

# COVID-19 has taken a significant toll on the mental health of healthcare workers.



## New and unprecedented

circumstances caused by COVID-19 have resulted in high rates of depression<sup>1, 2</sup>, anxiety<sup>1, 2</sup>, and moral injury<sup>3, 4</sup> among healthcare workers.

We talked to healthcare workers from across Canada to hear their stories in an effort to better understand the types of situations they are experiencing during the pandemic that are contributing to their mental stress. Our preliminary findings are listed on the next page.



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# 10 key COVID-19-related stressors for healthcare workers.

- 1 Repeated exposure to patients' prolonged suffering from COVID-19 and the provision of futile care. Exposure to increased number of deaths, including younger, unvaccinated and otherwise healthy individuals.
- 2 Patients dying alone without family. Taking on the role of family at end of life. Not having time to process and grieve the deaths.
- 3 Exhaustion and burnout but feeling non-deserving of time off and rest.
- 4 Fear of transmission to self but even more so to family members and others.
- 5 Disruptions in family life due to increased work hours and living apart for safety.
- 6 Perceived inequitable mandatory deployment to COVID-19 units.
- 7 Perceived lack of employer understanding, support, and adequate resources that has worsened over the course of pandemic.
- 8 Enforcing no-visitor policies in hospitals and healthcare organizations along with concerns about the risks of having visitors present.
- 9 Concern about traumatizing others who are not healthcare workers by talking about their experiences. Living in a different world than non-healthcare workers and not feeling understood.
- 10 Loss of usual coping strategies including access to gyms and socializing with peers and family members.

Though these findings are preliminary, these results highlight the need for adequate resources and supports for healthcare workers dealing with COVID-19-related stressors. Our ongoing research is investigating ways to help healthcare workers at this time.



If you are a healthcare worker and would like to participate in our study, [click here](#) or scan the QR code for our online survey.

