Physician Health and Wellness

American Academy of Pediatrics
Annual Leadership Forum 2016

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Wellness, the Opposite of...

Burnout: the feeling of being overextended and depleted of one’s emotional and physical resources.

- Emotional Exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Loss of a Feeling of Personal Accomplishment

Burnout Prevalence and Relevance

Why do we care?
Sobering Statistics: Pediatrics

- Lucille Packard Children’s Hospital ~80 residents
- 50% of pediatric interns report symptoms of burnout by February, never recover.
- Increased emotional exhaustion 6% to 44% (p < 0.001)
- Increased depersonalization 13% to 48% (p < 0.001)
- Strong associations have been identified between burnout and suicidal ideation.

Prevalence of Depression and Depressive Symptoms Among Resident Physicians: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis.

17,560 residents

Depression or depressive symptoms 28.8% (4969/17,560 individuals, 95% CI, 25.3%-32.5%)

Range 20.9%- 43.2% , prevalence increased with calendar year.

Clinician’s Mental Health

Stigma, Stoicism, Consequences

Clinician mental health impacts:

- Competency
- Professionalism
- Career satisfaction
- Quality of patient care
- Substance abuse, self prescribing
- Motor vehicle accidents


Ability of the physician well-being index to identify residents in distress.
Male physician: Relative risk ratio 1.4 to general male population

Female Physician: Relative risk ratio 2.27 to general female population.

300-400 medical students and physicians complete suicide annually, equivalent to 2 average sized medical school classes.

## Recognized Stressors

- Chronic elevated stress
- Patient care demands
- Environmental and infectious exposures, excessive light, noise
- Chronic fatigue, sleep disruption, sleep disorders
- Time constraints, strained relationships – personal and professional
- Lack of exercise
- Frequent exposure to conflict, yet lack of conflict resolution training
- Erratic meals, poor quality nutrition
- Deferred gratification
- Unprocessed emotional or spiritual needs – grief, trauma exposure
Internal Effects of Stress: highly pro-inflammatory.
**Telomeres and adversity: Too toxic to ignore.**

*Blackburn EH¹, Ebel ES.*

PMID: 23060172 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]
Long working hours and risk of coronary heart disease and stroke: a systematic review and meta-analysis of published and unpublished data for 603 838 individuals.

How do we identify those at risk?
Recognizing the Clinician in Distress

- Self reported errors
- Decreased adherence to best practices and changes in clinical reasoning
- Depressed residents made 5 times more medication errors
- Poor mental health affects physical health, personal relationships and ability and motivation to learn
- Disenchanted with demands and stresses of clinical practice

Recognizing the Clinician in Distress

- Perfectionism, “not good enough”, anxiety
- Withdrawal, isolation, overvaluing negative feedback
- Irritability, cynicism, loss of broader perspective
- Absenteeism
- Inability to grieve

- Weight changes gain or loss
- New personal or family event or stressor
- May be hard to know if colleague is under unusual stress
"Second victims are health care providers who are involved in an unanticipated adverse patient event, in a medical error and/or a patient related injury and become victimized in the sense that the provider is traumatized by the event.

“Frequently, these individuals feel personally responsible for the patient outcome. Many feel as though they have failed the patient, second guessing their clinical skills and knowledge base.”

Leadership and Burnout

Rate your leader: strong association with burnout and satisfaction at level of individual physician. (n=2813)

Distinct from salary, workload expectations, specialty, culture, strategic direction of the organization, personality conflicts, opportunities for professional development.

Impact of organizational leadership on physician burnout and satisfaction
Barriers to Seeking Help

- Lack of recognition of how one’s distress compares to others
- Reluctance to acknowledge personal struggles
- Worried about potential practice and license implications
- Often subordinate in a culture that frowns on weakness

Impact of organizational leadership on physician burnout and satisfaction
Positive Progress: Burnout Intervention

Elements associated with lower rates of burnout include:

- Sense of personal control
- Absence of role conflict
- Feeling of being fairly treated
- Social support
- Appropriate reward (financial, institutional, social)
- An alignment of values between individual and workplace

7 Themes for Change

- Workload
- Control
- Balance between effort and reward
- Community
- Fairness
- Values
- [Leadership]

J Appl Psychol. 2008 May;93(3):498-512 Maslach, Leiter
Eliminating Burnout: Promoting Wellness

- Personal shifts- normalize self care
- Institutional shifts- engage colleagues
- Cultural shifts- dissolve culture of silence
- Teach “advanced coping skills”
ACGME New Competencies (2012-13)

- Personal awareness
- Reflective practice
- Self-regulation
- Self monitoring
- Development of emotional intelligence
- Mindfulness
In 2015 the ACGME hosted Stakeholder Symposium to **better characterize the problem** and to identify areas of improvement.
ACGME Recommendations

- Increase awareness of stress in training
- De-stigmatize depression in trainees
- Create a safe space to identify and treat depression
- Confidentiality, reduce barriers to help
- Enhance mentoring
- Promote a supportive culture
- Deepen our understanding of the issue
ACGME Recommendations

- Foster the efforts of residents
- Talk about it- vulnerability is powerful
- Include as part of the curriculum
- Budget for wellness
- Take an honest look at faculty wellbeing
Culture Change: in the Academy

2010 Physician Health and Wellness SIG
2014 Clinical Policy Statement
2015 ALF Leadership topic
2015 SOIM Section Program, NCE, Washington DC
2015 Physician Wellness Booth Med-Peds SOIM
2015 Resilience in the Face of Grief and Loss curriculum, Hospice and Palliative Care Medicine
2016 ALF Leadership focus
2017 Peds 21 Program Topic, Chicago, IL
Culture Change: Positive Progress

National Pediatric Burnout and Resilience Research Consortium: APPD LEARN

- Create, test, share solutions
- Research and quality improvement initiatives
- Fund pilot projects
- Guidance on methods
- Multisite studies
Progress to Date

- Stanford Humanism Curriculum
- Stanford Wellness website:
  - http://wellmd.stanford.edu/
• Stanford Committee for Professional Satisfaction and Support (SCPSS):
  ○ Development of Physician Wellness Survey Tool
  ○ Administration of Wellness Survey and analysis of results
  ○ Peer Support program (for faculty and trainees involved in unexpected negative clinical outcomes)
  ○ Litigation Support program
  ○ Medicine and Literature discussion group program
  ○ Health for Healers Research collaborative
  ○ Planning for mindfulness and compassion training offerings
Positive Progress

University of Arizona
Pediatric Integrative Medicine in Residency 2012

• Self Care Curriculum (500 + residents and faculty)
• Nutrition
• Sleep
• Physical Activity
• Mind-Body Approaches, Resiliency
• Mindfulness, Foundations of Mental Health
Pediatricians will deal with:

- Same issues as mentioned earlier; stressors become magnified
- Personal situations
- Effects on family friends
- Austere conditions
- Compromised medical systems
“Emotional Labor” is Strenuous

Pediatricians will:
• Witness distress of others
• Experience repeated exposures to stories/anguish
• Lose some capacity of office staff
• Suffer physical and expense, damage to the practice
• Manage increasing patient needs
  o Mental health services
  o Medical needs
  o Help navigating social services
Do

- Monitor negative thoughts
- Set realistic professional expectations
- Create boundaries professional hours/personal time
- Make conscious effort to reduce compassion fatigue
- Help support colleagues
- Accept help: use professional/social supports
Remember

- Enormous needs – beyond your control
- Acceptable to be upset when situations are distressing
- You ARE making a positive impact
- Helping in a disaster is particularly rewarding
- Recovery is a long-term process
Discrepancy between progress for residents and progress for faculty and those in private practice. How can current initiatives inform future progress? What is your group doing? What do you need from the Academy? How can the Academy further disseminate or develop tools and resources Others.....
In Conclusion...

- Recognition of distress in oneself and colleagues.
- Attitudes changing, dispel culture of silence.
- Identify obstacles, personal, professional.
- Pause, re-balance, re-educate.
- Resources, identify what is useful for you.
- Immediate and ongoing steps, personal and professional.