

Burnout Survey and Use of Mindfulness during COVID-19 Pandemic at University Hospital Hairmyres

McGuinness J (ST5 Anaesthetics), Smith D, (ICU Charge Nurse) Bell J (ICU Charge Nurse), Stirling K (ICU Charge Nurse), Edgar J (Consultant Anaesthetist), Tartarkowska N (Consultant Anaesthetist)

Introduction

- The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional strain on NHS staff.
- Our objective was to ascertain the level of burnout within the ICU, theatre and anaesthetic departments immediately following the first wave of the pandemic.
- In addition, guided mindfulness sessions were made available to staff during the first wave.
- We were interested in the efficacy of these sessions as a possible resource for maintaining wellness throughout this difficult time.

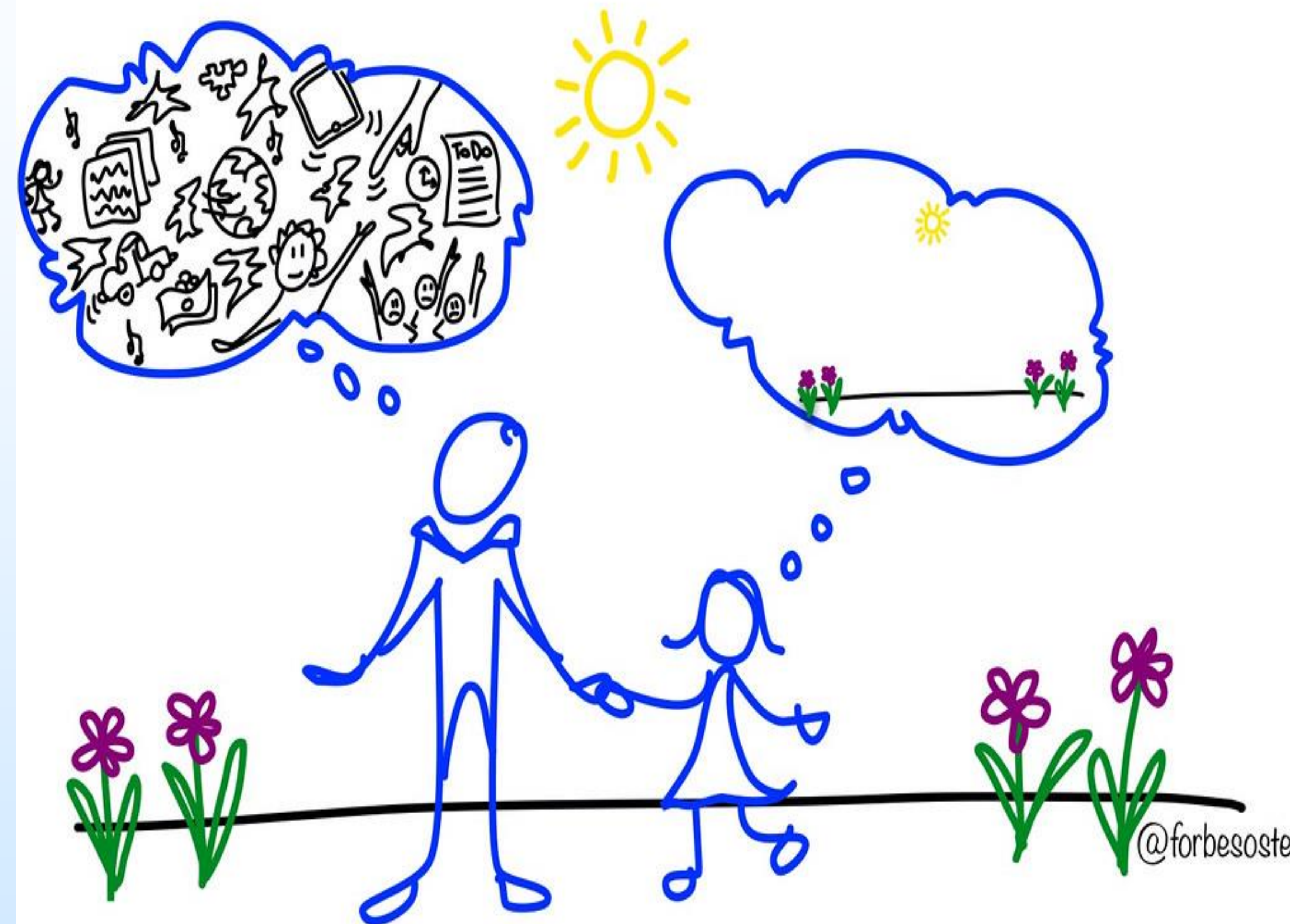
Method

- A 26-question survey was designed with the input of a multidisciplinary team.
- The first 15 questions utilized a burnout questionnaire used by the local occupational health department to score and stratify respondents into risk categories.
- The remaining 11 questions concerned areas for improvement and use of wellness resources.
- It was then disseminated via SurveyMonkey and left open for one month.
- Descriptive statistics were then calculated.
- No patients were involved, and staff participation was optional and anonymous.

Reference:

- 1.) [CC Search \(creativecommons.org\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Mind Full, or Mindful?



Results

- 98 members of staff responded to the survey.
- 18 (18%) medical staff, 24 (24%) ICU nurses and 55 (56%) theatre nurses.
- In terms of years of service, 17 (17%) were in the bracket of 0 to 5, 25 (26%) in 6 to 10, 11(11%) in 11 to 15 and 44 (45%) in the greater than 15.
- 82 (84%) described a change of role or responsibility during the pandemic.
- 78 (80%) experienced stress or anxiety as a result.
- In terms of burnout, the data was found to be normally distributed with a median and average score of 45.
- This correlated to a departmental burnout risk category of “At Risk”.
- 49 (50%) members of staff accessed the mindfulness sessions.
- Of those who did, 45 (92%) found them to be useful.

Discussion

- The high number of respondents to this relatively lengthy survey probably reflects the strength of feeling across the department.
- In terms of seniority, there was a binomial distribution across length of service suggesting that the burden was shared across generations of the workforce.
- Expectedly a high number of staff were found to have been redeployed, with 80% reporting that this led to stress and anxiety. This has obvious implications for the health and wellbeing of staff.
- However, in terms of the categorisation of department burnout, high levels of distress were not consistently reported, with the overall scoring consistent with the “At Risk” group.
- Whilst less than ideal, the author feels that this was unexpectedly low given the huge strain put on staff during the pandemic.
- Perhaps the most interesting data point is that **92% of those who used the mindfulness sessions found them to be useful** in managing stress and anxiety.
- Whilst there were obvious access issues, most notably for ICU nursing staff, this represents a potential avenue for maintaining staff health and wellbeing during, and potentially beyond the pandemic.