The majority of NHS nurses feel underpaid, overworked and undervalued, according to a survey carried out jointly by Nursing Times and ITV.

More than eight of 10 nurses said they did not have enough time to give patients adequate care and a quarter believed they had put a patient’s life at risk because they were too busy or overworked. Staff shortages and too much paperwork were the most common factors stopping nurses from doing their job properly, they said.

The survey results were due to be featured this week in ITV’s breakfast programme Good Morning Britain, as part of a special edition on nursing. The findings are a stark reminder of the everyday pressures faced by frontline nursing staff, and their view that staffing remains the key factor in ensuring patient safety. Despite an increasing recognition by many hospital trusts that they need to recruit more nurses, the findings suggest there is still a long way to go. This was further confirmed last week when persistent staff shortages were cited as a major factor for Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Foundation Trust being placed in “special measures” by healthcare regulators.

Around two-thirds of respondents, 66%, said they worried about the level of care that their ward, hospital or clinic could give to patients outside normal working hours. A similar percentage said their ward, hospital or clinic could not function at night, weekends or Bank Holidays without using agency staff. A massive 96% of respondents said there is too much paperwork in the NHS, in spite of ongoing efforts to reduce it, for example by improving technology, and it being a government priority that is often name-checked in ministerial speeches.

In addition, 76% of survey respondents said they did not feel valued by their manager and 86% said they did not get paid enough money for the job they do. A possible concern is that a significant chunk of respondents lacked confidence in their own work environment. Asked whether they would be happy to be a patient in the ward, hospital or clinic where they worked, 57% “yes” but 43% said “no”. Meanwhile, when asked whether they would encourage their own child to go into nursing, based on their experience, 73% of participants said “no”, while only 27% answered “yes”.

Although, the survey results highlighted the struggles faced by nurses, respondents remained positive about their motivation. One nurse said: “My job is great and I love it, when I am given the opportunity to do it well,” while another stated: “Although my responses are negative, I love my job.” A further respondent said: “Despite all the pressures, the public should understand that as nurses we do try our best.”