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**Sonographer
wellbeing: how do
you stay a healthy
sonographer?**



Overview



BURNOUT

Introduction, the state of things

WHY BURNOUT IS AN ORGANISATIONAL PROBLEM

SOLUTIONS



Burnout: A very brief introduction

- Construct first identified by Freudenberger (1970s)
- Christina Maslach developed the 'Maslach Burnout Inventory' (1982)
- Initially for health-care professionals
- Two main aspects now focused upon: Disengagement and Exhaustion (OLBI; Demerouti, 2010)



BURNOUT: EXHAUSTION

There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work

During my work, I often feel emotionally drained

BURNOUT: DISENGAGEMENT

It happens more and more often that I talk about my work in a negative way

Over time, one can become disconnected from this type of work

DEPRESSION

Feeling tired or having little energy

Poor appetite or overeating

Little interest or pleasure in doing things

ANXIETY

Not being able to stop or control worrying

Trouble relaxing

Sonographer burnout and stress



SINGH ET AL. (2017; AUS)

n = 121

98% suffering emotional exhaustion
89% experiencing depersonalisation
Slightly higher than radiography
colleagues

UGWU ET AL., 2009 (NIGERIA)

n = 48

Sonographers report higher anxiety and
lower job satisfaction than radiography
colleagues

JOHNSON ET AL., 2019 (UK)

n = 90

80% experiencing exhaustion
43.3% experiencing disengagement
88.9% could be classed as having a
minor psychiatric disorder



BUT THEN

Covid-19

LOCKDOWNS

SEPARATION FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

WORKPLACE TRAUMA

WEARING PPE

ANXIETIES AROUND SICKNESS; FAMILY'S HEALTH

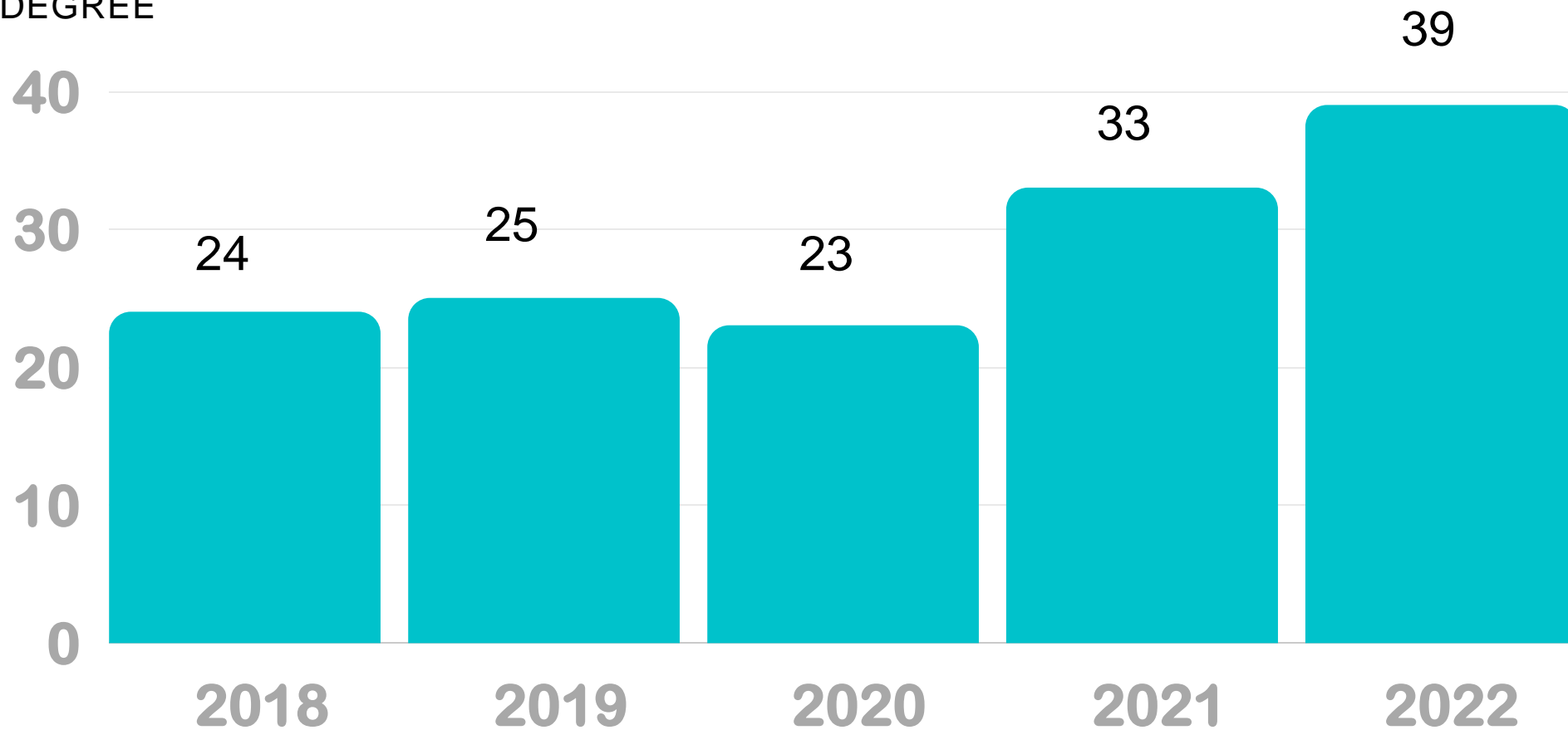
Burnout: post-pandemic

- GMC SURVEY INDICATES INCREASES FROM 1 IN 4 TO 4 IN 10 (2018-2022)
- >90% UK SONOGRAPHERS EXPERIENCING BURNOUT (SKELTON ET AL., 2023)
- AUSTRALASIAN STUDY (MAR – JUN 2020):
 - 3 IN 4 SONOGRAPHERS ANXIOUS ABOUT THEMSELVES/FAMILY CATCHING COVID DUE TO THEIR JOB
 - 3 IN 4 FEELING MORE ISOLATED THAN USUAL (CHILDS ET AL., 2021)



BURNOUT UK TRAINEES: GMC

2018-2022. ALL DATA COLLECTED JAN-MAR. BURNT-OUT TO A HIGH/VERY HIGH DEGREE





NHS STAFF SURVEY: BURNOUT

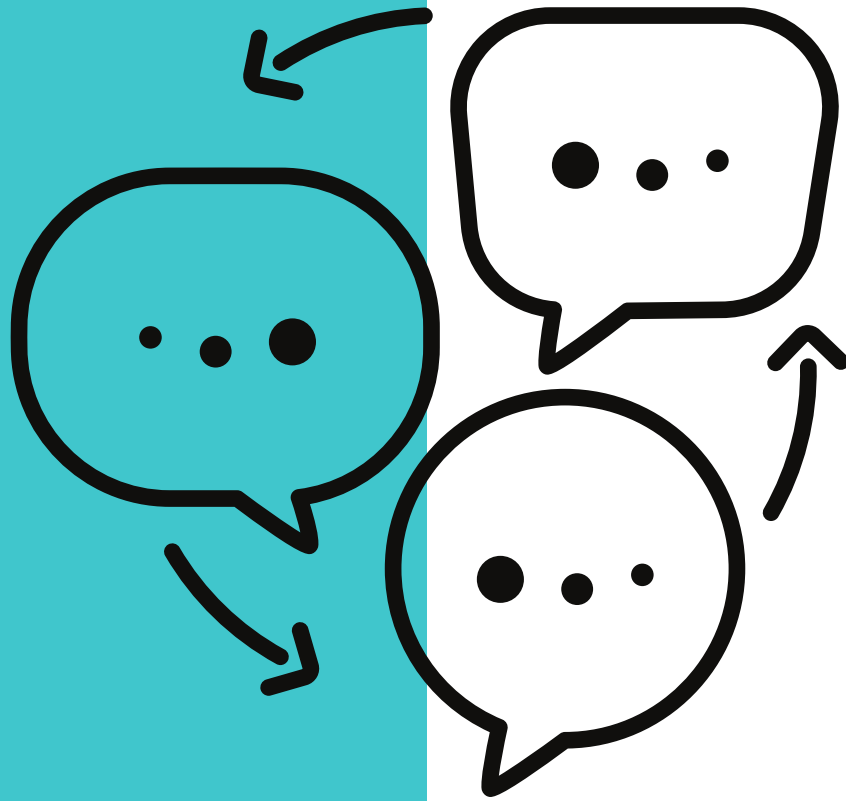
2021-2022; NHS staff agreeing they feel burnt-out because of their work



Learning from SARS

- Compared 587 HCPs in Toronto hospitals which treated SARS to 182 HCPs in Hamilton hospitals who did not treat SARS
- Around 1.5 years after the SARS crisis finished
- Toronto staff reported significantly:
 - Higher burnout (30% above EE cut-off vs. 19%)
 - Higher post-traumatic stress (14% above cut-of vs. 8%)
 - Decreased work hours (9% vs. 2%)
 - Decreased face-to-face patient contact (17% vs. 8%)
 - Increased smoking/drinking alcohol/unhelpful behaviours (21% vs. 8%)





Discussion

HOW HAS
SONOGRAPHER
WELLBEING CHANGED
SINCE THE PANDEMIC?

HOW MIGHT IT
CHANGE IN FUTURE?

**Burnout is an
organizational
problem**



**(1: the outcomes are
organizational)**

High staff turnover



% leaving due to poor work-life balance increased 2.5 x (4-11%) between 2011-21. The number increased 4 x (6.7-26k)



Replacement costs



Train a UK nurse: £26k
Hire an overseas nurse to the UK: £10k*

More sick days



26% of sickness due to MH problems 2023



Temporary staff



£8.9 billion on temporary staff in England 2021-22**

*Nuffield Trust: https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-10/1633336126_recruitment-of-nurses-lessons-briefing-web.pdf

**doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.o2749>

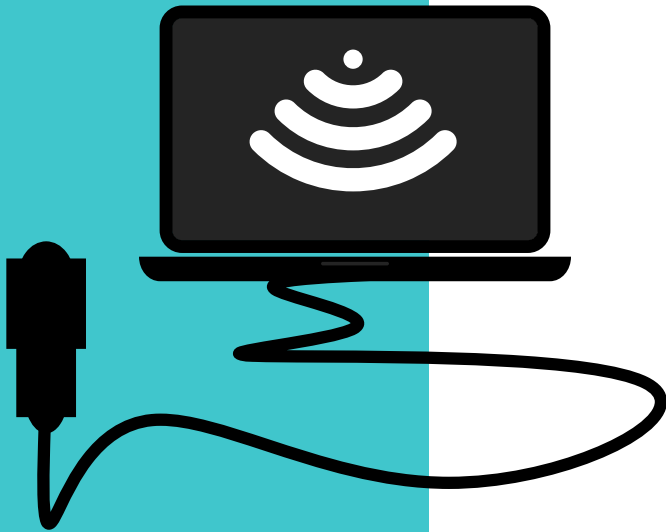
The situation in ultrasound

3 in 4 sonographers considering leaving within 5 years (Skelton et al., 2023)

UK Sonographers are on the shortage occupation list of the Migratory Advisory Committee

Report by the Centre for Workforce Intelligence estimates sonographer vacancy rates across England to be ~ 10%

A growing need (Harrison & Beardmore, 2020):



Question	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Number of additional sonographers needed to provide current service	2.65	0	10
Additional sonographers predicted to need to provide service in five years' time	4.6	0	20

Burnout, safety, professionalism and patient satisfaction



Burnt-out doctors have:

- 2x the risk of patient safety incidents (35 studies)
- 2x the risk of having dissatisfied patients (8 studies)
- 2x the risk of low professionalism (40 studies; e.g., adherence to treatment guidelines, quality of communication, malpractice claims, empathy)

They are also:

- 3x as likely to regret their careers
- 3x as likely to intend to leave their job

**(2: the causes are
organizational)**

HIGH WORKLOAD

High numbers of scans; time constraints; over-time

LACK OF CLARITY

Lack of clear guidance/standards; chaotic work environments

MORE INTENSE CLINICAL WORK

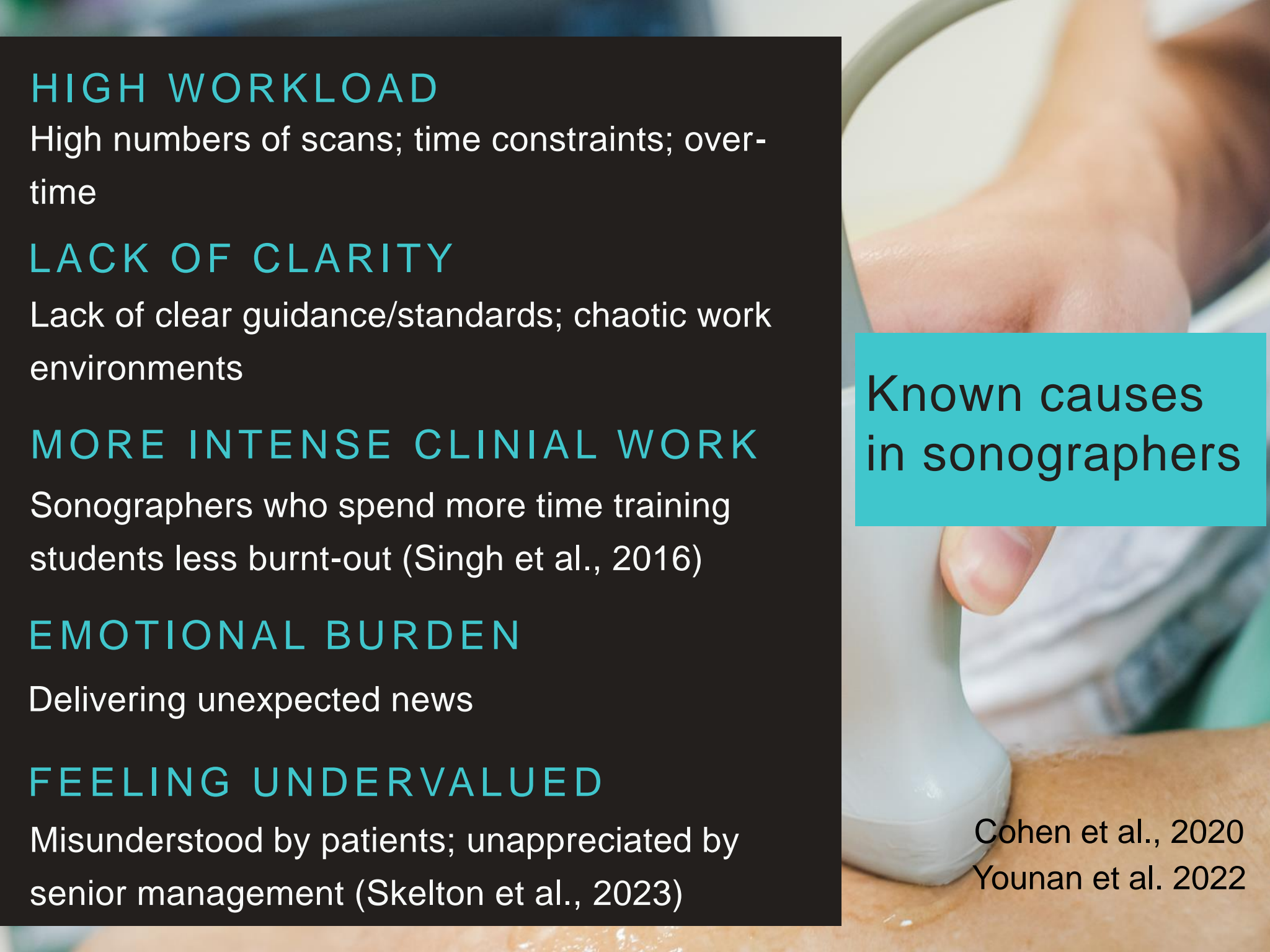
Sonographers who spend more time training students less burnt-out (Singh et al., 2016)

EMOTIONAL BURDEN

Delivering unexpected news

FEELING UNDERVALUED

Misunderstood by patients; unappreciated by senior management (Skelton et al., 2023)



Known causes
in sonographers

Cohen et al., 2020
Younan et al. 2022

Cyclical relationship

Hall et al. (2020)

F2: And then it's a downward spiral from there isn't it, cos the more you make mistakes, the more stressed you'll get.

F1: If you get a complaint that makes you more stressed and then you don't sleep."

West et al. (2006)

- 184 residents followed up quarterly through their training

- Errors were linked with subsequent worsened measures in all domains of burnout

- Increased burnout in all domains associated with increased risk of self-perceived error in the following 3 months





THE BOTTOM LINE

Burnout leads to work-related outcomes and is caused by work-related factors.

Burnout isn't your problem, it's an organizational problem.



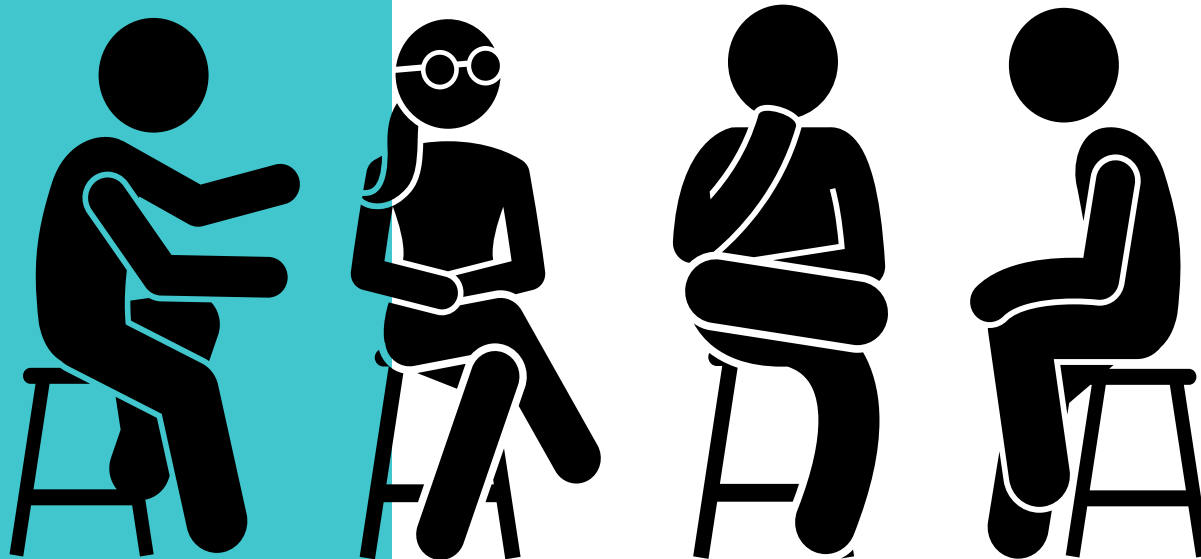
Interventions



Discussion

WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE DONE TO IMPROVE SONOGRAPHER WELLBEING?

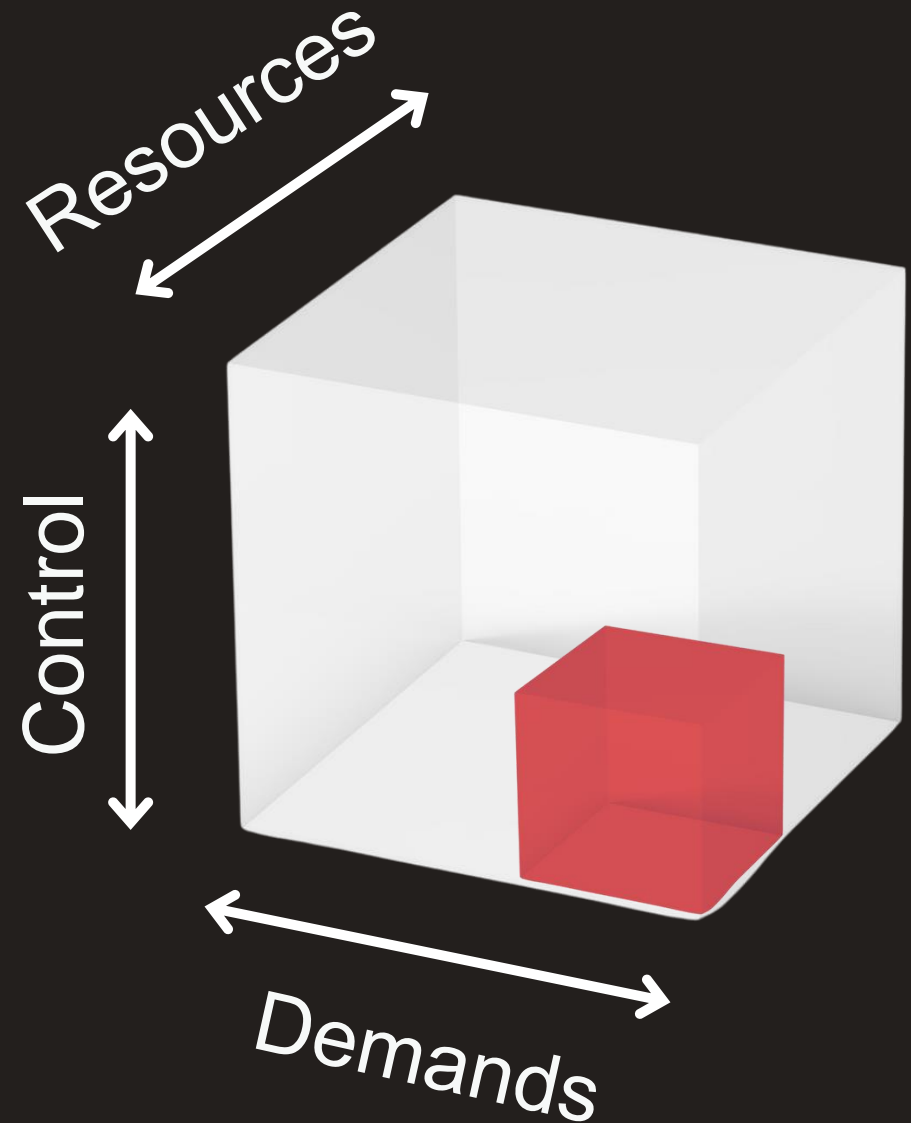
WHO SHOULD DO IT?



Job-demands resources model

BAKKER &
DEMEROUDI, 2007

- Fewer demands reduces stress/burnout
- Higher control reduces stress/burnout
- Better resources reduces stress/burnout



PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Recommended in the Francis Report (2013)

Three functions:

1. Educational
2. Quality assurance
3. Supporting emotional wellbeing



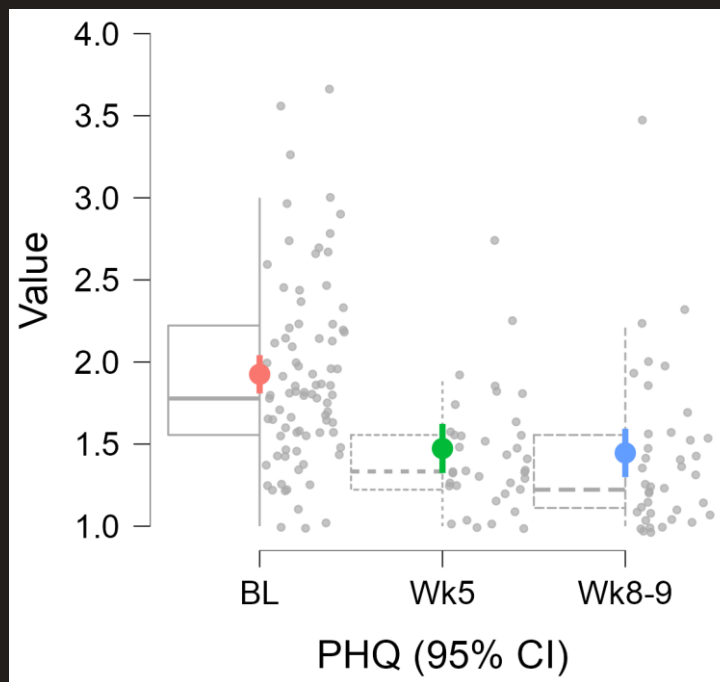
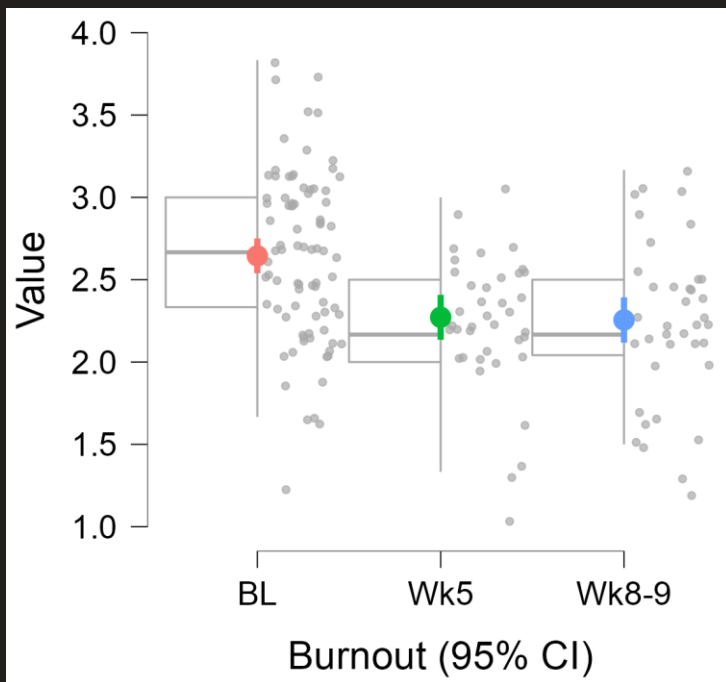
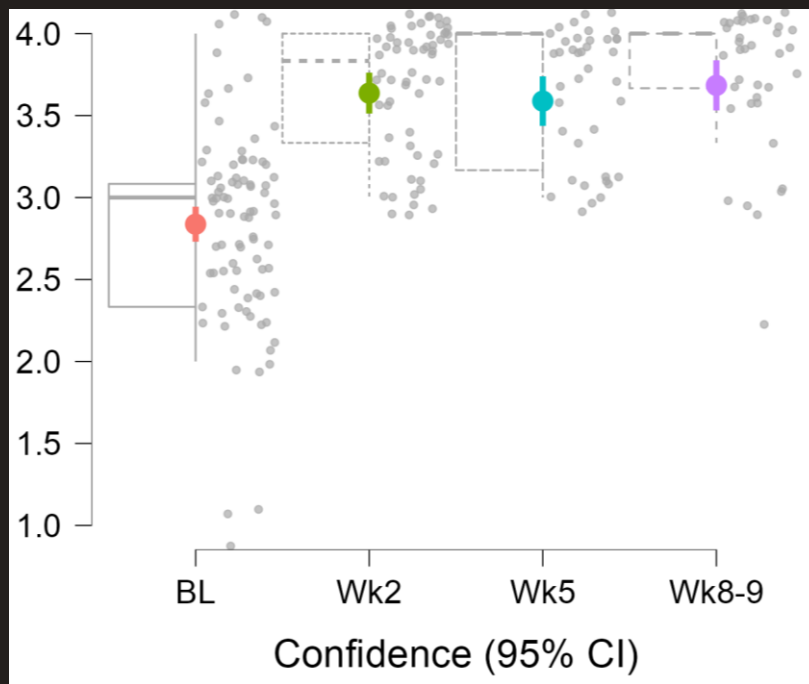
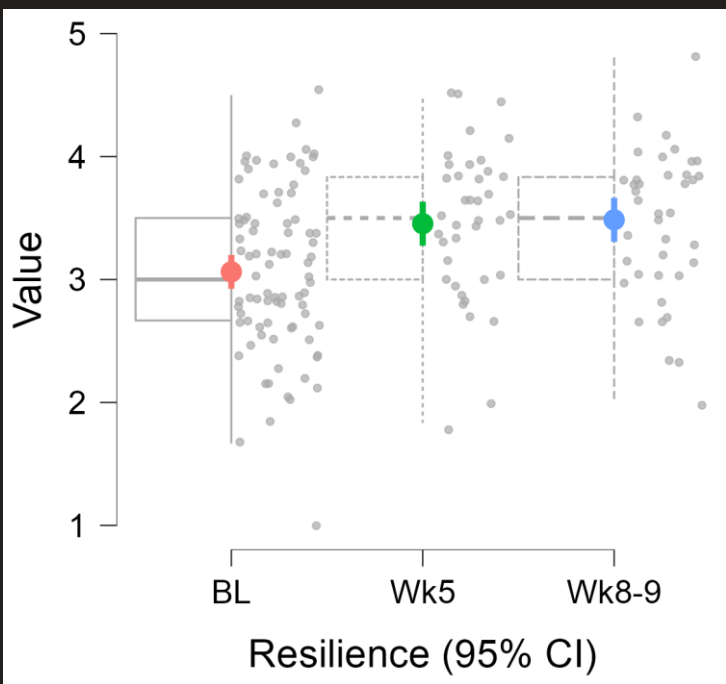
6 in 10 sonographers reported they received professional supervision

1 out of 35 reported that their supervision supported their emotional wellbeing

Occupationally relevant psychological coaching

- Reboot: designed to support health professionals with stressful work events
- Involves 2x2 hour discipline-specific small group workshops and a coaching phone session
- Tailored to developing resilience to the workplace stressors of healthcare professionals
- Draws on resilience theory
- Uses Cognitive-behavioural techniques





Results in CCNs

Thank you!



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