



FACT SHEET



Mental health

Your emotional, psychological and social well-being, including resilience to stressors.

Mental health disorders/ mental illness

Causes significant distress or impairment of personal functioning. Can affect behaviors, emotional regulation, perception and thinking.

Good mental health is very important, suicide is the second leading cause of death worldwide in 15-29 year-olds¹ and statistically more than **1/3 people suffer from a mental illness** each year². Currently mental health disorders and addiction have 7% of the global burden of disease and affected **1 billion people** globally in 2016³.

Work related stress can impact someone's mental and physical health as well as decrease their productivity. **Long working hours**, unclear roles, dissatisfaction, insecurity and poor relations with colleagues are some of the main stressors that people may face at the workplace⁴. **Chronic occupational stress** can lead to a syndrome called '**burn-out**', characterized by decreased efficiency, lack of energy and negative work-related feelings⁵. Chronic stress additionally increases the **risk of developing mental illness** in some people⁶.

Fast facts about Doctoral Researchers

Mental health-You are not alone

51% of DRs experienced psychological distress (~2x more likely than employed matched controls)⁷.

32% of DRs were at very high risk for developing a mental health illness (2.4-2.8x more likely than employed matched controls)⁷.

40% felt under constant strain and **30%** felt unhappy and depressed⁷.

41% percent of graduate students scored with moderate to severe anxiety (6% in the general population)⁸.

39% of graduate students scored with moderate to severe depression (6% in the general population)⁸.

60% of DRs suffer from stress related symptoms⁹.

40% suffer from back pain and **33%** from sleeplessness⁹.

24% increase in stress related symptoms from 1st to 3rd year DRs⁹.

Supervision

16% meet their direct supervisors **less than once a month**¹⁰.

1/5 share direct supervisors with **6** other DRs¹⁰.

Frequency of meeting supervisor correlates with satisfaction¹⁰.

40% that consider giving up PhDs mention supervisors as a reason¹⁰.

33% of DRs have considered giving up their research often or occasionally¹⁰.

Working hours

DRs work **11.2 hours** more than contracted¹⁰.

55% work weekends/holidays more than once a month¹⁰.

Well-being at work

Various meditation apps can help reduce stress and improve well-being¹¹.

Plants/green space in the office and forest visits can lower tension and anxiety^{12,13}.

Have a look at the MHAW 2019 Self-help document for more tips.

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