

## Shift Office Work

The article by Güngördü et al. [1] notes that in employees of a Turkish hospital, there is an association between occupational stress and sleep problems. The result is not new since longitudinal occupational studies have shown that stress and sleep are in a reciprocal relationship: excessive stress causes sleep problems, and workers with poor-quality sleep suffer more from stress [2]. The originality of the article lies in the occupational category studied because studies on office hospital workers are lacking. Therefore, it would have been essential to explain what risk the sample under investigation is exposed to and whether it includes night work.

The authors deal extensively in the Introduction with night work and the disruption of circadian rhythms caused by night work that interferes with the quality and quantity of sleep. Also, in the Discussion, they refer to the problems of night shift workers and the disruption of the sleep-wake cycle induced by night work. This would suggest that the offices of Turkish hospitals are open at night.

We do not know Turkish hospitals, but we know that offices do not work night hours in Europe. European hospital clerks perform two types of activities: desk clerks, who operate a single day shift, and counter clerks, who start early in the morning and work two shifts. The latter is more stressful due to a more significant workload and user pressure, which can not infrequently result in uncivil behavior and verbal violence. Work-related violence in healthcare workers

may be associated with sleep disturbances [3, 4]. If we were to interpret the causes of stress in counter workers, we would think primarily of the customers, not the double shift.

The association between stress and sleep that the authors observed in Turkey should have been interpreted considering the working conditions of employees.

**Nicola Magnavita<sup>1</sup>, Francesco Chirico<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Sezione di Medicina del Lavoro e Diritto del Lavoro, Dipartimento di Scienze della Vita e di Sanità Pubblica, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Roma

<sup>2</sup>Scuola di Specializzazione di Medicina del Lavoro, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Roma

### REFERENCES

1. Güngördü N, Kurtul S, Erdoğan MS. Evaluation of Sleep Quality, Work Stress and Related Factors in Hospital Office Workers. *Med Lav.* 2023;114(3):e2023023.
2. Garbarino S, Magnavita N. Sleep problems are a strong predictor of stress-related metabolic changes in police officers. A prospective study. *PLoS One.* 2019 Oct 22; 14(10), e0224259. Doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0224259
3. Magnavita N, Mele L, Meraglia I, et al. The Impact of Workplace Violence on Headache and Sleep Problems in Nurses. *Int J Environ Res Public Health.* 2022; 19(20):13423. Doi: 10.3390/ijerph192013423
4. Magnavita N, Di Stasio E, Capitanelli I, et al. Sleep Problems and Workplace Violence: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Front Neurosci.* 2019;13:997. Doi: 10.3389/fnins.2019.00997

## Authors' Reply

In Turkey, medical secretaries and data entry personnel participate in procedures such as data entry and experience little exposure to patients and their relatives. Shift work is mandatory for 24-hour health care service in the health sector. When we say shift work in the health sector, the first groups that come to mind are healthcare workers, such as nurses and physicians, and office workers in our country also work in shifts. The hospital office workers in our study are the medical secretary, data entry personnel, and administrative personnel. While the medical secretary and data entry personnel among the hospital office workers can work in shifts, the administrative personnel work during the daytime.

Employees are exposed to stress due to many factors in the workplace environment. Organizational factors such as working hours and shift systems are among the causes of stress in the workplace. Job stress can cause sleep problems. At the same time, sleep disturbance is a common problem faced by night shift workers. As a result of the disruption of the circadian rhythm due to shift work, a decrease in sleep quality and quantity occurs.

Considering the risks that hospital office workers are exposed to, we planned our study considering that shift work and job stress may cause more sleep disorders. In our study, sleep quality, work-related stress, and related factors were evaluated in hospital office workers. We found that shift work and increased job stress scores in hospital office workers increased the risk of poor sleep quality.

**Nejdiye Güngördü<sup>1</sup>, Seher Kurtul<sup>2</sup>,  
Mehmet Sarper Erdoğan<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Istanbul University-Cerrahpasa, Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty, Department of Occupational Disease, Istanbul, Turkey

<sup>2</sup>University of Health Sciences, Bozyaka Training and Research Hospital, Department of Occupational Disease, Izmir, Turkey

<sup>3</sup>Istanbul University-Cerrahpasa, Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty, Department of Public Health, Istanbul, Turkey