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## Health, self-care and the offshore workforce - opportunities for behaviour change interventions:

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DOI:

[10.22605/RRH4319](https://doi.org/10.22605/RRH4319)

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*Document Version*

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Citation for published version (Harvard):*

Gibson Smith, K, Paudyal, V, Klein, S & Stewart, D 2018, 'Health, self-care and the offshore workforce - opportunities for behaviour change interventions: an epidemiological survey', *Rural and Remote Health*, vol. 18, 4319. <https://doi.org/10.22605/RRH4319>

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## ORIGINAL RESEARCH

### Health, self-care and the offshore workforce - opportunities for behaviour change interventions, an epidemiological survey

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#### PUBLISHED

26 May 2018 Volume 18 Issue 2

#### HISTORY

RECEIVED: 16 January 2017

REVISED: 10 August 2017

ACCEPTED: 17 September 2017

#### CITATION

Gibson Smith K, Paudyal V, Klein S, Stewart D. Health, self-care and the offshore workforce – opportunities for behaviour change interventions, an epidemiological survey. *Rural and Remote Health* 2018; **18**: 4319. <https://doi.org/10.22605/RRH4319>

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#### ABSTRACT:

**Introduction:** The high risk nature of offshore work and inherent occupational hazards necessitate that offshore workers engage in behaviours that promote health and wellbeing. The survey aimed to assess offshore workers' health, self-care, quality of life and mental wellbeing, and to identify associated areas requiring behaviour change.

**Methods:** Offshore workers attending a course at a training facility in Scotland were invited to complete a questionnaire comprising 11 validated measures of health, self-care, quality of life and mental wellbeing.

**Results:** A total of 352 offshore workers responded (completion rate 45.4%). Almost three-quarters were identified as overweight/obese ( $n=236$ , 74.4%). Median scores for SF-8 quality of life (physical=56.1, interquartile range (IQR)=4.8; mental=54.7, IQR=8.1) and Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scales were positive (52.0, IQR=9.0). The largest

proportion of participants' scores across alcohol use ( $n=187$ , 53.4%) and sleep quality ( $n=229$ , 67.0%) domains were categorised as negative. The median number of self-care domains for which offshore workers scored negatively was 3 (IQR=2.0).

**Conclusions:** There are key areas relating to the health, quality of life, mental wellbeing and self-care of the offshore workforce that warrant addressing.

## KEYWORDS:

health promotion, mental wellbeing, offshore workers, occupational health, remote environments, self-care, UK.

## FULL ARTICLE:

### Introduction

Preventive health care is a key component of a sustainable model of health care<sup>1,2</sup>. Preventive components of healthcare directives aid in reducing the incidence of chronic health conditions amongst populations<sup>3,4</sup>. Self-care refers to engagement with behaviours that promote health and wellness<sup>5</sup>, and may be a critical factor in preventing the onset of chronic disease<sup>6</sup>. Evidence suggests that engagement with self-care may increase an individual's ability to preserve and manage their health<sup>5,6</sup>. It is anticipated that increasing engagement will also lead to improvements in an individual's quality of life and wellbeing<sup>7</sup>.

Promotion of self-care is a key global public health priority, and there is a recognised need to promote engagement within remote communities who are geographically isolated<sup>8</sup>. For example, the findings of a systematic review by Brundisini et al., on access to healthcare in remotely located communities, highlight that geographical location and widespread scarcities of health services may impede on accessibility<sup>9</sup>. Thereby, it is imperative that remote inhabitants are self-reliant and are active participants in the management of chronic health conditions<sup>8,9</sup>.

The offshore workforce is a pertinent example of a population who live in a remote and hostile environment<sup>10</sup>. In the UK Continental Shelf, around 64 000 individuals are employed offshore, of which around 29 000 spend over 100 nights per year in an offshore location<sup>10</sup>. The nature of shift work offshore, in conjunction with the hazards often inherent in offshore environments, may have a significant adverse impact on offshore workers' health and wellbeing<sup>11</sup>. It has been suggested that poor health within the workforce may increase absences from work and, also, increase the risk of medical evacuations (medevacs)<sup>12</sup>. Accordingly, promoting health and wellbeing within the workforce may be a key factor in mitigating early exit from the workforce due to health reasons and also in enhancing financial benefit<sup>13</sup>.

It is often assumed that, because the offshore workforce are medically screened, personnel experience optimal health<sup>14</sup>. However, a recent narrative review on offshore workers' health and wellbeing identified concerns over a number of domains. The findings of that review emphasised a number of limitations particularly in relation to the current evidence-base being outdated and restricted in the coverage of key health domains<sup>15</sup>.

Consequently, there is a unique opportunity to develop an up-to-date, comprehensive assessment of health, quality of life and mental wellbeing in the offshore workforce. Further, due to the increasing focus on preventive healthcare, particularly in remote communities, an exploration of self-care within the offshore workforce is warranted. This article describes the outcome of an epidemiological survey, the aim of which was to (i) assess offshore workers' health, self-care, quality of life and mental wellbeing status and (ii) identify associated areas requiring behaviour change.

### Methods

#### Design

An electronic cross-sectional, epidemiological survey was used to determine the health status, quality of life and mental wellbeing, and self-care status of offshore workers. A pilot study ( $n=9$ ) was initially conducted to assess the feasibility of the proposed recruitment strategy. Power size calculations were performed for a one-way fixed effects, omnibus ANOVA, using a medium effect size (0.25),  $\alpha=0.05$  and power=0.95. The results obtained from using G Power V

software v3.1.7 (<http://www.gpower.hhu.de/en.html>) suggested a sample size of approximately  $n=324$ .

### **Questionnaire development**

In an effort to ensure face and content validity, the authors invited eight experts in health services research, offshore health and self-care to participate in an expert panel review of the questionnaire. The final version of the survey contained a number of validated tools (outlined in Appendix I) in order to support the assessment, which pertained to either evaluating health status or self-care. Due to the absence of a universal measure of self-care, the seven pillar self-care framework, developed by Webber, et al<sup>6</sup>, in combination with extant literature on health in offshore workers, provided the basis for the development of a measure tailored to reflect particular features of this specific population.

**Health status:** Self-reported data on participants' height and weight were collected and permitted calculation of body mass index (BMI). Participants were asked if they had been diagnosed with a long term health condition, took medication for a long term health condition, and how many medications they took for a long term health condition. Participants were also asked questions relating to work absences and medevacs.

**Quality of life and mental wellbeing:** Two validated measures were used to determine the health status of the population. The measures assessed participants' quality of life (Short Form Health Survey 8 (SF-8)) in terms of their physical (Pain Catastrophizing Scale (PCS)) and mental functioning (MCS survey)<sup>16</sup> and mental wellbeing (Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS))<sup>17</sup>. The rationale for their inclusion was informed by the extant literature<sup>18-20</sup> on offshore health, which has emphasised their respective importance. The measures and scoring procedures are outlined in Appendix I.

**Self-care domains:** Seven validated behavioural measures were used to assess offshore workers' engagement in self-care (Appendix I). Measures of self-care were selected in accordance with the offshore health literature and Weber, et al's seven pillar framework, which proposes the following as key domains: health literacy; self-awareness of physical and mental condition; physical activity; healthy eating; risk avoidance or mitigation; good hygiene; and rational and responsible use of products, services, diagnostics and medicines<sup>6</sup>

The following aspects of self-care were evaluated: alcohol use (Fast Alcohol Screening Test (FAST))<sup>21</sup>; drug use (Single Question Drug Use Screening Test (SQDUST))<sup>22</sup>; sleep quality (Pittsburgh Insomnia Rating Scale-2 (PIRS-2))<sup>23</sup>, fruit and vegetable consumption (food frequency questionnaire (FFQ) element of the 5-a-day community evaluation tool)<sup>24</sup>; mindfulness (Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS))<sup>25</sup>, physical activity (International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ))<sup>26</sup> and smoking (Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS))<sup>27</sup>.

### **Participant recruitment**

Offshore workers attending the Further Offshore Emergency Training (FOET) course ( $n=776$ ) at an operational training facility in Aberdeen, Scotland, were recruited on a daily basis by the researcher, over a period of 16 weeks (October 2014 to March 2015). The FOET operated daily from Monday to Friday with a maximum number of 16 attendees. It is a one day refresher course, which requires successful completion every 4 years to enable offshore workers to maintain their certification to work offshore in the UK Continental Shelf. Only those with prior experience of working in an offshore environment, and who were employed in a position that required overnight stays in an offshore environment, were recruited.

### **Data collection**

Delegates attending the FOET were informed by the trainer that the researcher would be providing a brief of a survey. The researcher orally presented details of the survey in accordance with a standardised script to ensure consistency. Interested delegates were asked to complete a paper contact form with details of their name and email address. Email invitations, including a link to the online questionnaire, were sent out within a 24-hour period. Recipients were asked to complete the questionnaire by the deadline date set for two weeks from the point of contact. All participants were provided with the opportunity to complete the form anonymously to minimise non-response bias<sup>28</sup>. Each respondent was sent two reminder emails at fortnightly intervals. Participants were provided with the opportunity to be entered into

a prize draw for a £50 retail voucher.

### **Data analysis**

The epidemiological data were analysed using the Statistical Analysis Software Package v18 (IBM; <http://www-03.ibm.com/software/products/en/spss-statistics>). Descriptive statistics were used to report demographics, employment, health status, quality of life and mental wellbeing, and self-care. Means and standard deviations were used where distributions were normal, and medians and interquartile ranges when the distribution was skewed. Mann–Whitney *U*-tests were used to determine associations between quality of life and mental wellbeing variables and self-care domains. *P*-values  $\leq 0.05$  were considered statistically significant.

### **Ethics approval**

Ethical approval was granted by the University School Research Ethics Committee on 17 May 2014. The training site granted approval to access FOET delegates.

## **Results**

### **Demographics**

Of the 776 delegates who attended the FOET course, 657 provided contact details (84.7% response rate), of whom 352 completed the questionnaire (45.4% completion rate). Participants were aged 22–64 years (mean=42.9, standard deviation=10.1), and most were male ( $n=335$ , 96.3%) and either married or in a civil partnership ( $n=258$ , 74.1%).

### **Health status**

Participants' BMI values ( $n=317$ ) ranged from 17.7 to 40.6, with a median value of 27.5 (interquartile range (IQR)=4.9). Almost three-quarters of participants were classified as either 'overweight' ( $n=162$ , 51.1%) or 'obese' ( $n=74$ , 23.3%). One respondent was 'underweight' ( $n=1$ , 0.3%), and the remainder were within a healthy weight range ( $n=80$ , 25.2%). Fifty-two (14.8%) participants ( $n=352$ ) reported that they had been diagnosed with a long term health condition. Of the 50 participants who disclosed having at least one long term condition, 80% ( $n=40$ ) reported taking medication for their illness(es). The number of medicines taken for each long term health condition ranged from 0 to 5.

### **Quality of life and mental wellbeing**

Median scores for the SF-8 quality of life measure were 56.1 (IQR=4.9) for the PCS ( $n=338$ ) and 54.7 (IQR=8.1) for the MCS ( $n=342$ ). Both scores exceeded the norm-based score of 50.0 advocated by the SF-8 developers and were representative of greater physical and mental quality of life. Participants' mental wellbeing scores ( $n=326$ ), as determined by the WEMWBS, ranged from 19.0 to 70.0 (out of a possible 14.0 to 70.0) with a median value of 52.0 (IQR=9.0).

### **Self-care domains**

As outlined in Table 1, FAST scores ( $n=350$ ) indicated that over 50% ( $n=187$ , 53.4%) of participants were deemed to be at risk of 'harmful/hazardous' alcohol use (score $\geq 3$ ). SQDUST scores ( $n=345$ ) demonstrated that the majority of the sample did not report using recreational drugs over the previous 12 months ( $n=327$ , 94.8%). PIRS-2 scores ( $n=342$ ) suggested that most participants ( $n=229$ , 67.0%) suffered poor sleep quality (score  $\geq 2$ ).

The results from the FFQ ( $n=348$ ) showed that the majority of participants adhered to 5-a-day fruit and vegetable guidelines ( $n=191$ , 54.9%). MAAS scores ( $n=317$ ) ranged from 1.7 to 6 (possible range 1.0 to 6.0), with a median value of 4.5 (IQR=1.10). Of the 352 participants who completed the IPAQ, around two-thirds ( $n=249$ , 70.7%) achieved the 150 minutes/75 minutes of moderate/vigorous activity guidelines. The median value was 56.00 (IQR=9.00). The findings from the GATS ( $n=352$ ) suggested that the majority were non-smokers ( $n=195$ , 55.4%).

**Table 1: Health status and self-care of offshore workers**

Domain (n)	Category	n (%)
Body mass index (310)	Underweight	1 (0.3)
	Normal	80 (25.8)
	Overweight	160 (51.6)
	Obese	69 (22.3)
Chronic health condition (352)	Yes	52 (14.8)
	No	300 (85.2)
Unable to travel to work (348)	Yes	70 (20.1)
	No	278 (79.9)
Required medevac (347)	Yes	42 (12.1)
	No	305 (87.9)
Required emergency medical evacuation (41) <sup>†</sup>	Yes	14 (34.1)
	No	27 (65.9)
Hazardous alcohol use (350)	Non-hazardous	163 (46.6)
	Hazardous	187 (53.4)
Drug use (345)	Used recreational drugs in last 12 months	18 (5.2)
	Not used recreational drugs in last 12 months	327 (94.8)
Sleep quality (342)	Greater sleep quality	113 (33.0)
	Poorer sleep quality	229 (67.0)
Fruit and vegetable intake (348)	Adherent to guidelines	191 (54.9)
	Non-adherent to guidelines	157 (45.1)
Physical activity (352)	Adherent to guidelines	249 (70.7)
	Non-adherent to guidelines	103 (29.3)
Smoking (352)	Non-smoker	189 (54.6)
	Ex-smoker	87 (25.1)
	Smoker	70 (20.2)

<sup>†</sup> One respondent did not supply information on emergency medical evacuation.

**Table 2: Parameters used to categorise self-care of offshore workers**

Domain	Positive self-care score	Negative self-care score
Physical activity	Achieving MVPA guidelines	Not achieving MVPA guidelines
Diet	Achieving 5-a-day guidelines	Not achieving 5-a-day guidelines
Smoking	Not current smoker (ex and non)	Current smoker
Alcohol use	FAST non-hazardous	FAST hazardous/ harmful
Drug use	No use	Drug use
Mindfulness	Greater than sample median ( $\geq 4.53$ )	Less than sample median ( $\leq 4.52$ )
Sleep quality	Greater sleep quality	Poorer sleep quality

FAST, Fast Alcohol Screening Test. MVPA, moderate to vigorous physical activity.

### Exploring self-care

Participants' individual scores across each self-care domain were categorised as either 'positive' or 'negative'. Table 2 describes the parameters used to categorise domains. Positive self-care domains were identified for the majority in respect of fruit and vegetable intake ( $n=191$ , 54.9%), drug use ( $n=327$ , 94.8%), physical activity ( $n=249$ , 70.7%), smoking ( $n=282$ , 80.1%) and mindfulness ( $n=160$ , 50.5%). Conversely, negative self-care domains identified by the largest proportion of participants pertained to alcohol use ( $n=187$ , 53.4%) and sleep quality ( $n=229$ , 67.0%) (Table 3). The median number of self-care domains across which offshore workers ( $n=275$ ) scored negatively was 3 (IQR=2.0).

**Table 3: Positive and negative scoring of self-care domains**

Domain (n)	Category	n (%)
Hazardous alcohol use (350)	Positive	163 (46.6)
	Negative	187 (53.4)
Drug use (345)	Positive	327 (94.8)
	Negative	18 (5.2)
Sleep quality (342)	Positive	113 (33.0)
	Negative	229 (67.0)
Fruit and vegetable intake (348)	Positive	191 (54.9)
	Negative	157 (45.1)
Physical activity (352)	Positive	249 (70.7)
	Negative	103 (29.3)
Smoking (352)	Positive	282 (80.1)
	Negative	70 (19.9)
Mindfulness (342)	Positive	160 (50.5)
	Negative	157 (49.5)

## Self-care domains associated with quality of life (PCS and MCS) and mental wellbeing (WEMWBS)

A number of significant associations were observed between self-care domains and quality of life, and mental wellbeing (Table 4).

Those classified as having 'positive' scores in respect of mindfulness ( $U=4558.00$ ,  $p\leq 0.001$ ), physical activity ( $U=9265.50$ ,  $p=0.05$ ) and sleep quality ( $U=6768.00$ ,  $p\leq 0.001$ ) experienced more positive mental wellbeing (WEMWBS) than those who scored negatively across these domains. Similarly, hazardous alcohol users reported poorer mental wellbeing (WEMWBS) than non-hazardous users ( $U=11391.00$ ,  $p=0.04$ ).

In addition, those categorised with positive mindfulness ( $U=9870.50$ ,  $p<0.02$ ) and sleep quality ( $U=10270.00$ ,  $p=0.05$ ) scores experienced greater physical quality of life (PCS) than those scoring negatively.

Moreover, participants who were classified as having positive scores across mindfulness ( $U=7515.50$ ,  $p\leq 0.001$ ), sleep quality ( $U=8272.00$ ,  $p\leq 0.001$ ) and drug use ( $U=1747.00$ ,  $p=0.03$ ) domains experienced greater mental quality of life (MCS) than those who scored negatively. Hazardous alcohol users reported poorer mental quality of life (MCS) than non-hazardous users ( $U=11026.00$ ,  $p\leq 0.001$ ).

**Table 4: Mann–Whitney analyses between self-care domains and age, quality of life, and mental wellbeing**

Domain	Self-care score category	Median WEMWBS (IQR)	WEMWBS p-value	Median SF-8 PCS (IQR)	SF-8 PCS p-value	Median SF-8 MCS (IQR)	SF-8 MCS p-value
Alcohol use	Positive	53.00 (9.00)	0.04*	56.62 (4.41)	.48	57.25 (5.70)	<0.001***
	Negative	51.50 (9.00)		55.95 (5.12)		52.71 (9.19)	
Physical activity	Positive	53.00 (9.00)	0.05*	56.12 (4.97)	.87	55.34 (7.98)	0.11
	Negative	50.00 (8.75)		56.00 (4.82)		53.90 (8.78)	
5-a-day guidelines	Positive	53.00 (9.00)	0.12	55.99 (5.15)	0.81	54.67 (7.84)	0.41
	Negative	51.00 (8.00)		56.12 (4.45)		54.75 (8.76)	
Smoking	Positive	52.00 (9.00)	0.24	56.12 (4.76)	0.76	54.78 (7.98)	0.10
	Negative	51.50 (10.75)		56.26 (5.87)		52.74 (8.97)	
Mindfulness	Positive	55.00 (6.00)	<0.001***	56.60 (3.84)	0.02*	57.32 (5.23)	<0.001***
	Negative	48.00 (10.75)		55.25 (5.87)		52.31 (11.11)	
Sleep quality	Positive	55.00 (8.50)	<0.001***	56.64 (3.73)	0.05*	57.43 (5.26)	<0.001***
	Negative	50.00 (9.00)		55.40 (5.59)		52.69 (9.15)	
Drug use	Positive	52.00 (9.00)	0.09	55.95 (4.99)	0.42	54.77 (8.08)	0.03*
	Negative	48.50 (14.75)		56.68 (3.93)		49.98 (15.66)	

\*  $p\leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p<0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p<0.001$   
 IQR, interquartile range. MCS, mental component score. PCS, physical component score. Scale. SF-8, Short Form Health Survey 8. WEMWBS, Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale.

## Discussion

### Main findings of the survey

This cross-sectional, epidemiological survey has furthered understanding of the health, self-care, quality of life and mental wellbeing status of offshore workers by identifying key areas pertaining to health and self-care status that may benefit from behaviour change.

These key areas included overweight/obesity, hazardous/harmful alcohol use and poor sleep quality. Furthermore, most offshore workers' scored negatively across multiple self-care domains. However, as demonstrated by the distribution of scores, participants were also identified as having positive health across a number of domains including quality of life, mental wellbeing, adherence to 5-a-day fruit and vegetable guidelines, physical activity, smoking, drug use and mindfulness.

A number of significant associations between self-care variables and quality of life and mental wellbeing were observed. For example, poorer mental wellbeing was associated with hazardous alcohol use, poorer sleep quality, decreased physical activity and decreased mindfulness. Similarly, decreased mindfulness and poorer sleep quality were associated with poorer physical quality of life. Moreover, decreased mental quality of life was associated with hazardous alcohol use, drug use, poorer sleep quality and decreased mindfulness.

Key concerns pertaining to offshore workers' health status were identified, in particular overweight/obesity. The proportion of offshore workers with a BMI in the 'overweight' or 'obese' categories was similar to those reported in a recent publication<sup>29</sup>, but higher than historical estimates<sup>14,30</sup>. This may suggest an increasing prevalence of obesity within the workforce.

Moreover, a number of self-care domains indicated cause for concern within the sample of offshore workers, including the hazardous or harmful use of alcohol and poor quality of sleep. Heavy alcohol consumption has previously been reported within the offshore workforce<sup>14,31</sup>. Relatedly, shift work disorder, characterised by sleep disturbance, has been reported previously in offshore workers and has been associated with subjective health complaints, pseudo-neurological issues and gastric problems<sup>32</sup>. For many offshore workers, shift work, involving both day and night shift, is a requisite of employment<sup>33</sup>, which may pose a challenge in addressing poor sleep quality within the workforce.

The domains identified as positive are perhaps unsurprising due to the nature of offshore work. For example, it may be anticipated that because offshore workers are fitness-screened they would exhibit high levels of psychological and physical wellness. Similarly, the low prevalence of drug use may be expected due to the random drug testing that offshore workers are subjected to.

The results pertaining to physical activity, 5-a-day fruit and vegetable consumption and smoking domains should be interpreted with caution. For example, the findings suggested a comparatively higher level of physical activity than has been previously estimated in the offshore workforce<sup>30</sup>. However, there were still a large percentage of participants who were not achieving moderate to vigorous physical activity guidelines. Hence, increasing engagement in physical activity may still be a key issue within this remote population. Similarly, the prevalence of smoking was decidedly lower than historical estimates<sup>30</sup> and more recent ones<sup>29</sup>. Whilst smoking was regarded as a positive aspect of self-care in this survey, the majority were categorised as 'ex/non-smokers', so any prevalence should be regarded as a risk. Thus, it would be remiss to exclude it is a behaviour that did not warrant attention.

Further, whilst adherence to 5-a-day fruit and vegetable guidelines was regarded as positive within the population, a large proportion of offshore workers did not achieve consumption targets. This reflects findings from the extant literature highlighting the pervasiveness of unhealthy eating habits amongst offshore workers<sup>14,30</sup>.

The majority of participants scored negatively across a number of self-care domains, which suggests that individuals have multiple aspects that may require behaviour change. It has been acknowledged that engagement in multiple unhealthy behaviours increases the incidence of chronic health conditions and likelihood of premature death<sup>34</sup>. Furthermore, the likelihood of chronic conditions increases in accordance with age and as evidenced by the findings of this study and the extant literature. Given the age range of offshore workers, a number of personnel may be at increased risk of developing long term health issues<sup>10</sup>. The management of chronic conditions within the offshore workforce represents a significant global endeavour for both remote healthcare practitioners and offshore workers<sup>35</sup>. Hence, reducing engagement across multiple domains may be of paramount importance in this remote population.

### ***Strengths and limitations of the survey***

This research has addressed the paucity of literature around aspects of health, self-care, quality of life and mental wellbeing amongst the offshore workforce. The recruitment procedures adopted were a key strength of the survey: the researcher was granted access to a training facility that had a large daily footfall of offshore workers who represented a broad demography in terms of age and occupational status. Whilst there may have been a bias in response between those who participated and those who did not, due to the nature of approved recruitment procedures it was not possible to obtain data on the latter. However, the demographic profile of participants was relatively similar to those published in



a recent workforce report in terms of age (40.8 years) and gender (3.6% female)<sup>10</sup>. Further, the power of the analysis was enhanced by the size of the sample, which aligned to previously published literature on health in offshore workers<sup>29</sup>. Moreover, the sample size ( $n=352$ ) exceeded the sample size results obtained from G Power V software ( $n=324$ ) and, hence, would be considered appropriate in terms of the data analysis conducted. The oversampling was conducted in an effort to overcome non-participation associated with completion of online surveys. For example, meta-analyses of response rates to online surveys estimate a rate of between 34% and 39.6%<sup>36,37</sup>. Self-report data collected in this survey may have been vulnerable to recall, reporting and response style bias<sup>28</sup>. In an effort to minimise potential for such bias, the survey utilised a range of standardised measures previously demonstrated to have validity and reliability in evaluating the key concepts.

### **Implications for remote health**

Despite investment in health promotion and surveillance in the oil and gas industry<sup>14</sup>, the key findings from the survey highlight the predominantly poor health status of those working in remote offshore locations across multiple domains. Although specific causal mechanisms cannot be determined by virtue of the cross-sectional design of this epidemiological survey, these key findings would intuitively suggest that improvement may be attained by the implementation of a self-care intervention – in particular, one that encompasses multiple behaviours, has a strong theoretical underpinning<sup>38</sup> and utilises a range of techniques known to facilitate behaviour change<sup>39</sup>. Encouraging offshore workers to take ownership of their own health may have a positive impact on their overall health status and reduce the likelihood of medevacs. Whilst the findings of this study are specific to the offshore workforce, they highlight the importance of promoting self-care in other remote and rural occupational populations whose access to health care is also limited.

### **Conclusion**

Maintaining and improving the health of employees working in offshore environments may be a crucial component in maximising economic opportunity, ensuring the longevity of the workforce and reducing the occurrence of critical medical incidents. The findings from this research demonstrate that the offshore workforce may benefit from implementation of a self-care intervention that targets multiple behaviours. It is advised that intervention development is underpinned by behaviour change theory to ensure effectiveness.

### **Acknowledgements**

Thanks is owed to the following organisations and individuals for their invaluable contribution to the survey: Institute of Health and Wellbeing PhD Studentship, Robert Gordon University; Petrofac Training Services, Aberdeen; Dr Hector Williams, Robert Gordon University; Professor Graham Furnace, Robert Gordon University, Oil and Gas UK; Professor James Ferguson, Robert Gordon University, NHS Grampian; and study participants.

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## APPENDIX I:

### Questionnaire content

Measure	Domain	Measurement and scoring	Interpretation of scores/categories
Body mass index (BMI)	Healthy weight	BMI was calculated by dividing participants' weight in kilograms by height in metres squared. Scores were assigned to categories.	Underweight: <18.5, normal: 18.5-24.9, overweight: 25-29.9, obese: >30
Short Form Health Survey 8 (SF-8)	Physical and mental quality of life over the last 4 weeks	The SF-8 requires participants to answer eight questions, using a 5- or 6-point Likert scale, relating to either physical or mental quality of life, and produces two summative scores that pertain to each. Scores were generated by using the accompanying software.	The survey developers advocate using the norm-based cut-off value of 50.0 for each score rather than the possible range of scores. Scores greater than 50.0 are indicative of greater quality of life.
Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)	Mental wellbeing over the last 2 weeks	The 14 item WEMWBS requires participants to provide answers on a 5-point Likert scale. Exemplar: 'I've been feeling optimistic about the future'. Total scores were generated by summing individual scores for each of the 15 items.	Scores range from 14 to 70. Higher scores represent greater mental wellbeing.
Fast Alcohol Screening Test (FAST)	Hazardous alcohol use in the last year	FAST was used to identify hazardous alcohol users. The FAST contains four questions relating to alcohol use. Total scores were generated by summing the numerical values associated with responses.	Scores range from 0 to 16. Hazardous alcohol users: ≥3, non-hazardous: <3.
Single Question Drug Use Screening Test (SQDUST)	Recreational drug use in the last year	Participants were asked, 'How many times in the past year have you used an illegal drug or used a prescription medication for non-medical reasons?' Drug use was grouped into categories.	Use of an illegal substance within the last 12 months, no use of illegal substances over the last 12 months.
Pittsburgh Insomnia Rating Scale-2 (PIRS-2)	Sleep quality over the last 7 days	Participants completed two questions using a 4-point Likert scale and total scores were generated by summing the responses. Scores were grouped into categories.	Scores range from 0 to 6. Lower risk insomnia: <2, higher risk insomnia: ≥2.
Food frequency questionnaire (FFQ)	Diet over the last 24 hours	Participants were required to indicate the number of portions of foods that they had consumed. The number of portions of fruit and vegetables was totalled to determine overall consumption. Scores were grouped into categories.	Not achieving 5-a-day fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines: <5, achieving 5-a-day fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines: ≥5.
Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)	Mindfulness (attention and awareness)	Statements in the 15-item MAAS were worded negatively and represented decreased mindfulness. Responses were measured using a 6-point Likert scale. Total scores were generated by summing the responses, in accordance with a scoring protocol, and dividing by the total number of items.	Scores range from 1 to 6. Higher scores represent greater engagement in mindfulness.
International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ)	Physical activity	Participants were required to report the number of days, hour and minutes that they had exercised vigorously, moderately or walked for a period of 10 minutes or more. Total scores were generated in accordance with a scoring protocol. Scores were categorised in accordance with moderate-vigorous physical activity guidelines.	Not achieving recommended level of physical activity: <150/75 minutes moderate/vigorous physical activity, achieving recommended level of physical activity: ≥150/75 minutes moderate/vigorous physical activity.
Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS)	Smoking	The GATS was used to evaluate smoking. Participants were required to complete an initial screening question and, depending on the response, may be required to complete another thereafter. Screening question: 'Do you currently smoke tobacco on a daily basis, less than daily, or not at all?' Participants are categorised, on the basis of their answers, as a smoker, non-smoker or ex-smoker	Smoker/ex-smoker/non-smoker.

IQR, Interquartile range. MCS, mental functioning survey. PCS, Pain Catastrophizing Scale. SF-8, Short Form Health Survey 8. WEMWBS, Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale.

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