

# Additional file 1. Interview guide.

## Objective:

The interview guide aimed to explore the key determinants of mental well-being, resilience, and job satisfaction among healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the impact of hospital and governmental policies on these outcomes.

## Introduction

- Brief explanation of the study's purpose.
- Reassurance about confidentiality and anonymity.
- Consent confirmation for audio recording.

## Background Information

- Can you tell me about your role in the hospital during the pandemic?
- Were you reassigned to a different department or unit? If so, how did this affect your work?

## Main Questions

1. How do you reflect on working during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What factors influenced your mental well-being and resilience during the pandemic?
3. What could the hospital have done to maintain or enhance job satisfaction?

## Sub Questions and Probing Topics

### **INTRAPERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL EXPERIENCES**

- Emotional responses during the pandemic.
- Sources of positivity, support, and resilience.
- Coping mechanisms and mental strain.
- Solidarity and collaboration among colleagues.

### **INFLUENCES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS**

#### Hospital-Level Influences

- Perceptions of hospital support.
- Impact of hospital measures on mental well-being.
- Gestures of appreciation or lack thereof.

#### Government-Level Influences

- Recognition and support from the government.
- Impact of societal debates and political decisions on mental health.
- Perceptions of governmental policies and their effects on the workplace.

### **JOB SATISFACTION AND NURSE RETENTION**

- Reasons nurses left healthcare during the pandemic.
- Measures to improve job satisfaction and reduce stress.
- Hospital and policy-level interventions to retain nurses.

**CLOSING QUESTIONS**

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience during the pandemic?
- Do you have any additional thoughts or suggestions related to the study topic?

**NOTE:**

This guide was developed collaboratively by the research team based on findings from the S3 study, literature on healthcare workers' mental health, and input from a practicing nurse. The guide was refined after one initial interview to improve clarity and flow.