System or Student? Analysing factors leading to junior doctor burnout and mitigating strategies during transitions of practice

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There are no actual or potential conflicts of interest to declare amongst authors.
The beginning of every doctor
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DISCUSSION
Physician burnout costs US $4.6bn a year, study finds

Owen Dyer

THE LANCET

Physician burnout: a global crisis

The Lancet

Published: July 13, 2019 • DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(19)31573-9

The Unspoken Causes Of Physician Burnout

Forbes
Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from **chronic workplace stress** that has **not been successfully managed**. It is characterized by three dimensions:

- **Feelings of energy depletion** or exhaustion;
- **Increased mental distance** from one’s job, or feelings of **negativism or cynicism** related to one's job; and
- **Reduced professional efficacy**
Burnout amongst trainee doctors

45-80%
Implications

- Patient safety
- Patient satisfaction
- Interpersonal relationships
Our study’s focus

- Quantify burnout before practising
- Identify causative factors
- Develop mitigating strategies

- Medical School Clinical Years (Years 3-5)
- PGY1/Housemanship
- Medical Officer
- Junior Resident
Methodology

Experience in Medical School:
Within 2 weeks of starting PGY1

Experience in PGY1:
After completing PGY1

- Local tertiary hospital
- PGY1 doctors
- Anonymous questionnaire
Components of the questionnaire

- Maslach Burnout Inventory
- Scoring of stressors and relievers
- Strategies to alleviate burnout

MBI
- Emotional Exhaustion
- Depersonalisation
- Reduced Personal Accomplishment
**Findings**

* = burnout as defined by high scores in EE or DP

Pre-Survey (n=28)
Freshly graduated from medical school

- 78%

Pre-Survey (n=10)
Completion of PGY1

- 90%
## Findings

### Survey period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score category</th>
<th>Pre-PGY1 (n=28)</th>
<th>Post-PGY1 (n=10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion (%)</td>
<td><strong>67.9</strong></td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depersonalisation (%)</td>
<td><strong>57.1</strong></td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Accomplishment (%)</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What makes you burnt out?

Pre-PGY1
- Working hours
- Workplace relationships

Post-PGY1
- Working hours
- Personal health
- Preparing for professional exams
How can we help? (In medical school)

- STUDENT GUIDANCE
- EXPOSURE TO CLINICAL WORK
- AVENUES TO COPE WITH STRESS
How can we help? (In medical school)

"clinical mentors who ... mentor students personally"

"reach out to students [and] help set realistic expectations"
How can we help? (In medical school)

EXPOSURE TO CLINICAL WORK

“encourage more calls”
AVENUES TO COPE WITH STRESS

"anonymous avenues for psychological help"

"find out what problems they may be facing ... in the clinical setting"

"mindfulness teaching"
How can we help? (In the workplace)

- Manpower Policies
- Infrastructure
- Workplace Culture
How can we help? (In the workplace)

MANPOWER POLICIES

"better welfare"
"more manpower"
"give them more rest"
"less admin work"
How can we help? (In the workplace)

"basic things that make our day easier - IT infrastructure especially"
How can we help? (In the workplace)

"Scolding is expected, but it would be great if it could come with some teaching as well"

"A sense of compassion and understanding within the team would go a long way"

"Stresses can come from higher ups ... fostering fear of asking for help by being aggressive/snappish"
Limitations

- Sample size and population studied restricted by PGY1 postings
- Potential for scope to survey existing final year undergraduate students (Year 5s) on top of fresh PGY1s
Medical School

The Competent Doctor

Workplace
Thank you