

# Addressing and Preventing Burnout

## The relationship between health care providers' motivations and burnout

The 3 pillars of intrinsic motivation that can help health care providers feel fulfilled within the workplace<sup>1</sup>:

**1. Autonomy:** Having choice and control over work

**2. Competence:** Feeling valued for their medical knowledge and clinical judgment

**3. Relatedness:** Having a psychological feeling of belonging, interpersonal attachments among coworkers, and connection to the organization

## Ideas to decrease the burden of electronic health records among health care providers<sup>2</sup>

- Review electronic health records (EHR) to optimize workflow such as using a “top-of-license” approach for EHR documentation to reduce nonessential tasks or reassign them to other staff
- Reduce hospital or practice-specific customization of the EHR to make it easier to use, to avoid over-complicating the system, and to reduce the need for frequent system maintenance
- Increase user familiarity and effectiveness of the EHR by providing ongoing training to health care providers and staff on how to use the EHR system

## Different approaches to prevent burnout



### Programs at the individual level:

- Create programs that educate health care providers about burnout earlier in their training or orientation and teach them how to maintain their well-being
  - An example is the University of North Carolina's model called the “Art of Oncology Curriculum” that had the goal of mitigating burnout through fostering solidarity among hematology/oncology fellows. The program used both small and large group sessions to facilitate individual reflections and open discussions on a shared mental model of caring for patients and helping fellows understand their purpose or calling as oncologists<sup>3</sup>



### Strategies at the organizational level:

- Provide a forum for feedback to address concerns<sup>4</sup>
  - The “Schwartz Rounds” is an example of a program that offers a forum for health care professionals to openly and honestly talk about the social and emotional issues around caring for patients and families<sup>5</sup>
- Encourage breaks that temporarily remove employees from the stressful environment<sup>6</sup>
- Implement engaging health and wellness programs<sup>7</sup>
- Decrease workload, when possible, and increase sense of job control to reduce exhaustion and cynicism<sup>8</sup>



### Practices at the management level:

- Meet with staff each month<sup>9</sup>
- Discuss and deal with the emotions of recent events<sup>10</sup>
- Create an environment that will support well-being and sustain resilience<sup>11</sup>
- Implement interventions directed at individuals and the organization that are aimed at identifying stressors and reducing stress<sup>12</sup>

## Additional resources:

- **Physician burnout: improve physician satisfaction and patient outcomes.**



- **7 steps to prevent burnout in your practice.**



- **5 simple changes to help cut doctors' EHR burdens.**



- **A review on strategies to manage physician burnout.**



## References

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