

Mind the Gap: Perceived Organizational Support in Primary Care Physician Burnout

Denise Renée Prindiville, BSc, MBA, DBA Student ; Royal Roads University

Definition and Dimensions

Burnout

Burnout is a syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed (WHO, 2021). Burnout is characterized by three dimensions:

1. feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion (emotional exhaustion, EE)
2. feelings of negativism or cynicism or increased mental distance from one's job (depersonalization, DP)
3. a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment (personal accomplishment, PA)

Research Problem

Situation

“Burnout” has been studied for 50 years and is considered an occupational hazard for physicians. Researchers report reduced quality of patient care and satisfaction, double the risk of medical errors, decreased productivity, and increased turnover, (Lee et al., 2013; Mete et al., 2022; Shanafelt & Noseworthy, 2017; Tawfik, et al., 2018; West et al., 2018).

The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) 's 2021 National Physician Health Survey shows:

- ↳ 57% of general practitioners had burnout
 - ° 50% high on EE dimension
 - ° 28% high on DP dimension
- ↳ 15% of general practitioners have thought about suicide in the last twelve months
- ↳ 80% of physicians don't feel the organization are providing necessary resources and support



References

Canadian Medical Association. (10 August 2022). Canada's health care crisis: What we need now. CMA News. <https://www.cma.ca/news/canadas-health-care-crisis-what-we-need-now>

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499-512.

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Peeters, M. C., & Breevaart, K. (2021). New directions in burnout research. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 30(5), 686-691.

Dollard, M.F. and Bakker, A.B. (2010), Psychosocial safety climate as a precursor to conducive work environments, psychological health problems, and employee engagement. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83: 579-599.

Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(3), 500.

Hobfoll S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources. A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *The American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513-524.

Lee, R. T., Seo, B., Hladkyj, S., Lovell, B. L., & Schwartzmann, L. (2013). Correlates of physician burnout across regions and specialties: a meta-analysis. *Human Resources for Health*, 11, 48-48.

Mete, M., Goldman, C., Shanafelt, T., & Marchalik, D. (2022). Impact of leadership behaviour on physician well-being, burnout, professional fulfilment and intent to leave: a multicentre cross-sectional survey study. *BMJ Open*, 12(6)

Shanafelt ,T.D., Goh, J., & Sinsky, C. (2017). The Business Case for Investing in Physician Well-being. *JAMA Intern Med*. 177(12):1826.

Shanafelt, T. D., & Noseworthy, J.H. (2017). Executive Leadership and Physician Well-being: Nine Organizational Strategies to Promote Engagement and Reduce Burnout. *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, 92(1), 129-146.

Tawfik, D.S., Profit, J., Morgenthaler, T.I., et al. (2018). Physician Burnout, Well-being, and Work Unit Safety Grades in Relationship to Reported Medical Errors. *Mayo Clin Proc*. 93(11):1571-1580.

West, CP, Dyrbye, LN, Shanafelt, TD. (2018). Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN; and Stanford University Medical Center, Stanford, CA, USA). Physician burnout: contributors, consequences and solutions (Review). *J Intern Med* 283: 516- 529.

Research Aim

Gap

Despite a high organizational cost to physician burnout, there has been less attention to workplace interventions and leadership (Demerouti et al., 2021; Shanafelt et al., 2017)

Purpose

To provide executive leaders with evidence-based scholarship on how to support and protect family physicians' wellbeing and reduce the risk of burnout

Research Question

“How might health-team leadership support and resources, reduce the level of exhaustion, contributing to burnout, among primary care physicians in Ontario?”

Theoretical Underpinnings

Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R)

Job demands and job resources, when imbalanced, can lead to either engagement or burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001)

Conservation of Resources Theory (COR)

Individuals strive to obtain, retain and protect resources
(Hobfoll, 1989)

Discussion

- 1) *Which health team leadership actions do you think foster positive working environments and could serve as protective factors against exhaustion, a key dimension of burnout?*
- 2) *Do you perceive there to be a gap in primary care health teams to support physicians' wellbeing?*