Objectives

- Understand the scientific data and research on health care professional burnout and resilience
- Understand how health care professional burnout affects the health care organization and patient safety
- Implement resiliency skills into your daily routine
Physician burnout

Emotional exhaustion

- High 38%
- Intermediate 15%
- Low 43%

Depersonalization

- High 29%
- Intermediate 21%
- Low 50%

- 38% had positive screen for depression
- 6.4% had thought of suicide in past year

Patient care practices of residents suffering burnout

Weekly | Monthly | Several Times a Year

- Discharged patients because team was too busy
- Did not fully discuss treatment options or answer patient’s questions
- Made treatment or medication errors not due to inexperience
- Ordered restraints or medication for an agitated patient before evaluation
- Discharged patient rather than perform diagnostic test

Patient care attitudes of residents suffering burnout

- Paid little attention to social or personal impact of illness on patient
- Had little emotional reaction to patient’s death
- Felt guilty about my treatment of patient from humanitarian standpoint


Relationship of error to risk

- Guilt, Frustration

Error involvement → Responses to distress: Burn-out, depression, diminishing empathy → Quality of care, Patient safety


The emotional impact of medical errors

- Reputation
- Lower satisfaction
- Sleeping problems
- Loss of confidence
- Anxiety

Proportion of a physician's career spent with an open malpractice claim, by physician specialty

Stress management reduces errors and risk

Two studies based on five-step program:
1. Discussion of results of stress survey and recommendations to decrease organizational stress
2. Policy and procedural changes in highest-stress departments
3. Sharing of survey results with employees
4. Education program on stress
5. Implementation of employee assistance and counseling programs

Results
- Reported medication errors cut in half
- Reduced malpractice claims from 1.4 to .4/year


Redefining quality
- How we take care of our patients
- How we take care of each other
- How we take care of ourselves
Resiliency

An individual’s ability to overcome adversity and continue his or her normal development.

Measuring the effects of stress

- We now have tools to measure physical changes in the body caused/influenced by the mind (functional MRIs, hormone levels, antibodies, heart rate variability)
- We can measure the effects of the mind and emotions on the heart, digestive tract, immune system, and individual cells
- We see that physical symptoms can change emotional health and vice versa
Stress can ...

- Slow wound healing
- Diminish strength of immune response to vaccines
- Enhance susceptibility to infections illness
- Boost allergy symptoms
- Reactivate latent viruses

Stress at the cellular level
What does resilience look like?

- Awareness (of situation, of your reactions, of others' behavior)
- Acceptance that stress is part of life
- Internal locus of control
- Strong problem-solving skills
- Strong social connections
- Self-identify as a survivor vs. victim
- Willingness to ask for help

The five pillars of resilience

- Self Awareness
- Mindfulness
- Purpose
- Self Care
- Relationships

How are we going to fill up?

Techniques for building resiliency

- Good nutrition and sleep
- Exercise
- 4-7-8 breathing technique
- Meditation/mindfulness
- Gratefulness journal
- Random acts of kindness
- Support groups
- Social connection/spiritual practice
Self care – why do we sleep?

- Improve immune function (repair and rejuvenate)
- Consolidate memories
- Regulate emotions
- Brain cleansing

Tips for a better night’s sleep

- Skip the snooze button (makes you more tired)
- Avoid caffeine within 4-6 hours of sleep onset
- Get outside in the natural afternoon light (even if cloudy) to reset circadian rhythms
- Avoid eating within 2-3 hours of sleep onset because digestion disrupts sleep
- Morning exercise provides boost of energy, decreases stress hormones, and improves sleep quality (75% more time in deep sleep)
Breathing Technique

- Get comfortable
- Inhale deeply through your nose to a count of **4**
- Hold for a count of **7**
- Exhale through your mouth for a count of **8** with tip of tongue against inside of teeth

Mindfulness

Awareness of present experience with acceptance, allowing you to see the big picture, recognize patterns, and enhance performance, creativity and innovation

Barbara Frederickson
Mindfulness

A flexible state of mind in which we are actively engaged in the present, noticing new things and sensitive to context

Ellen Langer

Association of an Educational Program in Mindful Communication With Burnout, Empathy, and Attitudes Among Primary Care Physicians

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Physician care physicians report high levels of distress, which is linked to burnout, attrition, and poor quality of care. Programs to reduce burnout before it results in impairment are rare, data on these programs are scarce.

Objective: To determine whether an intense educational program in mindfulness, communication, and self-awareness is associated with improvement in primary care physician well-being, psychological distress, burnout, and capacity for relating to patients.

Design, Setting, and Participants: Before-and-after study of 70 primary care physicians in Rochester, New York, in a continuing medical education (CME) course in 2007-2008. The course included mindfulness meditation, self-awareness exercises, narrative writing, compassion training, and discussion. An 8-week intensive phase (2.5 h/week, 7-hour retreat) was followed by a 3-month maintenance phase (2.5 h/week).

Main Outcomes Measures: Mindfulness (2 subscales), burnout (3 subscales), empathy (3 subscales), additional orientation, personality (2 factors), and mood (6 subscales) measured at baseline and at 2, 12, and 18 months.

Results: Over the course of the program and follow-up, participants demonstrated improvements in mindfulness (raw score, 49.2 to 54.1; raw score change 4.9, 95%)

Practice “3 Good Things”
Random acts of kindness

Doing a kindness produces the single most reliable momentary increase in well-being of any exercise that has been tested.

“Find one wholly unexpected kind thing to do tomorrow and just do it. Notice what happens to your mood.”

Martin Seligman, 2011

Writing to heal

- Personal upheavals
  - disrupt normal cognitive activity
  - undermine social interactions and relationships
- Writing about an upheaval
  - reduces need to inhibit thoughts, emotions, behaviors
  - improves emotional modulation
  - brings cognitive resolution/frees up working memory

Writing to heal

- Write about recent trauma at least 3 times for at least 25 minutes, with 24 hours in between each writing.


Benefits of resilience writing

- Decreased depressive symptoms
- Improved psychological well-being
- Improved working memory
- Improved sleep
- Improved immune system function
- Improved relationships
- Improved coping with emotional upheavals


Relationships

- A primary factor in resilience is having caring and supportive relationships within and outside the family.
- Relationships that create love and trust, provide role models, and offer encouragement and reassurance help bolster resilience.

“We can live without religion and meditation, but we cannot survive without human affection.”

The Dalai Lama
The top five regrets of the dying

1. I wish I’d had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.
2. I wish I hadn’t worked so hard.
3. I wish I’d had the courage to express my feelings.
4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.
5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.

- Bronnie Ware, author and blogger
Additional resources

- DrWeil.com
- *Flourish* by Dr. Martin Seligman
- Gratefulness.org
- Drrachelremen@commonweal.org
- *Daring Greatly* by Brené Brown
- *The Chemistry of Joy* by Henry Emmons, M.D.
- *Enjoy Every Sandwich and Finding Balance in a Medical Life* by Lee Lipsenthal
- *Healthy Aging* by Andrew Weil, M.D.
References


References (cont'd)