

Well Now



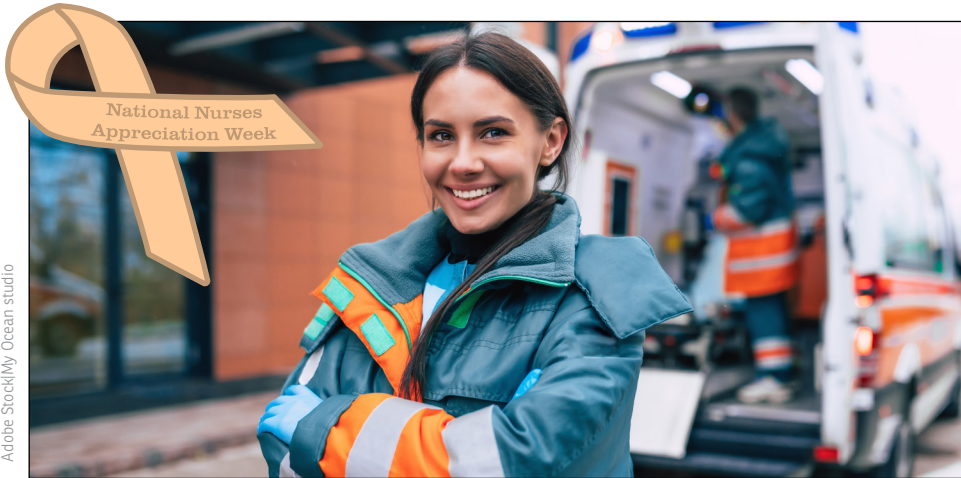
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In this Issue

- In Celebration of EMS Nurses
- Mental Break Word Search
- Burnout as a Mental Health Warning
- May Awareness & Events
- The HR Spot

A Hall Ambulance Periodical Dedicated to Your Wellness, Well-Being, and the HAS Employee Experience

In Celebration of EMS Nurses



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Designated with an apricot-coloured ribbon, National Nurses Appreciation Week is May 6-12, with National Nurses Day being observed on May 6th and International Nurses Day falling on the 12th.

In addition to EMTs and paramedics, Critical Care Transport Nurses, Flight Nurses, and Nurse Paramedics make up a vital medical component of EMS. As front-line registered nurses with specialized certifications, EMS nurses bridge emergency medicine with critical care while operating in some of the highest-stakes environments in modern medicine. As such, they are susceptible to similar stressors and mental health concerns as other First Responders.

Significant mental health challenges including burnout, depression, and anxiety are the most prevalent concerns and over time, can develop into post-traumatic stress disorder/injury (PTSD/I). Constant high-acuity patient care, exposure to traumatic injuries, and elevated patient mortality rates contribute to emotional exhaustion, compassion fatigue, apathy, disconnectedness, and a diminished sense of well-being. In addition, moral distress/injury can arise when EMS nurses are unable to act according to their ethical beliefs (often due to limited resources or systemic constraints) leading to guilt, frustration, and even a loss of professional identity.

The physical and environmental demands of flight nursing further intensify these challenges. Noise, vibration, safety risks, and disrupted circadian rhythms from long or irregular shifts contribute to both physical and emotional strain. Sleep deprivation and shift work can impair cognitive function, leading to "brain fog," slower reaction times, and an increased risk of errors. Situational patient care requires constant vigilance, while safety fears regarding aviation accidents add a unique backdrop of stress not found in ground-based care.

Addressing these challenges requires proactive and sustained support. Early recognition of burnout symptoms – such as chronic fatigue, irritability, and disengagement – is critical. Peer support, Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISDs), and culturally-competent, trauma-informed mental health services like Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) can significantly improve resilience. By prioritizing mental health alongside clinical performance, EMS agencies can better support flight and critical care nurses in managing the profound demands of their work.

(Adapted from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1067991X25002032> and

[https://www.airmedicaljournal.com/article/S1067-991X\(25\)00203-2/fulltext](https://www.airmedicaljournal.com/article/S1067-991X(25)00203-2/fulltext))

Mental Break Word Search

National EMS Week May 17-23

I Z O D R E T E M O M R E H T
S U S R L O B X T Q B G D G S
T Q Z L I I R U H Q C V A A X
A W J Y Q A J Z C L L L Z G P
G F B X K Z G T T E S O C B A
I S B P E E E G A I R T Z D R
N W M E V I D H P U H D L E A
G Y B H Q N I M S O X M T M M
L N T L W R L I I L L E V V E
F Y E F S Q T O D T M T U U D
T Q U K L Y E S G O P C Y X I
B S Q L B O G V C O P I S A C
O H I K T S O U T D Q F J E J
Q E N J U V L R X L U J R E J
S A R G R G I A K E Z T L N F
F R U M G F U P E N T K O S
M S O Y I I X V W I H T L Q B
F H T O S S V S L G M G K P I
G N J R L O E P F T J Y A O S
V M V U A H S R K Z B H R X X
W O L R T Z W O I U T X V I N
I H A R I T O T Z M Q U M P B
D X N K V E P A E M R Y F N P
Y J B P E T X L W C R E U Y E
C L U X D M X L E X R N N U J
S V H N C V E I M V B R T B L
D A V S B J J R R G Y U E P P
V B I K H M Y B G D W G Q F N
Q G W M H R A I K E R G H U X
I P J U Z K X F S S N M D H N
C O I Y J S U E A A T C I V K
G J F E I A C D H K X O Y O X
Z A M B U L A N C E A D T N S
O J C F O K M P C R A A C U U
D N T M U U O V A B R K Z K H

ALS
AMBULANCE
BLS
BVM
DEFIBRILLATOR
DISPATCH
EMERGENCY
EMT
GLUCOMETER
GURNEY

PARAMEDIC
PCR
PPE
SHEARS
SPLINT
STAGING
THERMOMETER
TOURNIQUET
TRIAGE
VITALS

Burnout as a Mental Health Warning

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Careers in EMS demand extraordinary resilience in the face of challenging 24-hour shifts, chronic sleep debt, and consistent high-acuity calls. Burnout in this field is not merely fatigue; it is a clinical syndrome stemming from unmanaged workplace stress manifesting in a combination of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and a dwindling sense of personal accomplishment. Left unaddressed, burnout acts as a dangerous precursor to severe mental health issues, including clinical depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder/injury (PTSD/I).

Research indicates that frontline medical practitioners miss work due to injury more frequently than both police and fire personnel. The 'rescuer' role, characterized by a high need for control, stimulation, and internal motivation, often drives providers to work through trauma until they break. This tough-it-out culture contributes to cumulative stress and alarming suicide rates within the profession. To survive, EMS professionals must transition toward a model of proactive wellness. By acknowledging that mental wellness is as critical as clinical skill, providers can protect themselves against the rigors of the job, ensuring they save lives without losing their own in the process.

Protect against burnout and subsequent mental health struggles by incorporating the following into your personal wellness plan:

- **Physiological Recovery** - The nature of 24-hour shifts creates a profound "sleep debt" that impairs judgment and emotional regulation. Prioritizing

seven to nine hours of quality rest on days-off is non-negotiable for mental clarity.

- **Mindful Nutrition** - Due to unpredictable call volumes, crews often rely on high-sugar, high-calorie, high-caffeine fast foods due which can result in metabolic crashes, mood swings, lethargy, and weight gain. Conscious meal prepping is a viable (and financially practical) solution essential for healthy eating.
- **Slow Down and Relax** - The adrenaline response triggered by emergencies can make everyday life feel dull, leading to risk-taking, adrenaline-seeking behaviours. Counteract this by developing hobbies entirely unrelated to medical care.
- **Establish Boundaries** - Separate professional and personal lives by learning tools to leave the stressors of the job where it belongs - at work.
- **Seek Support** - Isolation is a hallmark of the burnout cycle. Resources like your Claremont/Uprise Health Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offer confidential counseling that serve as a vital safety valve for stress.
- **Learn and Grow** - Burnout often stems from stagnation. Pursuing advanced certifications or transitioning into mentoring can renew a sense of purpose.

(Adapted from: <https://www.emteat.com/post/tips-for-preventing-burnout-in-ems-careers> and

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK493236/>)

MAY AWARENESS

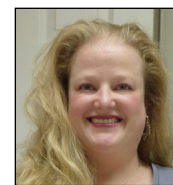
Mental Health Awareness Month (LIME GREEN)
Critical Care Recognition Month
Military Appreciation Month
3-9: Public Service Recognition Week
3-9: National Correctional Officer Week (THIN SILVER LINE)
6: National Nurses Day (APRICOT)
6-12: National Nurses Week (APRICOT)
10-16: National Police Week (THIN BLUE LINE)
12: International Nurses Day (APRICOT)
15: Peace Officer Memorial Day
16: Wear Purple for Peace Day (PURPLE)
17-23: National Emergency Medical Services Week (THIN WHITE LINE)

MAY COMMUNITY EVENTS

3: Cinco de Mile Half-Marathon @ 4200 Empire Dr
4: Cults & Classics - "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" @ Fox Theatre
8: 30th Annual Battle of the Badges Boxing @ KC Fairgrounds
11: Bakersfield Mother's Day Run @ Riverwalk Park
18: Cults & Classics - "Jurassic Park" @ Fox Theatre
23: Wild Earp Swingout 2026 @ Tehachapi VFW
25: Thousand Flags Fun Run @ Riverwalk Park, West Pond
31: Bakersfield Hot Fudge Sundae Run @ Riverwalk Park

The HR Spot

Taking care of others starts with taking care of yourself, using your benefits, asking questions, and reaching out for support are all part of staying well and strong, and HR is here to help.



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988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE



WellNow is published monthly for Hall Ambulance employees and their families.