

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

[Translated article] Burnout syndrome in orthopaedics and traumatology professionals: A continuous danger?



Síndrome de *Burnout* en los profesionales de ortopedia y traumatología: ¿un peligro continuo?

Dear Editor,

The manuscript, “Telematic consultation in OTS during the COVID-19 pandemic. Has it come to stay?”¹ points out that orthopaedic and trauma professionals have used telemedicine as a feasible option for care. Nevertheless, due to the characteristics of these services, remote work due to the pandemic has led to high levels of work pressure and rotating shifts that lead to professional burnout.

Burnout syndrome is an occupational condition that affects both mental and physical health and is manifested by the constant emotional stress to which people are subjected as a result of the work they undertake in treating others as successfully as possible. In fact, this tension arises from the continuous interaction, and at times somehow losing empathy towards the patient, without generating further concern or commitment.²

It is worth mentioning that one characteristic is that the professional develops a sense of failure in the workplace, especially with the people around him/her, and on top of that, constant emotional exhaustion that culminates in negative attitudes towards others.

Accordingly, we can comprehend these aforementioned characteristics by looking at the following symptoms: (a) emotional exhaustion, which covers a gradual loss of vital energy whereby people become irritable, with persistent complaints about the volume of work carried out, and the motivation to enjoy the tasks entrusted to them is lost, and (b) depersonalisation, which manifests as feelings of helplessness and personal hopelessness with increasing feelings of exhaustion and which can lead to depression.

Along these lines, it should be noted that organisations can generate important negative scenarios with consequences for work dynamics resulting from poorly conducted interactions between supervisors and co-workers. Finally, we cannot overlook the so-called stressors of the modern age that have to do with new technologies, such as virtual care, medical appointment systems, meetings via videoconferencing platforms, and other tools that have been used for medical care during the COVID-19 pandemic and that have exerted an impact on healthcare professionals, keeping them from applying the very skills they need to put into practice in order to perform their work in optimal conditions.³

In conclusion, and in order to mitigate the burnout syndrome of the medical professional, we would like to indicate that proper planning and its respective execution with realistic and adaptable strategies applied at all levels, whether individual, collective, or institutional, should be contemplated in order to prevent, control and, if necessary, manage the consequences of this syndrome effectively.

Level of evidence

Level of evidence IV.

Authorship contributions

The authors have contributed to the drafting and revision of the final version.

Conflict of interests

None to declare.

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