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## **Changes of physical and emotional wellbeing of public health workers during the Covid-19 pandemic**

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### **Background:**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, healthcare workers' mental health was affected by enormous challenges in work environment. The study aimed to analyze the physical and emotional wellbeing of the Lithuanian National Public Health Center (NPHC) workers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. It assesses the relationship between self-assessed well-being and sociodemographic factors.

### **Methods:**

An online questionnaire including 8 statements on health and physical and 13 statements on emotional wellbeing was distributed to all 396 NPHC workers. Answers to the statements were provided on a 5-point Likert scale. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test, Mann-Whitney Test and Spearman's rank correlation were used for assessment on relationships.

### **Results:**

Our final sample included 343 (86,6%) NPHC workers. The self-assessment of health and physical wellbeing of the total 8 statements determined that 81.5% of respondents rated it worse during the pandemic ( $p < 0.001$ ). The self-assessment of the emotional wellbeing of the total 13 statements showed that 84.7% of respondents rated it worse during the pandemic ( $p < 0.001$ ). There were statistically significant relationships between self-assessment scores during the pandemic and public health workers' age and work specificity. University degree workers showed significantly higher negative changes both in health and physical wellbeing ( $p < 0.001$ ) and in emotional wellbeing ( $p = 0.001$ ) compared with non-university degree workers.

### **Conclusions:**

The health and physical and emotional wellbeing of the workers of NPHC during the Covid-19 pandemic have significantly deteriorated. It suggests, that measures ensuring public health workers remain physically and mentally healthy during future crises such as COVID-19, are necessary.

### **Key messages:**

- Health and physical and emotional wellbeing of public health workers during the Covid-19 have deteriorated.
- Measures that ensure public health workers remain healthy during future crisis are necessary.