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An Assessment of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Among Nationally Certified EMS Professionals

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logistic regression modeling was used to quantify the prevalence of depression,

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anxiety, and stress and to predict the association of demographic and work-life characteristics with each outcome. Results. A total of 64,032 individuals were eligible to renew their national certification and 34,340 (53.6%) individuals returned a questionnaire. The DASS-21 classified 1,589 (6.8%, 95% confidence interval [CI] = 6.4%–7.1%) EMS professionals as depressed, 1,406 (6.0%, 95% CI = 5.7%–6.3%) as anxious, and 1,382 (5.9%, 95% CI = 5.6%–6.2%) as stressed. Multivariable logistic regression estimates showed that paramedics (odds ratio [OR] = 1.31, 95% CI = 1.22–1.39), those working in county or municipal services (OR = 1.36, 95% CI = 1.16–1.60) or private services (OR = 1.32, 95% CI = 1.14–1.52), and those with ≥ 16 years of EMS experience (OR = 1.28, 95% CI = 1.01–1.62) had an increased odds of depression. A stepwise increase was found when estimating the effects of self-reported general health on the odds of anxiety (very good, OR = 1.84, 95% CI = 1.53–2.22; good, OR = 3.88, 95% CI = 3.32–4.67; fair/poor, OR = 10.81, 95% CI = 8.14–14.34). Likewise, paramedics (OR = 1.32, 95% CI = 1.23–1.42), those working in a private EMS system (OR = 1.35, 95% CI = 1.16–1.56), and those with ≥ 16 years of EMS experience (OR = 1.67, 95% CI = 1.28–2.18) had an increased odds of stress. Conclusions. This study was able to estimate the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress among a large cohort of nationally certified EMS professionals and identified statistically significant demographic and work-life characteristics that predicted depression, anxiety, and stress. Future research should attempt to follow EMS professionals prospectively to determine the association between exposure and the development of these conditions.

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