

Key Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction for Physical Therapists in the Emergency Department: A Systematic Review

Introduction: The role of Physical Therapists (PTs) in the emergency department (ED) has gained increasing recognition for its benefits, such as cost-effectiveness, improved patient outcomes, reduced imaging, fewer hospital admissions, and a decreased average length of stay for patients. Despite these advantages, studies focusing on PTs' job satisfaction in the ED remains limited.

Purpose: This study's purpose is to determine the key factors influencing job satisfaction for healthcare professionals in the ED, specifically PTs. In addition, the aim is to identify weaknesses in current evidence and areas for continued research.

Methods: A systematic review of peer-reviewed articles published after 2009 was conducted utilizing EBSCO Host, PubMed, Google Scholar, and APTA EBSCO databases with the keywords "job satisfaction," "emergency department," "burnout," and "stress," by five reviewers. As the first line of review, selected articles were evaluated and approved by the team members, and any conflicts were resolved by a vote.

Results: After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 415 articles emerged which were then screened for relevance, duplicates, and study rigor, resulting in 25 articles included in this review. Of the 25 articles, 6 focused on physicians, 13 on nursing, 1 on physicians and nursing, and 5 for all ED health professionals. Using the Oxford levels of evidence, of the 25 articles, 5 were systematic reviews/Level 1, and ____ were Level 2. The reoccurring themes of work environment, personal demographics, and psychological factors were identified and explored.

Conclusion: Physical therapists thrive in EDs and are equipped with a skill set to benefit the hospital system and its patients. Patient access to care and maintaining a positive work environment are amongst potential challenges PTs may experience.

Discussion and Clinical Significance: Given the growing importance of PTs in this setting, further investigation is essential to understand how their involvement influences job satisfaction and the broader dynamics of the ED team. PTs should be included in the ED to increase the value of the care team and to provide excellence, efficiency, and cost-effective care.