

**Title: Mental health burden among physicians and other medical employees working during the COVID-19 in Albania**

**Liljana Ramasaço MD, Alexander Xhuvani', Elbasan, Albania and Jerina Celaj**  
Universiteti Ismail Qemali, Vlore, Albania

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**Biography**

Liljana Ramasaço, MD, is a graduate of Tirana University, Faculty of Medicine in 1997 as a Medical Doctor, and in the same year, she became part of the Gramsh Hospital as



a physician. From August 2002 – to May 2007, Dr. Ramasaço worked as a family physician on health services with a focus on diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of patients at the health center and community. For four years December 2009 –to September 2013 she held the post of Executive Director in Regional Health Authority Tirana. Meantime in 2013, Dr. Liljana Ramasaço gained the Ph.D. grade in the Faculty of Medicine, Tirana, with the theme HIV AIDS In Albania 2005-2011

employees  $\chi^2=85.2$ , 95% CI, a p-value of 0.03 than radiologists, stemmatologists, and pharmacists. Furthermore, the younger age groups  $\leq 40$  years and  $>55$  were more prone to report likely fair, stress, and depressive symptoms compared to other ages (p-value=0.042). This study reports a high level of fair and stress and mild to moderate burdens of depression and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, studies with a large sample size to include all medical staff nationwide need to identify and evaluate mental health among medical staff in Albania.

**Abstract**

Healthcare staff that operated at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19 hence faced enormous physical and mental pressures. We aim to investigate the mental health situation among physicians and other medical employees in Albania. A cross-sectional and descriptive survey was conducted from September 2020 to January 2021 time when the COVID-19 in Albania was at its peak.  $\chi^2$ /Fisher exact test was used; a significant association between level of mental health and survey characteristics was made. P-value  $<0.05$  was considered statistically significant. Out of 537 medical employees, nurses were the most predominant participants 40.8% (219/537) in this study. Females were 74.7% of them and almost 63.1% had 25–40 years of age. Stress and Fear were the most affected mental health with 67.2% and 82.3% respectively, while Anxiety and Depression resulted in 33.3% and 23.4%. Mild depression appeared in 74 (58.7%) of participants, whereas anxiety, 75 (41.9%) appeared with moderate to severe symptoms. Females had a higher median depression score than male participants  $p < 0.05$ , while medical employees who work in Tirana had a higher significant score than those living in other regions  $p < 0.05$ . Nurses and medical doctors were significantly more likely to report depressive symptoms compared to other medical