

Psychosocial Determinants of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among Healthcare Workers in Saudi Arabia During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened psychological distress among healthcare workers (HCWs) globally, with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) becoming increasingly prevalent. This study examines PTSD prevalence and psychosocial determinants among HCWs in Saudi Arabia, where they faced high-risk conditions during the pandemic.

Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted among 541 HCWs, assessing PTSD symptoms using the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for Civilians (PCL-C), along with The COVID-19 Fear Scale (FCV-19S), and The four-item Patient Health Questionnaire-4 (PHQ-4) for depression and anxiety screening. Statistical analyses were performed to identify correlations between PTSD symptoms, demographics, COVID-19 exposure, and mental health screening abovementioned scales.

Results: PTSD symptoms were reported by 16.8% of participants, with 18.3% and 18.5% experiencing anxiety and depression, respectively. PTSD symptoms were positively correlated with depression ($r=0.719$), anxiety ($r=0.715$), and COVID-19 fear ($r=0.387$) ($p<0.001$). Higher PTSD scores were more common among unmarried HCWs and those with infected relatives or friends. Regression analysis showed depression and anxiety as significant predictors of PTSD severity.

Conclusion: PTSD among Saudi HCWs during COVID-19 is notably linked to anxiety, depression, and COVID-19 fear, with additional risk for those unmarried or where loved individuals are affected by the virus. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted mental health support to address PTSD risk factors and improve HCWs' well-being.

Keywords: 1; PTSD 2; COVID-19 3; Saudi 4; Healthcare Workers

Bahrain Med Bull 2025; 47 (1): 2757-2762

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