First civic survey on health personnel in Italy.
On the front line but in the shadows: behind the scenes of the National Health Service.

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Cittadinanzattiva / Active Citizenship Network

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Active Citizenship Network
CITTADINANZAttiva

The survey

Cittadinanzattiva's Civic Evaluation Agency in collaboration with the Federazione Nazionale Ordini Professioni Infermieristiche (FNOPI) and the Federazione Nazionale Ordini dei Tecnici sanitari di radiologia medica e delle Professioni sanitarie tecniche, della riabilitazione e della prevenzione (FNO TSRM e PSTRP).

How **10,000** workers, representing **20 different health professions** live their professional condition

Nurses, Pediatric Nurses, Radiographers, Audiometrists, Neurophysiopathology technician, Biomedical Laborator Technicians, Orthopedic Technician, Hearing Aid Technician, Technician of Cardiocirculatory Pathophysiology and Cardiovascular Perfusion, Dental Hygienists, Dieticians, Speech Therapists, Podologists, Orthoptist - Ophthalmology Assistant, Occupational Therapist, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Technician Neuro and Psychomotor Therapist of Developmental Age, Professional Educators, Health Assistants, Environment and Workplace Protection Technicians

The survey

Survey Instrument: Online questionnaire with 23 primarily closed-ended questions

Survey objectives:

1. Assess the **perceived climate** among public and private healthcare workers.
2. Identify **critical aspects** within various working areas.
3. Understand **motivations driving or hindering personnel** in the National Health Service (NHS).

Survey focus areas:
1. Workplace well-being
2. Political and social recognition
3. Professional empowerment and growth
4. Working conditions and equipment
5. Gratification and job satisfaction
6. Communication and participation
7. Principles and values of the Italian care system
8. Attractiveness of the NHS

Well-being at work

Work-Life Balance:

33% **struggle to balance** work and private life.
35.3% lack flexible working hours.
Yet, 48.8% manage to preserve their private life.

Workload and Support:

41.2% find workloads **inadequate**.
36.3% consider work rhythms **unsustainable**.

36.2% feel **supported by colleagues**.
42.2% feel little or **no support from superiors**.

Security Concerns:

25.7% feel unprotected at work & 24.8% find security measures inadequate.

46.5% are unsure/**not knows if a system exists to prevent violence** in their workplace.

Mental Health Support:

65.9% desire a psychological counseling point in the workplace.

Victims of aggression in the last 3 years:

31.6% faced **aggression from users**.
20.7% faced aggression from superiors.
18.4% faced aggression from colleagues.

Presence:

Low percentages report frequent absences due to illness/accident (3.1%), difficulty in staying focused (7%), and burn-out (13.3%).

Recognition and appreciation

RECOGNISABILITY: being identified as distinct from other professionals working in healthcare

- 75.4% feel **little or no recognition** from politics.
- 63.7% feel unrecognized by institutions.
- 57.6% lack recognition from their own workplaces.
- On average, **more recognition from citizens/carers** (44.7%) and other **professionals** (46.6%).

APPRECIATION: for one's professional profile and role

- Appreciated **by citizens/patients** (57.9%).
- Feel little or no appreciation from politics (73.5%), institutions (64.6%), and their own workplaces (60.8%).

Professional empowerment and growth

Consistency and Satisfaction:
- 53.7% feel their work **aligns with their professional profile.**
- 46.6% express satisfaction with their career.

Work Environment:
- **Little** stimulation for **personal fulfillment** (42.6%).
- Limited encouragement for **professional growth** (48.5%).

Training and Skills:
- Adequate basic training (42%).
- **Good preparation** in theory (45.5%) and practice (41.9%).
- Training in soft skills (36.9%).

Continuing Education:
- **Dissatisfaction with opportunities** (48.3%) and CME credits (53.1%).
- Limited access to courses aligned with professional needs (34.4%).
- Satisfaction with **course quality** (50.8%).

Working conditions and equipment

Work Distribution:

- **Insufficient** equity in workload distribution (42.3%).
- Uneven distribution of responsibilities (44.1%).

Workplace Conditions:

- Poor satisfaction with **workplace characteristics** (36.3%).
- Adequate **resources and tools** (**only** 30%).
- Opportunities for skill recognition and improvement (**only** 21.6%).

Remuneration and career advancement

Pay dissatisfaction:

- 60% find the salary-to-commitment ratio **inadequate**.
- 65% believe salary does **not match responsibilities**.

Career advancement:

- 67.6% see **no real career advancement** opportunities.
- 69.3% believe advancement **isn't merit-based**.

Diversity and equality:

- Positive promotion of **gender equality and cultural diversity** (54.6%).

Involvement and participation

Company/Institution Objectives:

- 60.4% feel **uninvolved in defining objectives and strategies**.
- 47.3% cannot express opinions on work organization decisions.
- 68% feel **their opinions aren't considered** in company policies.

Training and Education Plans:

- 65.4% feel little to **no involvement in defining training and education plans**.

Impact on Health Policies:

- 77.5% **feel their opinions aren't reflected in health policies** at their **workplace**.
- 81.5% feel unheard **at regional level and national level**.

Staying vs leaving: the voice of those concerned

Reasons for leaving NHS:

- Compensation and contractual concerns.
- Lack of recognition and growth opportunities.
- Work-related stress and workload.
- Negative work environment and relationships.
- Management issues and resistance to change.
- Concerns about system trends and depersonalization.
- Lack of involvement in decision-making.
- Deviation from NHS values and patient focus.
- Negative feelings towards the profession.
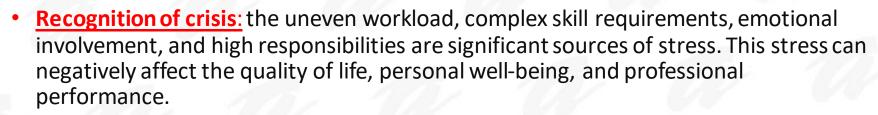- Desire for change and new motivations.

Reasons for staying in NHS:

- Stability and security.
- Commitment to public health.
- Contribution to system improvement.
- Passion and belief in the profession.
- Sense of responsibility and duty.
- Positive work relationships with colleagues.
- Opportunities for professional growth.
- Personal realization and satisfaction.
- Work-life balance and convenience.
- Commitment to quality service.

Conclusions

- **Recognition of crisis**: the uneven workload, complex skill requirements, emotional involvement, and high responsibilities are significant sources of stress. This stress can negatively affect the quality of life, personal well-being, and professional performance.

- **Focus on priorities**: fair compensation for their skills and responsibilities, greater social and institutional recognition; investing in continuous education & training, support, proximity, and innovative technologies & communication tools are highlighted as crucial priorities. These actions can enhance the resilience and effectiveness of healthcare services, ensuring better patient care and trust in the system.

- **Professional Commitment**: despite challenges, healthcare professionals remain committed to the values of the National Health Service (SSN) and the concept of health as a public good. Their dedication to addressing social and healthcare needs demonstrates their intrinsic motivation to contribute to the well-being of society.

- **Call for political action**: there's a clear call for a multi-faceted approach that prioritizes investment, political commitment, and a patient-centered perspective within a framework of social responsibility and equity. Only through concerted efforts at both national and European levels can these challenges be effectively tackled and the integrity of healthcare systems upheld.

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