Addressing Burnout Head-On: How to Develop a Physician Wellness Program

Barbara A. Reilly, PhD
SVP, Employee, Nurse and Physician Engagement
Press Ganey

Tom Jenike, MD
SVP, Chief Human Experience Officer
Novant Health
Dealing with Patient Suffering Is a Daily Challenge

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.” (Rachel Remen, MD, 1996)

Photo Of Doctor Grieving Over Lost Patient Is Worth A Thousand Words

-- Huffingtonpost.com, March 2015

Caregivers need incredible resilience every day.
The Ways Caregiver Resilience Can Be Eroded

Role
- Stress of clinical role - complexity, high stakes activities
- Sympathy overload - secondary traumatic stress of witnessing suffering
- Emotional labor of caregiving role

Job
- Emotional labor of employee demands
- Stress of interruptions, multitasking and task switching
- Stress of pace of change in organization and larger industry
- Lack of education/support to prevent/address compassion fatigue
- Moral distress arising from inability to provide level of quality desired
- Lack of appreciation
- Lack of resources
- Communication break downs, lack of needed information
- Lack of trust in leadership

Harm
- Lack of respect
- Emotional abuse (bullying, humiliating, demeaning behaviors)
- Back or musculoskeletal injuries
- Unprotected exposure to blood-borne pathogens
- Physical violence
- Lack of safe refuge to report physical and psychological harm

Inherent
Avoidable
The Voice of Caregivers with Low Resilience

“I have seen patient care suffer and be compromised for the sake of "time and money." Life-threatening mistakes can be made because people aren't given the time to be careful. Everything is rushed and pushed, and patients are the ones suffering. We are understaffed, under appreciated, and exhausted.”

“We are pressed for time to get procedures started, with onset of EMR, it is difficult to access information in a timely manner...while I agree with productivity, we are not an assembly line of car parts. We are here to provide patient care of which if we miss something we could cause harm.”

“It does not currently feel like safety is a priority despite many years of concern...The number of meetings leadership seems to attend does not seem to help me in my day to day care of pts. I need help, not e-mails.”

“There seems to be an endless amount of things to do in less & less time. Problems are addressed with committees, meetings, surveys, and nothing gets accomplished but looks like something being done.”

“We work under horrible unsafe conditions and we never have what we need to do our job and our patients aren't even safe.”

“Patient safety is an issue because we are consistently are missing instruments or have broken ones.”

“There is nothing safe about the OR at ***. The OR is run like a fast food restaurant. Next! Next! Next!! The rooms are filthy disgusting. Staff are completely overworked and underpaid.”
Burnout is a psychological syndrome that involves a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job. The three key dimensions of this response are an overwhelming exhaustion, feelings of cynicism and detachment from the job, and a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment (Maslach 1993).
Prevalence of Burnout

Critical Care Nurses

Physician:
Mayo Clinic Proceedings 2015 & Dyrbe et al., 2010

Nurse:
Adriaenssens, 2015, Sexton, et al. (2009)

General
Adriaenssens, 2015, Shanafelt et al. 2012

50%
Prevalence of Burnout

Physicians

Physician: Mayo Clinic Proceedings 2015 & Dyrbe et al., 2010

54%
Influencing Factors: Physician Burnout

1. Asymmetrical Rewards
2. Cognitive Scarcity
3. Loss of Autonomy

Dan Ariely – Duke 2015
Press Ganey’s Measurement of Burnout - Items

Aspects of Burnout

- Physical & Emotional Exhaustion
- Depersonalization/Cynicism
- Reduced Sense of Accomplishment

NEW Concept:
Inability to Detach/Emotionally and Physically Recharge
Individual Consequences of Burnout

- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Depression
- Obesity
- Insomnia
- Alcohol/Drug Abuse
- Relationship Issues
Economic Consequences of Burnout

- Absenteeism
- Turnover
- Increase in Healthcare Costs
Consequences of Burnout

Decrease in Quality of Care
MY LIFE

MY WORK
MY WORK
What are we going for?

1. Create a personal shift that leads to an *enhanced life experience* for you, and an *enhanced leadership experience* for everyone around you.

2. Help you develop an ability to *effectively lead* your team by first improving your ability to *see yourself* (awareness) and *lead yourself*. 
External Forces

Internal Condition

Core
Thoughts
Reactions
Behaviors
Feelings
Lead

Lead the Culture (Tone)

Lead the Team

Lead Yourself

Home Team

Work Team
| Human Doing Logistics Tasks To Do Lists Transactions | Human Being |
Human Doing Logistics Tasks To Do Lists Transactions

Human Being Spirit Emotions Core Relationships
Is it possible?

Professional success
+ Personal satisfaction
+ Meaning/Purpose
+ Contribution
+ Fulfillment
Core Clarity

What are the values that I choose to define me as person?

What in my life is *most* important to me?

What is my chief aim?
2015 Novant Health Medical Group Wellness Program Participants Press Ganey Percentile Rankings

- 2015 Engagement Percentile Ranking:
  - All respondents: 62
  - Wellness Program: No: 54
  - Wellness Program: Yes: 89

- 2015 Alignment Percentile Ranking:
  - All respondents: 67
  - Wellness Program: No: 55
  - Wellness Program: Yes: 92
2016 Novant Health Medical Group Wellness Program Participants Press Ganey Percentile Rankings

2016 Engagement Percentile Ranking
- All respondents: 2015 = 62nd, 2016 = 86
- Wellness Program: No: 2015 = 54th, 2016 = 82
- Wellness Program: Yes: 2015 = 67th, 2016 = 97

2016 Alignment Percentile Ranking
- All respondents: 2015 = 55th, 2016 = 90
- Wellness Program: No: 2015 = 67th, 2016 = 90
- Wellness Program: Yes: 2015 = 92nd, 2016 = 97
"My life changed significantly since participating in the physician wellness program. Like many, I was frustrated and overwhelmed both personally and professionally. By sharing experiences in a non-judgmental and supportive atmosphere, I was able to gain insight, rejuvenate and begin to improve my future. Because of this program's tools and guidance, I have learned how to take control of my happiness and have a much brighter outlook overall."

— Dr. Barbara Meyer
"This program gives physicians a space to let their guard down, look inside themselves, and allow us to realize the importance of personal wellness. As a result, I can say that I am a better physician, friend, father, husband, and son." — Dr. Ehab Sharawy
“Beginning with residency, physicians are trained to be super humans. We’re taught that physical and mental toughness are essential elements of a good physician so exerting ourselves becomes the norm as we establish our own medical practices. I was initially skeptical of the physician resiliency program because mentally, I was unaware that I wasn’t truly connecting with my patients or team members.

The program made me realize that I wasn’t truly getting to know my patients. I was also not emotionally available to my wife and children even if I was physically present with them. I now make sure I am fully present when at work and when at home. I had no idea how this could positively impact the way I practice medicine. Patient satisfaction has improved, they have fewer questions after their appointments, and even the mood in the office has become less stressful. I’ve regained my love of seeing patients. Each one has become a gift.” — Dr. Steven Gilchrist
Key Learnings

Show **CARE** for the human beings
Buy-In from Sr. Leaders, especially physicians
Group facilitated conversations (12-20 participants)
Off-site
Early ‘enrollment’
Measuring Workforce Engagement

- I would recommend this organization as a good place to work.
- I would recommend this organization to family and friends who need care.
- I am proud to tell people I work for this organization.
- I would like to be working at this organization three years from now.
- I would stay with this organization if offered a similar job elsewhere.
- Overall, I am a satisfied employee.
The Burnout Items

- At the beginning of a work day I am emotionally ready for whatever comes my way.
- At the end of a work day I have enough energy to pursue non-work activities.
- I rarely lose sleep over work issues.
- I am able to free my mind from work when I am away from it.
- I can enjoy my personal time without focusing on work matters.
- The work I do makes a real difference.
- I care for all clients/patients equally.
- I see every client/patient as a person.
- I rarely experience burnout from my work.
Engagement by Age

Engagement by Age

Engagement

3.80
3.90
4.00
4.10
4.20
4.30
4.40

18 to 24 years
25 to 29 years
30 to 34 years
35 to 39 years
40 to 44 years
45 to 49 years
50 to 54 years
55 to 59 years
60 to 64 years
65 to 69 years
70 to 74 years
75 to 79 years

ASHHRA
THE HUMAN SIDE OF HEALTHCARE

PRESS Ganey®

NOVANT HEALTH
Resilience by Age

Resilience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Resilience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 to 24 years</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 29 years</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 34 years</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 39 years</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 44 years</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 49 years</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 54 years</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 59 years</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64 years</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 69 years</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 74 years</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 79 years</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Engagement & Resilience by Age

[Bar chart showing engagement and resilience across different age groups from 18 to 79 years old.]
Key Drivers of Resilience

- The amount of job stress I feel is reasonable.
- This organization supports me in balancing my work life and personal life.
- Overall, I am a satisfied employee.
- I am proud to tell people I work for this organization.
- I have sufficient time to provide the best care/service for our clients/patients.
Combatting Burnout

Manager
- Create meaningful dialogue
- Establish bigger picture
- Restore joy

Person
- Retrain the brain
- Support the body
- Create a new inner dialogue

Team
- Create meaning
- Affirm the work
- Establish team debriefs

Organization
- Understand pain points
- Remove roadblocks
- Innovate to reduce burnout