Prehospital Delivery of Death Notifications Associated with Higher Rates of Occupational Burnout among EMS Professionals

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BACKGROUND

Death Notification

• EMS professionals must often undertake the difficult task of delivering the news of a death.
• Training related to delivering bad news uncommon for EMS professionals.
• Lack of training related to death notification may exacerbate stress and lead to burnout.

Disclosures

• None

METHODS

RESULTS

DISCUSSION

CONCLUSION
**Background**

**Burnout**
- Characterized by extreme emotional and physical exhaustion
- Often results in a loss of commitment to one's work
- Linked to serious mental and physical conditions
- Linked to workforce issues: turnover and absence

**Objective**

Assess the relationship between death notification, training, and work-related burnout in EMS.

**Design & Study Population**
- Target population
  - Nationally-certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and paramedics
- Design
  - Cross-sectional questionnaire administered in April 2017
- Sample size calculation
  - Random sample of 19,330 EMTs and paramedics
**Primary Outcome: Work-Related Burnout**

- Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI)
  - Freely available
  - 19-item validated instrument
  - Consists of 3 Dimensions

**Independent Variables**

- Self-reported # of adult death notifications in past 12 months
- Self-reported training related to death notification

  - Confounding variables adjusted for:
    - Certification level
    - Years of EMS experience
    - Agency type
    - Call volume

**Data Analysis**

- Descriptive statistics
- Multivariable logistic regression modeling
  - Confounders selected a priori
  - Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test
BACKGROUND

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Respondents

Respondents

Nationally-Certified EMS Population

n= 2,333 (response rate=12%)

N= 378,850

Death Notification & Burnout Prevalence

Prevalence of Death Notification in the Past 12 Months

Prevalence of Burnout

Death Notification and Burnout

Burnout by Number of Death Notifications

% Exhibiting Burnout

*p<0.001

# Death Notifications Delivered in Past 12 Months

23%

36%

51%

0

1 to 5

6 or more

*
Multivariable Results

Association of Delivering Death Notifications with Work-Related Burnout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Work-Related Burnout OR, (95% CI)*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivered ≥1 Death Notification</td>
<td>1.47, (1.12-1.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Notification Training</td>
<td>0.60, (0.47-0.77)</td>
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*Adjusted for: Certification level, Years of EMS experience, Agency type, Call volume
H-L goodness-of-fit: p=0.25

Limitations
- Cross-sectional analysis
- Self-reported data
- Response bias

Strengths
- National data set
- Controlled for confounding variables

Conclusions
- Delivering death notifications associated with burnout.
- Training was associated with lower odds of burnout.
- Future prospective research is needed to explore causes of this relationship.
THANK YOU!