



Physician Health First®

Summary of Challenge

Our nation's health care has long prioritized sick care over health care, deepened racial disparities, and left physicians feeling buried. Although burnout was impacting physicians before the COVID-19 pandemic, more physicians are unhappy with their jobs now. Family physicians suffer from significantly higher rates of burnout than physicians in many other specialties; 51% of family physicians reported being burned out in 2022.¹ Burnout hurts patients, too, with effects including a two-fold increase in the odds for unsafe care, unprofessional behaviors and low patient satisfaction.² Burnout also worsens the primary care workforce shortage by driving physicians to reduce or leave clinical practice.³

Addressing Needs

Well-being and professional satisfaction are not simply the absence of burnout, just as good health is not simply the absence of disease. Supporting family physicians requires a multi-dimensional approach that includes reducing burnout drivers in addition to ensuring access to cultures and skills that promote well-being.

The AAFP strongly believes that physician burnout is a problem of health systems, organizations, practices, and physician cultures, not just an individual concern. We apply a systems-based approach to identifying and addressing root causes of physician burnout at all levels of the family physician ecosystem while promoting practices that support physician well-being throughout the family physician career journey.

Partnership Opportunities

The Physician Health First® initiative is devoted to improving family physicians' well-being and professional satisfaction by addressing the causes of physician burnout and offering resources and opportunities to help.

Opportunity 1: Physician Health First® Webinar Series and Chapter Dissemination

Overview

This webinar series allows for live engagement with our esteemed faculty from across the country on topics including belonging, the state of burnout, finding support, mental health, advocacy, stigma, the power of storytelling, financial well-being and suicide prevention. These webinars are free and open to everyone – regardless of membership status – and they offer free CME credit.

Activities

The Physician Health First® webinar series will be available in our Learning Management System after each live webinar takes place. We also propose chapter dissemination tactics, including a promotion kit and help identifying well-being speakers.

Estimated Cost: \$98,000

Opportunity 2: WE WILL (Women Empowering Women Inclusively Leading with Love)

Overview

Women face unique health and well-being challenges—especially women physicians. WE WILL enables participants to create a virtual peer-to-peer culture of wellness where women physicians can find fellowship that helps reduce feelings of professional isolation, gain knowledge through curated educational experiences and experience peer mentorship.

Activities

Over a six-month period, participants engage in a virtual discussion led by well-being and equity experts. Between sessions, they have access to an online community for on-going fellowship and connection. We also encourage participation in affinity groups that meet during FMX and the annual Physician Health and Well-being Conference.

Estimated Cost: \$41,000

Opportunity 3: Physician Health and Well-Being Conference

Overview

The AAFP has held the Physician Health and Well-being Conference annually since 2018 with year-over-year growth in attendees. This conference is our showcase for interactive learning, growth, and connection in well-being, including innovative strategies to address the underlying causes of burnout and moral injury.

Activities

Over three days, physicians are immersed in evidence-based solutions for wellness, and new solutions for improved professional satisfaction and patient care.

Estimated Cost: \$92,500

Sources:

1. *Medscape Physician Burnout & Depression Report*. 2022. <https://www.medscape.com/slideshow/2022-lifestyle-burnout-6014664#1> Accessed 2/9/2023.
2. Panagioti M, Geraghty K, Johnson J, et al. Association Between Physician Burnout and Patient Safety, Professionalism, and Patient Satisfaction: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *JAMA Intern Med*. 2018;178(10):1317–1331. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2018.3713
3. Sinsky CA, Brown RL, Stillman MJ, Linzer M. COVID-Related Stress and Work Intentions in a Sample of US Health Care Workers. *Mayo Clin Proc Innov Qual Outcomes*. 2021 Dec;5(6):1165–1173. doi: 10.1016/j.mayocpiqo.2021.08.007. Epub 2021 Dec 8. PMID: 34901752; PMCID: PMC8651505.