Job Stress and Burnout among Medical Laboratory Professionals Working in Urban and Rural Locations

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PURPOSE OF STUDY

- To investigate the pervasiveness of job stress and burnout within the laboratory workforce and inform recommendations to promote well-being and prevent burnout.
- To examine the relationship between the job stress and burnout of medical laboratory professionals and their geographic work location.

METHODS

CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY DESIGN

Survey deployed online to a large national sample of medical laboratory professionals, examining indicators including:

- Type of practice setting
- Type of geographical area (urban, urban cluster, or rural)
- Level of job stress
- Whether respondents had and/or were experiencing burnout

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

4,613 laboratory professionals participated

GENDER

Female (n = 3818, 83%)
Male (n = 756, 16%)
Other (n = 12, < 1%)

MEAN AGE

45.3 years (SD = 12.7)

TOP PRACTICE SETTINGS

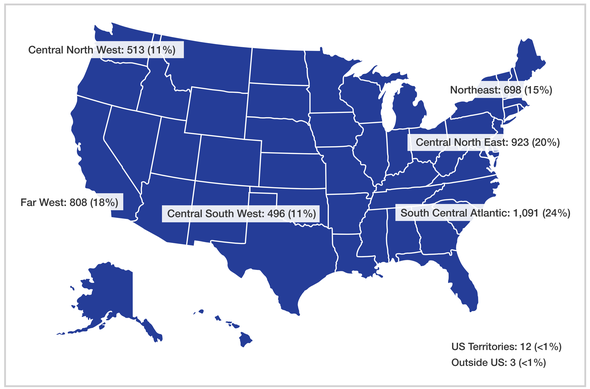
Academic hospitals (n = 1,702, 37%)
Non-academic hospitals (n = 1,602, 35%)
Reference laboratories/independent laboratories (n = 381, 8%)

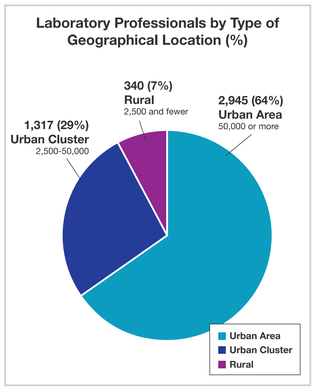
TOP GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

South Central Atlantic (n = 1,091, 24%)
Central North East (n = 923, 20%)
Far West (n = 808, 18%)

GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

Urban (n = 2,945, 64%)
Urban cluster (n = 1,317, 29%)
Rural (n = 340, 7%)



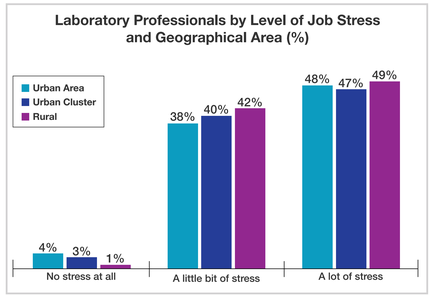


KEY FINDINGS

JOB STRESS

87% REPORTED FEELING AT LEAST SOME LEVEL OF JOB STRESS (N = 3,996)

Stress levels were comparable across the types of geographic areas, F(2, 4133) = 0.20, p > .05



TOP SOURCES OF JOB STRESS INCLUDED:

- Workload or call duties
- Colleagues/coworkers
- Administrative duties
- Management/administration
- Organizational processes/climate

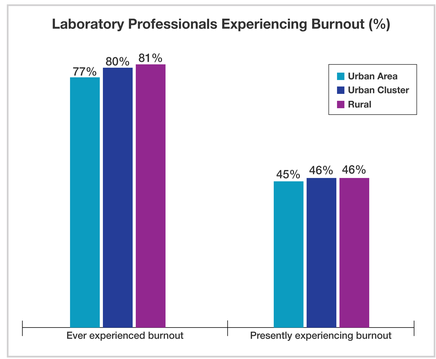
BURNOUT

78% OF THE LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS REPORTED EVER EXPERIENCING BURNOUT (N = 3,601)

Highest in rural areas (81%) but not significantly, $\chi2(2, N = 4,128) = 5.2$, $p > .05$

46% PRESENTLY EXPERIENCING BURNOUT (N = 2,105)

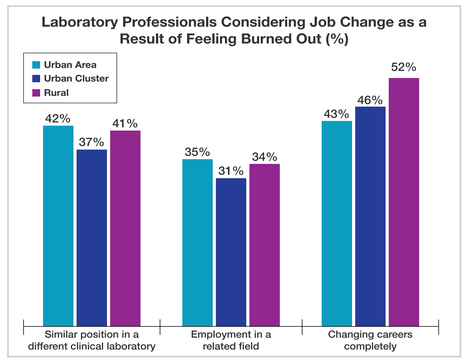
Highest in rural areas and urban clusters but not significantly, $\chi2(2, N = 3,880) = 0.3$, $p > .05$



JOB CHANGES

JOB CHANGES BEING CONSIDERED BY LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS PRESENTLY EXPERIENCING BURNOUT:

Similar position in different laboratory: Highest in urban areas (n = 555, 42%)
Employment in a related field: Highest in urban areas (n = 463, 35%)
Changing careers: Highest in rural settings (n = 82, 52%)



CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS

JOB STRESS

87% OF THE LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS REPORTED FEELING AT LEAST SOME LEVEL OF JOB STRESS

- Close to half reported feeling a lot of job stress (47% in urban areas to 49% in rural areas)
- Less than 5% reported feeling no job stress (1% in rural areas to 4% in urban areas)

BURNOUT

78% OF THE LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS REPORTED EVER EXPERIENCING BURNOUT

46% REPORTED PRESENTLY EXPERIENCING BURNOUT

JOB CHANGES

TOP JOB CHANGES BEING CONSIDERED BY LABORATORY PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING BURNOUT: CHANGING CAREERS COMPLETELY

- Highest percentage in rural areas (52%)
- Lowest percentage in urban areas (43%)