

THE TURNOVER INTENTION AMONG PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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Background: The turnover intention (TI) among public health professionals (PHPs) may lead to substantial workforce losses and negatively affect the public health system's performance. The rate of TI varies among different countries and types of public health workers. Most research has consistently confirmed that job satisfaction significantly influences PHPs' decisions to leave their jobs.

Methods and Objectives: This study identifies PHPs' intention to leave the job and associated factors using cross-sectional national surveys on employee satisfaction from 2015 to 2020 and provides short-term historical forecasts of TI in public health institutes.

Results: TI tendencies are increasingly common among public health professionals (PHPs) in public health institutes in Serbia, where the prevalence of TI increased from 18.5% in 2015 to 27.1% in 2019 before returning to 18.6% in 2020. However, the growing trend is projected to continue. Results also demonstrate a consistent association between organizational factors and PHPs' TI, including job-related stress, interpersonal relationships with colleagues and supervisors, salary, opportunities for professional development, recognition and valuing of work, and organizational culture. While individual factors such as gender, age, marital status, and external factors like employment opportunities, household income level, family size, and family responsibilities may also underlie the TI, their significance is less clear and varies across different studies.

Conclusions: TI tendencies are increasingly common among public health practitioners in Serbia, indicating that a holistic approach is effective in developing retention strategies. In addition to prioritizing the health and safety of PHPs, these strategies should focus on enhancing job satisfaction, acknowledging employees' values and accomplishments, and establishing supportive and efficient work environments. To attract and retain the new generation of PHPs, management interventions in public health organizations should be geared towards fostering innovation and creativity in the workplace.

Keywords: public health professionals, public health, turnover intention, forecasts, Serbia