**Examining the Occupational Stress Experienced by Ambulance Staff: A Mixed-Methods Stress Audit**

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**Objectives:** UK ambulance staff are the most burnt out in the NHS and work stress is a key reason for staff absence. Work stressors such as lack of manager support and poor work-life balance have previously been identified for ambulance staff. This study investigated which specific stressors have the most negative impact on health, well-being, performance, and intention to leave; whether these impacts are mediated by cognitive appraisals or mental rest; and which ambulance staff are most at risk of stress-related problems.

**Methods:** A mixed-methods explanatory design stress audit was conducted amongst ambulance staff in Southwest England. An online survey (n = 420) with ambulance service staff assessed the entire stress process (stressors, appraisals, mental rest), key outcomes (mental health, well-being, performance, and intention to leave), and stress management preferences. Semi-structured interviews (n = 8) explored the findings of the survey in more depth.

**Results:** Multiple regression analyses examined the relationships between predictors (e.g., stressors) and outcomes (e.g., well-being) and ANOVAs and t-tests explored differences between groups (e.g., Band level). A full thematic analysis of all qualitative data is being conducted. Quantitative data revealed that stress related to workplace demands, manager support, relationships and change had the most negative impact on health, well-being, performance and intention to leave and both poor mental rest and threat appraisals were strong predictors of these outcome measures. More experienced staff, Band 6s, those working in mixed (urban and rural) areas and males were more at-risk of deleterious outcomes (e.g., mental ill-health). Analysis of the qualitative data is ongoing and will provide explanatory analysis of the survey findings.

**Conclusions:** The findings of this study offer a comprehensive and novel insight into the stress experiences of ambulance staff and will inform the effective development and delivery of tailored stress management interventions.

**Keywords:** Ambulance staff; Health and wellbeing; Occupational stress.

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