

EDİTÖRE MEKTUP / LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Psychiatric Problems of Emergency Workers in Nuclear Crisis: An Issue in Industrial Psychiatry

*Nükleer Krizde Acil Müdahale Ekibi  
Çalışanlarının Psikiyatrik Sorunları:  
Bir Endüstriyel Psikiyatri Konusu*

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The problem of exposure to contaminated nuclides from nuclear accidental crisis is very important. It can affect the health status of the population in general. However, there is a specific group of people that takes the higher risk than others. This is the emergency worker such as the nuclear cleaner and rescue team. It is no doubt that there are several possible health problems in following up for these workers. Of interest, 3 to 6 times higher incidence of carcinogenesis in this specific population comparing to general exposed populations is reported.[1] Focusing on psychiatric problem, it is little mentioned. The more serious psychological impact among the emergency workers might be expected. Based on the previous well documented nuclear accident episode, Chernobyl crisis, there are some reports on this specific issue.

Long term psychological disorder among the emergency workers in Chernobyl crisis is reported in the literatures.[2,3] Depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and suicidal ideation are the important detected problems.[2,3] For the possible pathogenesis, Vyatleva et al. reported that “systemic CNS changes occurred in patients from the clean-up worker groups, especially in those with psycho-organic syndrome.[4]

The authors would like to leave a message that the concern on psychiatric problem of emergency workers in nuclear crisis is required. This can be

applied to the present Fukushima crisis. Close psychiatric following up on those workers is highly recommended. The early psychiatric treatment is warranted. Case by case management by the expert psychiatrist is needed.

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