

*JdeJonge et al. Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology Mar (2001) Vol.74 #1 p.29.*

A study of the relationships between job characteristics and psychological well being among health care workers.

261 health-care professionals (mean age 32, mean work experience 10 years, 89 percent women) took part in a longitudinal study over 1 year.

Standard questionnaires were used to assess Trait anxiety, Job demands, Autonomy, Social support, Emotional exhaustion, Job satisfaction and Work motivation.

After controlling for affectivity, age and gender; perceived job demands and social support were causally correlated with job satisfaction, but emotional exhaustion was causally correlated with perceived job demands!



### **Comment**

Most health care workers in this study were members of close knit teams. Any perceived isolation would be expected to have an effect on job satisfaction. It is not clear that there is any adverse health implication of poor job satisfaction.

The most interesting result is that emotional exhaustion predicted high, perceived job-demand and not the reverse. Emotional exhaustion could be anticipated to play a role in the development of psychological ill health. But this study seems to show that perceived job demands were not causal.

The links between the above list of occupational woes and psychological or physical ill health continue to be elusive, but now there is emerging some doubt about the causal direction.