of health care workers, in order to give better health protection in our country.

The aim of our study is to evaluate job satisfaction in health care workers and to identify factors that contribute to their professional satisfaction.

### Material and methods

A transversal study was conducted in the Clinical Center Nis in the period from February to June 2007. Participation in the study was on voluntary basis.

The sample involved health-care workers of different education level. Out of 800 employees, consent to interview was obtained from 770 of them.

Interviews were done by Nis Medical School graduates using MM-040 EA (16) questionnaire surveys. According to literature data the questionnaire

was designed by experts from Örebro University in Sweden in order to interview employees about their working conditions that have impact on their health. The questionnaire comprises five parts. In this study the part regarding job satisfaction was investigated using the MM 40 with the following four questions:

- Do you regard your work as interesting and stimulating?
- Do you have too much work to do?
- Do you have an opportunity to influence your working conditions?
- Do your fellow workers help you with problems you may have in your work?

There were four alternative response categories to the questions (yes, often; yes, sometimes; no, seldom; no, never).

For the statistical descriptive and analytic processing, the Epi info 6.0 statistical program was used.

### Results

In this investigation, 770 health care workers were enrolled, 209 male and 561 female (Table 1). Mean age was 40.65 ±9.82 years. There was no statistically significant difference in age in different categories according to qualifications (Kruskal-Wallis  $\chi^2$ -test = 71.7,  $P > 0.001$ )

The greatest number (427) of respondents had secondary education, 212 of them were general practitioners and specialists. About 5% of employees had higher qualifications, and there were about 10% of employees with scientific position (masters and doctors of science).

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents

Male	209	27,14%
Female	561	72,86%
Mean age (Xsr± SD)	40.65±9.82	
Under 35 years	394	51,16%
36 to 55 years	167	21,70%
Over 55 years	427	55,45%
Secondary education	427	55,45%
Higher qualification	44	5,71%
High qualification	212	27,53%
With scientific position	87	11,31%

The respondents answered the questions as it is showed in tables 2-5.

Table 2. Answers to the question if the work was interesting and stimulating (%)

Qualification	often	sometimes	seldom	never
secondary	46.11	41.35	10.77	1.77
higher	58.13	34.88	6,97	0.02
high	70.61	27.01	1,89	0.49
scientific position	77.01	20.69	0.00	2,21

From this table it can be seen that perceiving work as interesting and stimulating increases with qualifications, so the greatest number of masters and doctors of science replied that their

job was interesting and stimulating (77.01%), while the percentage is considerably lower in employees with secondary education (46.11%).

Table 3. Respondents' answers to the question if they had too much work to do (%)

Qualification	often	sometimes	seldom	never
secondary	68.85	28.57	2,20	0.38
higher	75.00	25.00	0.00	0.00
high	74.06	24.52	1,42	0.00
scientific position	75.86	24.14	0.00	0.00

The greatest number of respondents think they are often overloaded with work. The percentage is between 68.85 to 75.86%.

Table 4. Respondents' answers to the question if they have an opportunity to influence their working conditions (%)

qualification	often	sometimes	seldom	never
secondary	6.91	27.90	42.22	22.97
higher	23.83	16,66	40.47	19.04.
high	16.50	39.15	36.79	7.56
scientific position	18.39	37.93	35.63	8.05

Respondents regarded their influence to working conditions as poorly significant and they mostly answered this question as „seldom“.

Table 5. Respondents' answers to the question if their fellow workers help with problems at work (%)

qualification	often	sometimes	seldom	never
secondary	50.62	39.21	7.94	2.23
higher	63.63	27.27	9.09	0.01
high	58.29	30.80	9,47	1.21
scientific position	55.17	35.63	8.05	1.15

The majority of respondents were positive about team work and organisation of work and more than half of them claimed they often received help from their colleagues.

### Discussion

Surveys on satisfaction of customer service are most often used in organisations that have market business in order to increase profit. If we regard health as goods which qualities are to be constantly improved, then surveys on patients' satisfaction by health service are conducted (17,18). But, health-care workers are seldom interviewed about their working conditions, regardless of the fact that they provide health services and enhance health (19,20).

A questionnaire used in this study is mainly used for examination of microclimatic conditions of work environment, although there is a section about job satisfaction. In most studies that used

this widely accepted questionnaire, data on job satisfaction were of secondary importance.

There are numerous more detailed questionnaires used worldwide for job satisfaction. However, the basic aim of our investigation was to identify problems in our health care institutions. The results showed that obviously there is a problem that requires greater attention. The positive side of this study is that by examining conditions in which health-care workers perform their duties, parameters for employees' satisfaction were observed for the first time.

The results showed that more diverse and qualified professional work is more stimulating. But, it should be noted that more professional work requires greater responsibilities and demands, as well as more detailed preparations and great previous knowledge of employees.

More than two thirds of employees think they are overloaded with work. As the number of employees in health-care institutions is in accordance with world's normatives, it is employees subjective experience on work overload, or organisation of work is not adequate. It is well known that work overload is greater if responsibilities and duties are not adequately distributed.

Employees are not satisfied with their influence on organisation of work and more than one third think they can seldom influence the work conditions. Such results are not satisfactory, and management education at all levels in health-care institutions in our country should be undertaken. Motivation of employees is also important in solving problems in this field.

Team work, as an important factor in functioning of health-care system, was assessed

in respondents and probably has an impact on quality of health-care services.

The questionnaire used had only four questions, but it can be accepted as a very useful tool for quick screening in a health-care institution, especially if we take into account that in our conditions fast and cheap methods are more suitable than complex and more detailed ones. Of course, obtained framework about presence of certain problems in job satisfaction in health care workers should be accepted as a basis for more detailed investigation if necessary. A special attention should be directed to education and information of health care workers, to development of team work and to organisation of work.

### Conclusion

The majority of employed health care workers think their job is interesting, and their perception is in correlation with their qualifications. Most of the respondents claim they are overloaded with work, and the majority can rely on their fellow workers. Minority of respondents think they can influence their work conditions. These preliminary results show that there is a need for education in communication skills and prevention measures for health improvements and job satisfaction. This pilot investigation points out that it is necessary to apply interventions in certain sections that are related to job satisfaction in health care workers. A greater engagement of relevant structures in taking and directing necessary measures at the work place to improve satisfaction and well-being of the personnel is required.

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## ZADOVOLJSTVO POSLOM KOD ZDRAVSTVENIH RADNIKA

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Zadovoljstvo poslom zdravstvenih radnika je vrlo važan parametar koji utiče na kvalitet pružanja zdravstvene zaštite, kao i motivaciju zaposlenih. Cilj ovog rada bio je oceniti neke od parametara zadovoljstva poslom kod zdravstvenih radnika. Pilot studija sprovedena je u Kliničkom centru u Nišu u periodu od februara do juna 2007 god. Instrument istraživanja bio je upitnik MM-40 EA koji je izradio Örebro univerzitet iz Švedske. Anketiranje su radili studenti završne godine Medicinskog fakulteta u Nišu. Ispitano je 770 zdravstvenih radnika (209 muškaraca i 561 žena), prosečne starosti 40.65±9.82 godina. Većina anketiranih smatra da im je posao zanimljiv i stimulativan, ali da previše rade. Zaposleni nisu bili zadovoljni svojim uticajem na organizaciju posla, kao i uslovima rada. O timskom radu se više od polovine ispitanika izrazilo pozitivno. Očigledno je da je potrebno veće angažovanje u cilju poboljšanja zadovoljstva zaposlenih kod nas, te slična istraživanja treba ohrabriti. *Acta Medica Medianae* 2008;47(4):9-12.

**Ključne reči:** zdravstveni radnici, zadovoljstvo poslom, anketa