

# Work & Life Stress Experienced by Professional Workers During the Pandemic

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## Key Take Home Messages

- Overall, we found the negative impact of the pandemic on work stress was greater among women professional workers.
- The proportion of women health professionals reporting high work stress was about 20 percentage points higher than that of men (61% vs 41%).
- Both men and women reported higher non-work-related stress levels during COVID-19.

## Background/objectives

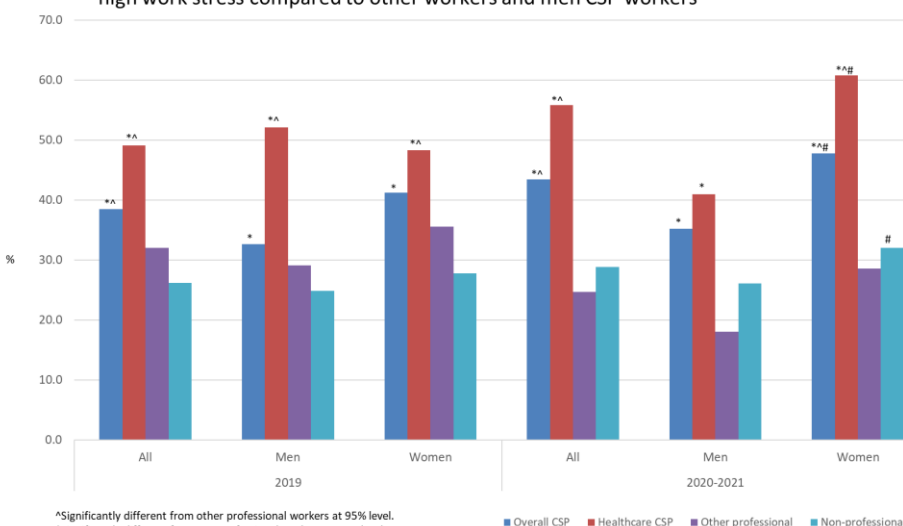
- Work and home life were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic which highlighted pre-existing stressors and introduced new challenges for professional workers.
- Although some research has been published focusing on workplace mental health, there has been a dearth of research that considers the impact of gender identity/roles on stress or develops targeted workplace mental health promotion initiatives.
- This poster highlights the levels of work & life stress and explores the diverse stressors that professional workers experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Methodology

- The research draws on two pan-Canadian sources to address the impact the pandemic had on professional workers: The Canadian Community Health Survey (2019, 2020, 2021) administered by Statistics Canada, and the Healthy Professional Worker Survey (2021), conducted by a pan-Canadian research team.
- Professional workers included in the analysis were academics, accountants, dentists, nurses, physicians, and teachers.
- Descriptive and multivariate analyses were conducted to examine the prevalence and odds of self-perceived life stress and work stress to assess the inter-group differences between occupational groups (professional workers, healthcare workers and non-professional workers) and between gender groups.

## Findings Work stress

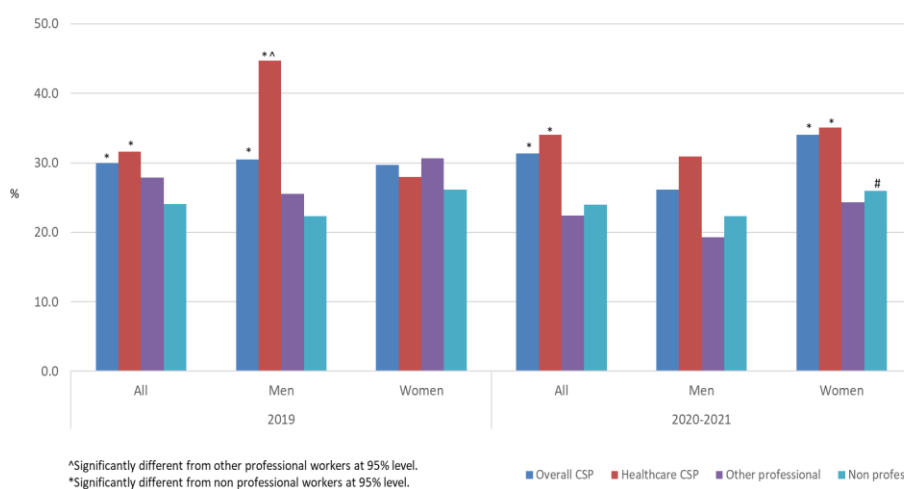
During the pandemic, women CSP workers were more likely to report high work stress compared to other workers and men CSP workers



\*Significantly different from other professional workers at 95% level.  
 #Significantly different from men of the same occupational category at 95% level.  
 Data sources: CCHS 2019, CCHS 2020, CCHS 2021

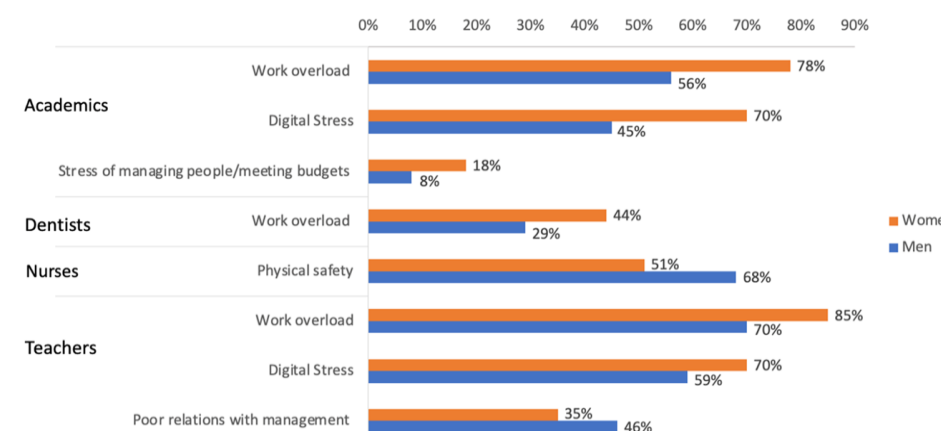
## Findings Life stress

During the pandemic, women CSP workers were more likely to report high life stress compared to non-professional workers

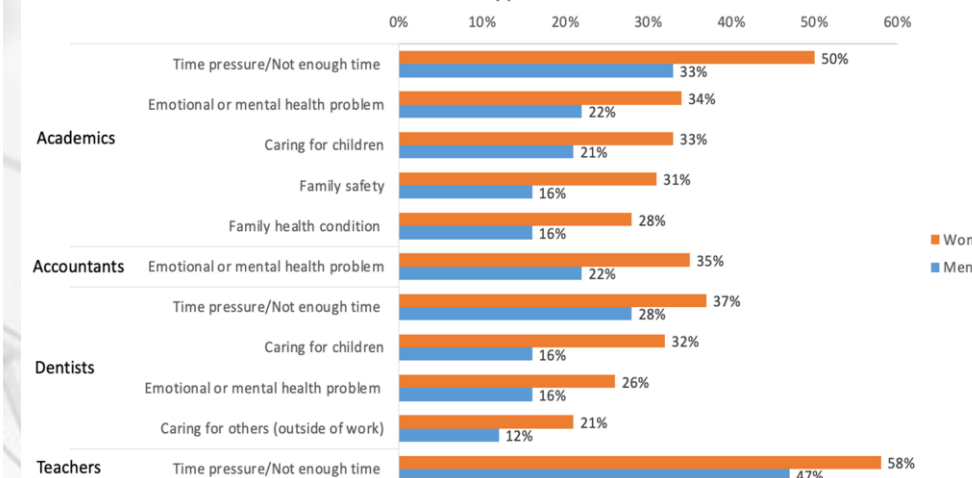


\*Significantly different from other professional workers at 95% level.  
 #Significantly different from non-professional workers at 95% level.  
 Data sources: CCHS 2019, CCHS 2020, CCHS 2021

Significant gender differences in the sources of work stress since the COVID-19 pandemic, by profession



Significant gender differences in the sources of non-work stress since the COVID-19 pandemic, by profession



## Implications

- Work overload emerged as the most frequently selected source of work stress across most professions. Digital stress, poor work relations, and uncertainty were also cited as the top sources of work stress across numerous professions.
- The primary source of non-work stress across all professions was time pressure followed by caring for children and physical and mental health conditions.
- Acknowledging the significant gender disparity in work and life stress among professional workers, particularly concerning the influence of gender identity and roles in both work and home environments, is crucial.
- Given the multifaceted nature of the pandemic and its varied impact across professions, it's essential to adopt a comprehensive approach to explore organizational and systemic changes that are aimed at safeguarding the well-being of professional workers,