

# Well-being and Work Ability of Professionals in the Emergency Departments of the University Hospital of Modena

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- Employees' intention to leave emergency departments (EDs) is significantly and negatively related to their well-being
- Employee well-being is influenced by working conditions (e.g., work environment, peer support) and other psychosocial dimensions (e.g., work-life balance, presenteeism)
- Some groups of workers (women, doctors) have more unfavorable working conditions, which may lead to lower levels of well-being and greater intention to leave EDs

## Introduction

Recruitment and retention strategies for healthcare personnel represent a priority for European political agendas (Kroezen et al., 2015), which are examining how to counteract the high turnover rate in healthcare facilities, particularly in the emergency departments (EDs) (McDermid et al., 2020).

To deal with the increase in resignations among healthcare professionals, empirical evidence (Romero-Sánchez et al., 2021) shows that reduced levels of work ability and well-being are significant determinants for absenteeism, intention to leave the job and early retirement. On the other hand, adequate levels of these factors are associated with increased productivity and job tenure, and a higher likelihood of remaining an active worker over time (Lindberg et al., 2006; Pak et al., 2019; Tisch et al., 2015). Alongside work ability, studies on hospital turnover recognize the central role of organizational conditions, work environment (physical and social environment, structural characteristics), job satisfaction, and emotional exhaustion in influencing turnover and the intention to leave the job (Bruyneel et al., 2017).

## Methodology

This study, through the administration of a questionnaire in May-June 2024, aims to investigate the well-being of health care workers in the Emergency Departments (EDs) of the University Hospital of Modena (Modena AOU). Specifically, it aims to assess: i) How to promote employee well-being, with a focus on the role of working conditions ii) The presence of differences and weaknesses among subgroups of workers (divided by role, gender and age group).

Medical, psychological and organizational expertise will be integrated in an interdisciplinary framework to develop a theoretical model, supported by empirical evidence, that can help design multilevel interventions to promote organizational well-being in these areas, which are characterized by significant levels of psychosocial risk (work-related stress, aggression and violence against workers, etc.).

To achieve these objectives, ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions were performed on employee well-being as measured by job satisfaction and perceived work ability. Multivariate analyses including t-test between gender groups and one-way ANOVA between job roles and age groups were also estimated to assess specific weaknesses between these subgroups. Results are graphically represented in Table 1 and in Graphics 1, 2.

## First Results and Future Steps

Results from OLS regressions support the existence of a significant correlation between lower levels of well-being and employees' intention to leave the Eds (Table 1). Furthermore, these results suggest that specific working conditions should be promoted to improve employees' job satisfaction and work ability, such as the supervisor's ability to promote teamwork and support among colleagues, autonomy to apply personal ideas at work, the improvement of work-life balance, and the reduction of employees' presenteeism, for example through forms of counseling support. Finally, an adequate working environment in terms of light, space and rumors is also essential.

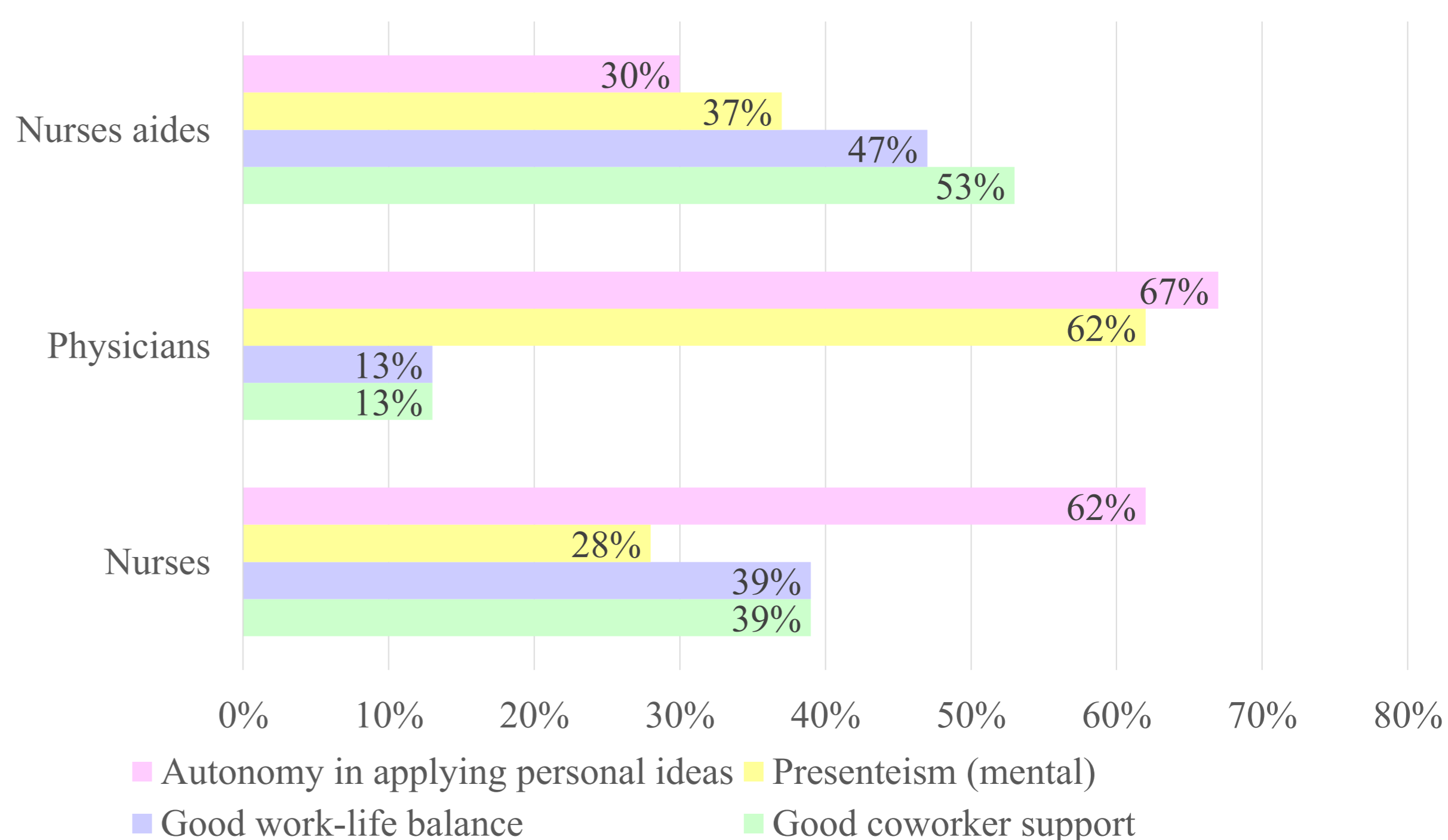
The multivariate analysis indicates that specific factors are more scarce among certain subgroups of workers. For instance, specific differences are observed among job roles and age groups. Physicians present a higher rate of presenteeism, a scarce work-life balance and a lower support between coworkers (Graphic 1). Additionally, considering gender, women present a scarce perceived work ability, lower support among colleagues and an elevated rate of presenteeism (Graphic 2). Future steps in this research include further administration of a questionnaire in the EDs of the Modena AOU in 2025, which will allow us to assess the effects of the variables and policies under consideration over a medium- term time frame.

## Bibliography

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Variables	(1) Perceived work ability	(2) Job satisfaction
<i>Work-life balance</i>	0.18*	0.08
<i>Autonomy in applying personal ideas</i>	0.08	0.20***
<i>Coworker support</i>	0.20*	-0.07
<i>Presenteeism (mental)</i>	-0.19***	-0.21***
<i>Inadequate work environment</i>	-0.12*	-0.22***
<i>Intention to leave ED</i>	-0.34**	-0.41***
<i>Supervisor support in teamwork</i>	-0.01	0.16***
<i>Controls variables</i>	Yes	Yes
Observations	128	128
R-squared	0.371	0.556

**Table 1.** Main factors affecting employees' job satisfaction and perceived work ability. Robust standard errors in parentheses \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Controls included: gender, age groups, job roles.



**Graphic 1.** Differences among job roles, statistically significant



**Graphic 2.** Gender differences in perceived work ability, presenteeism and coworker support, statistically significant