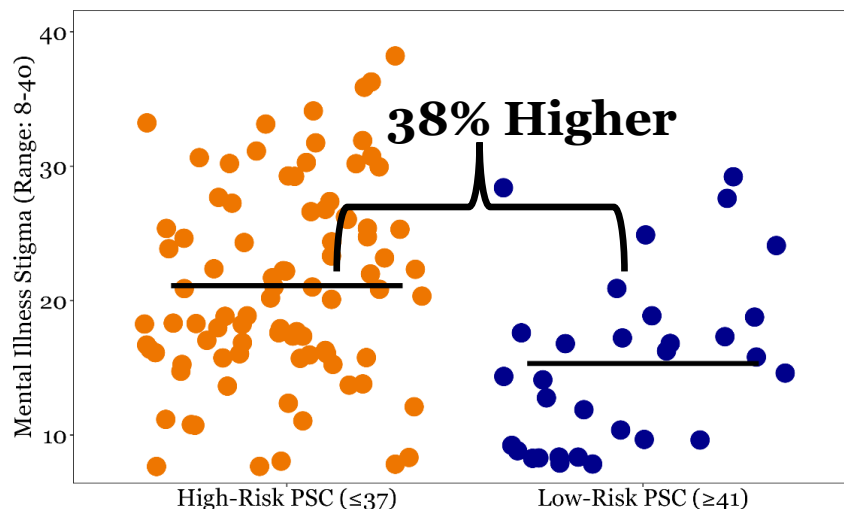


To Reduce Mental Illness Stigma among Emergency Medical Service Clinicians, Agencies Must Value Workers' Psychological Safety and Health

Bryce Hruska, Maria L. Pacella-LaBarbara, and Marley S. Barduhn

Despite the [mental health burden](#) experienced by emergency medical service (EMS) clinicians, most workers do not seek help due to the stigma associated with treatment seeking. [Psychosocial safety climate \(PSC\)](#) refers to how much an organization creates an environment that values, supports, and protects workers' psychological safety and health. Promoting psychosocial safety in EMS agencies is critical because it can create a work environment that reduces mental illness stigma. Our [study](#) shows that EMS clinicians at agencies with [high-risk](#) PSC levels report 38% more mental illness stigma in the workplace compared to workers at agencies with low-risk PSC levels. EMS agencies should implement mental health awareness campaigns that normalize mental health as an acceptable topic to discuss and provide mental health training to supervising EMS officers who are the first line of contact between management and an EMS clinician who is experiencing distress.



Mental Illness Stigma Associated with PSC Levels Among EMS Personnel

Data Source: Data were collected in 2023 from 124 EMS workers employed in the Northeastern U.S. Census Region. Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC) was measured using the [Psychosocial Safety Climate-12 scale](#). Risk status was determined using previous established [cutoff values](#). Each dot is an observation. Black bars are average stigma levels after adjusting for demographics and mental health treatment.

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