

ANNOTATION

"Quality of Life and Mental Health of Medical Professionals in Bulgaria" is an in-depth study of the often-neglected psychosocial aspects of health professionals in a country with turbulent and controversial health reforms. The author, a distinguished expert in health policy and public health, provides insight into the unique challenges faced by Bulgarian health care workers, exploring how their professional environment affects their mental health and overall quality of life.

The monograph begins by examining the work environment of medical professionals as one of the important contributors to burnout and quality of life, as well as the unique challenges and stressors of the medical profession. Subsequent chapters are devoted to stress and professional burnout in the medical profession, with a discussion of the most common mental health disorders in medical workers. Considerable attention is given to the stigma in the profession of sharing and seeking help when the need arises.

The book also discusses the impacts of work stressors on the personal lives of healthcare workers, including their family relationships, social, sexual lives, and general well-being. Empathy in medicine is discussed separately, with a discussion of empathy fatigue, the need for empathic care, and the preservation of professional boundaries. The author skillfully links these personal impacts to broader societal and health outcomes, including quality of patient care, health system performance, and public health trends.

Subsequent chapters are devoted to empirical research conducted by the author and other experts. It includes survey and interviews that reveal the mental health of physicians, nurses, and other health professionals in Bulgaria. Key findings show high levels of stress, burnout, and job dissatisfaction, often linked to poor working environments in hospitals, low pay, heavy workloads and lack of resources and support. The first Bulgarian pilot model of group psychotherapy for medical professionals, organized by Astra Forum Foundation, is presented.

The final chapters of the book are solution-oriented, offering recommendations for improving the mental health and quality of life of medical workers in Bulgaria. The author proposes a wide range of interventions as solutions at the individual level, at the health facility level and at the national, policy level, which are a perspective for the challenges facing the Bulgarian health care system. These include policy changes, institutional reforms, and citizen-level initiatives that can create a more supportive and sustainable work environment for the health professionals.

"Quality of Life and Mental Health of Healthcare Professionals in Bulgaria" is a seminal work that illuminates a critical but little studied aspect of health care. It is a must-read for health care policy makers, health care managers - executives at various levels in health care facilities, all

health care professionals, medical university students, and anyone interested in the intersection between health care, work-life balance, and mental well-being.