

“The terror and the pride”: a theoretically informed, mixed methods study of the impact on redeployed nurses of working in ICU during the pandemic

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# Background

Redeployed nurses (RDNs) typically had:

- Little or no critical care experience<sup>1,2</sup>
- Limited choice or warning of their redeployment<sup>1</sup>
- Widely variable opportunities for training, support & supervision<sup>2</sup>

N.b. Data collection: May 2021-2 (waves 2 and 3 of the pandemic)

# Aims

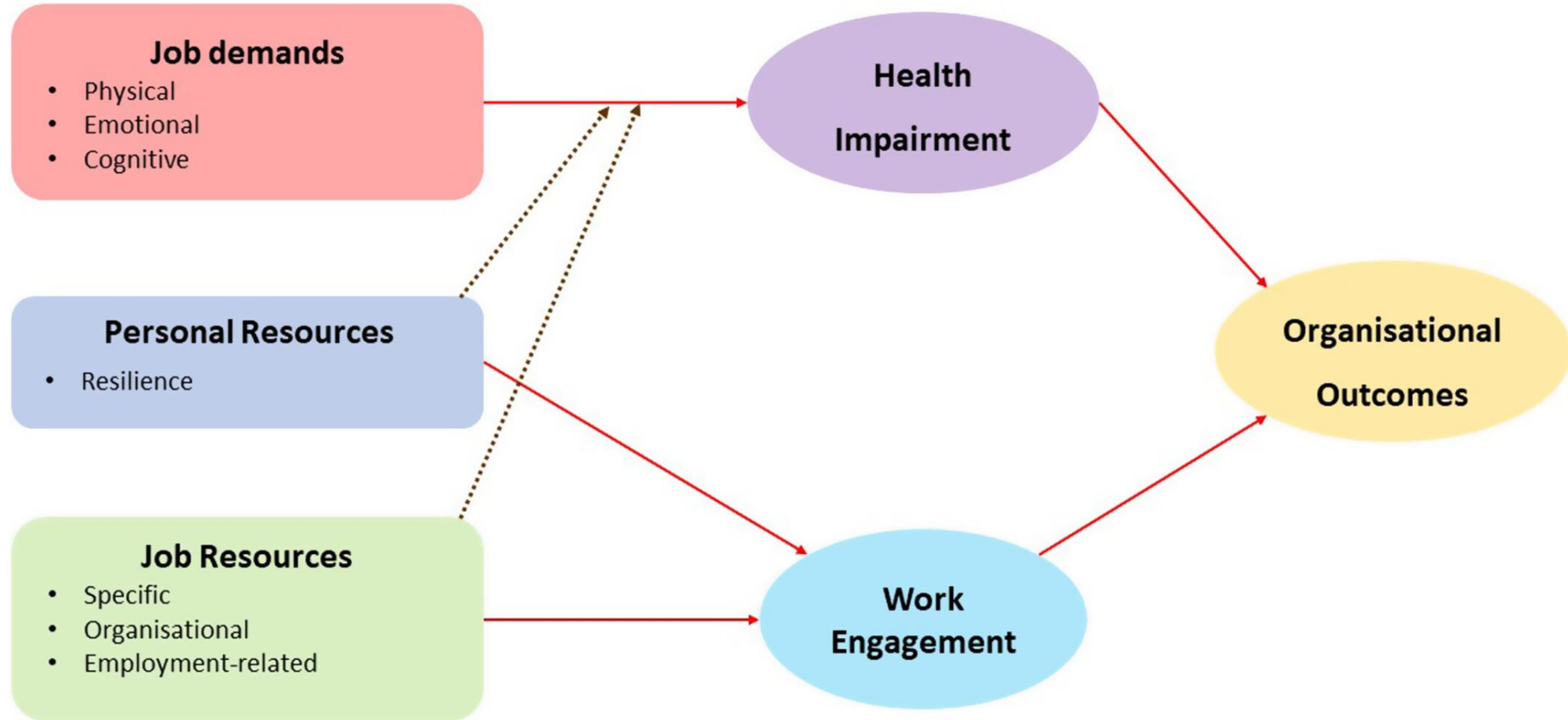
To understand the impact of the critical care pandemic work environment on **redeployed nurses** in terms of:

- Job demands
- Job resources
- Health impairment
- Organisational outcomes

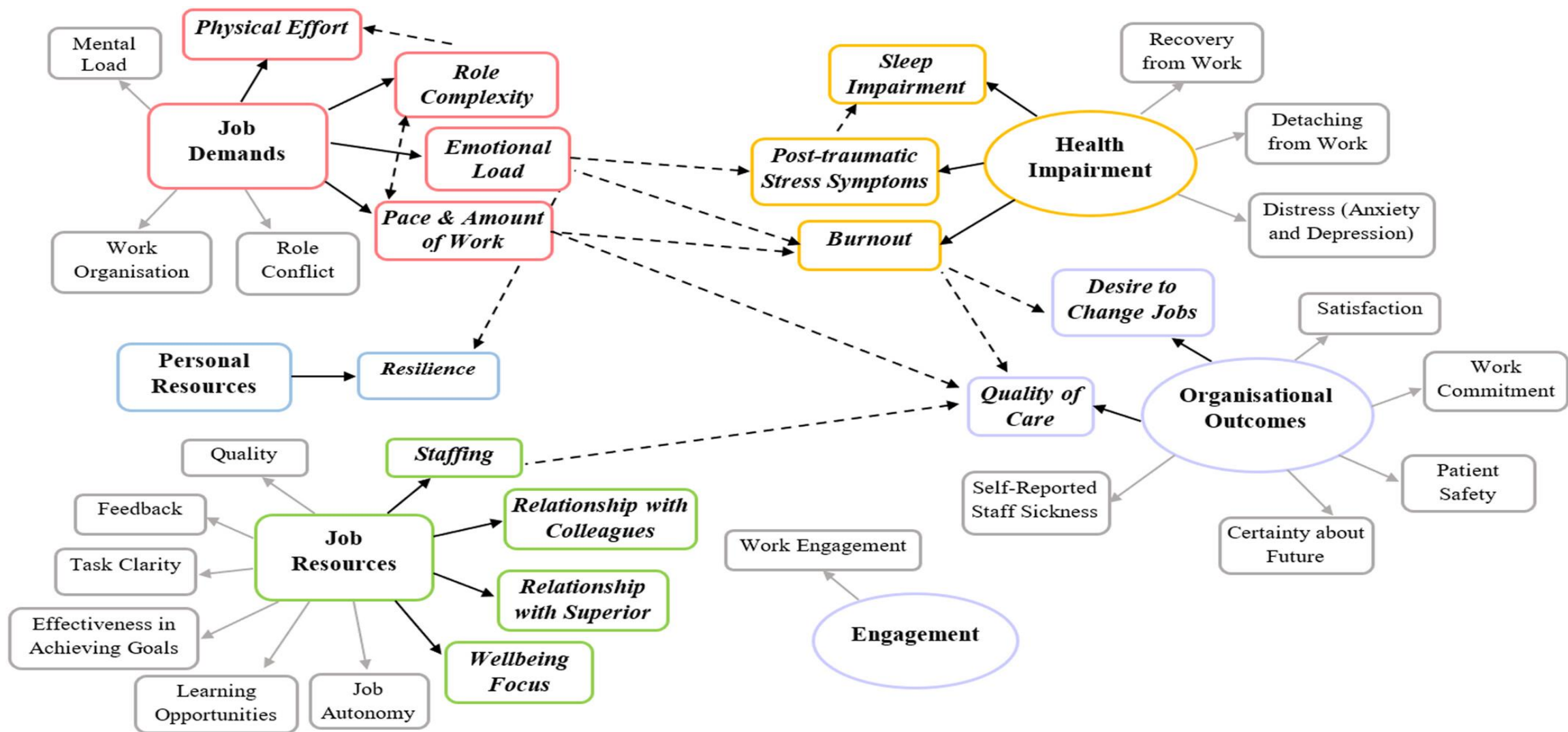


Job Demands-Resource model<sup>3</sup>

# Theoretical framework



Job Demand-Resources Model<sup>3</sup>



————> Salient themes for CCNs.

————> Grey arrows indicate JD-R components that did not feature as salient themes for CCNs.

- - - -> Bi-directional dotted arrows demonstrate a relationship between themes.

# Methods

## **Survey (n=187)**

- Raft of validated questionnaires aligned to the Job Demands-Resources Model

## **Interviews (n=16)**

- Online or telephone interviews
- Topic guide structured around the Job Demands-Resources Model
- Interviews lasted 39-119 minutes

Data collection: May 2021-2 (waves 2 and 3 of the pandemic)

# Participants

	Survey	Interview
Number of participants	187	16
Age (Mean (SD))	43 (11)	45 (9)
Gender: % Female	94%	75%
Nursing experience (years; mean (SD))	17 (11)	17 (11)
Band 5	63%	31%
Band 6	24%	31%
Band 7+	13%	38%

Inclusion criteria: Registered Nurses redeployed for  $\geq 2$  shifts

# Free text survey responses: worst shift

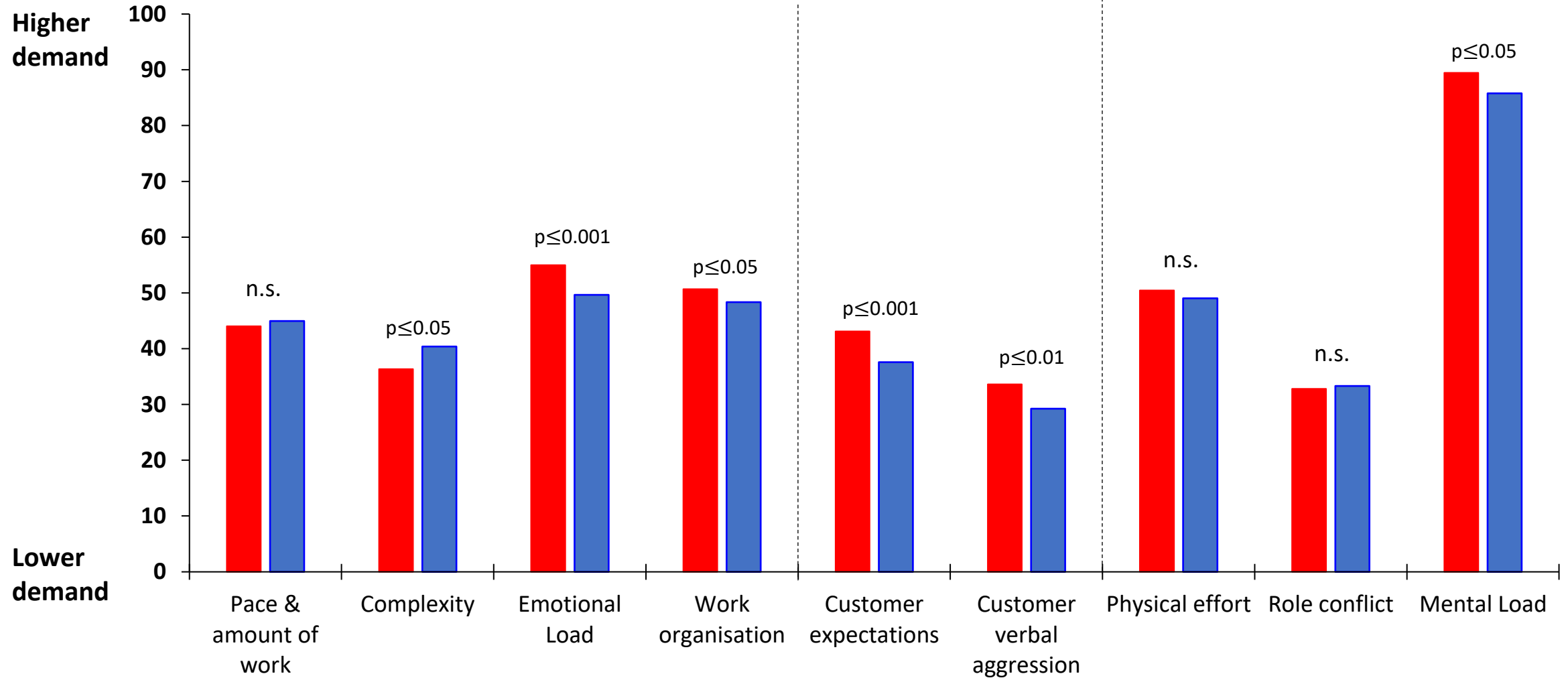
relentless  
felt useless  
sick with fear  
harrowing  
horrendous  
unsupported  
terrifying  
isolated  
abandoned  
exhausting  
despair  
heart-breaking  
panic  
inadequate  
soul-destroying  
overwhelming



# Free text survey responses: best shift

inspiring  
battle-hardened  
making a difference  
safe  
uplifting  
controlled  
good support  
humbling  
satisfying  
good teamwork  
organised  
well-staffed  
fulfilling  
rewarding  
prepared  
pride  
sense of achievement

# Job demands: CCNs v's Redeployed nurses



# Job demands

My anxiety was all around about *not knowing what I was doing*...with *new equipment, not having the training, or the prep*...just to have been thrown in there with two patients...

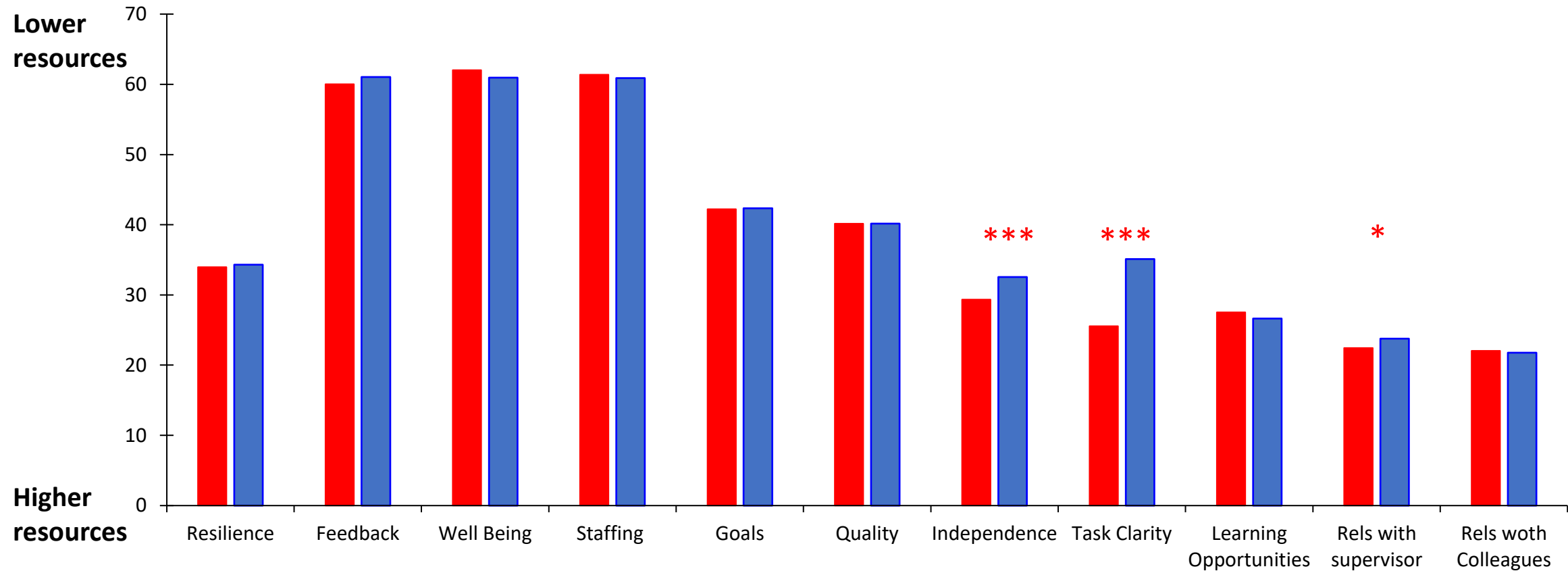
“I was double-checking, double-checking... *constantly...double-checking, double-checking*. I went home and night and thought, “I've done it wrong. Oh my God, what's going to happen?” *I doubted myself, every single minute*”.

*I hadn't been clinical (previous ICU nurse) for five years*....I went in for my first half shift, I obviously hadn't done IV drugs, hadn't been near a ventilator or a haemofilter. That day, *I was supernumerary with someone who was really sick, on a filter, on a ventilator, with a nurse who I seemed to know more than. Which was pretty scary.*”

# Job demands

“...it’s difficult to process a death, more so when you don’t know if you contributed to it, in a sort of indirect way. *It’s still my biggest struggle...I don’t know how many people I have inadvertently or indirectly caused harm or death to, purely because of what I didn’t know, and the lack of time and support I had*”.

# Job Resources in CCNs v Redeployed nurses



Redeployed nurses reported:

- The same level of resource on 8 out of 11 resources measured
- Lower resource on task clarity, less independence in their work and relationship with supervisors

# Job resources

“...being split up as a team was really, really hard, *because wherever we got sent we were the only one*. So we never had a friend, an ear, someone to moan to, someone to understand...*I don't talk about my experiences a lot with other people because they don't understand*”.

“...hand on heart, it was one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. I saw people so sick, but I saw *staff who absolutely cared, not only about the patients but about us.*”

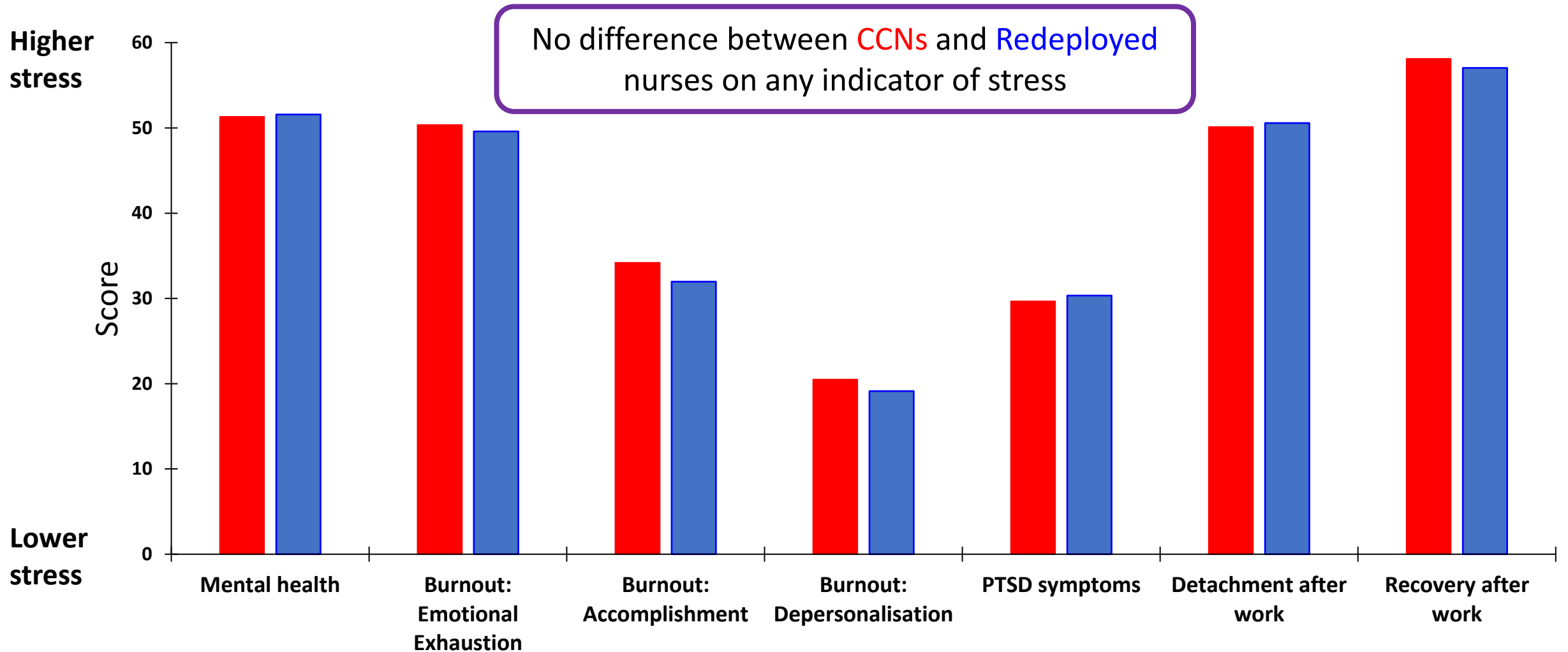
“some of them were...*you felt like you were almost a hinderance* to them. But definitely, we felt like *invaders* at times

# Job Resources

“I was angry that I'd been put in that position. With no support. It was really tough. I couldn't go back in that situation...*I spoke to my senior charge nurse who was patronising, as if to say, I couldn't cope. And to this day, I still feel, well, a failure.*

“The senior charge nurse was wonderful and the unit manager also came down two or three times...especially at the start, to check that I was okay. *Both made it clear that if I had any issues, if there was any problems, that they were there..*

# Health impairment in **CCNs** v's **Redeployed** nurses





# Health impairment

*“I cried a lot. It was the whole experience - I just hated it.* I hated how I felt when I was at work, unsafe and just exhausted...”

“It was...extremely difficult to detach (from work). I didn’t sleep, *I couldn’t sleep, I would sleep for maybe four hours at a time. I wasn’t eating,* I lost a stone in weight...*I was sick with worry and anxiety”.*

*“I went at it with a really pragmatic attitude...we had endless patients pass away and I just thought, if I let myself get too emotionally involved, I’ll just cry every day. But lately, I find myself...a bit stressed...less calm, and I’ve got less time for peoples’ bullshit”*

# Health impairment

“...*this has completely changed me as a person*. When I first went back to the ward, I was uncontrollably upset...*I think I was actually mourning myself as well as all the people that died, because I'm no longer that person*...and I don't know if I ever will be the same person again”.

# Acknowledgement & support

“It felt like *we were a bank of staff to be sent anywhere*...and they just kept asking more and more from us. ITU were heroes, A&E were heroes...*but nobody acknowledged or recognised us*”

“... *even just offering proper support* or acknowledging that you did what you did would be a start...I’m not asking for like a red carpet and a hero badge, but *just some compassion and some understanding would be nice.*”

# References

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