From Bryan Bohman, MD  
Chair, Physician Wellness Committee

ANESTHESIA WELLNESS PROGRAMS

One department that is tackling the issue of burnout in a thoughtful and measurable way is the Anesthesia Department, whose Resident Wellness Program commenced in 2010.

Co-directed by Drs. Emily Ratner and Tara Cornaby, the program begins with an optional offsite weekend retreat for first year Anesthesia residents, modeled after Georgetown’s medical student and faculty programs. Enthusiastic word of mouth led 21 of the 24 first year residents to attend in 2012: goals include learning techniques to manage the effects of stress, creating a strong peer support foundation, and enhancing resiliency and positive coping strategies. As part of the required didactic curriculum, subsequent sessions are held every other month throughout the remaining 3 years of residency. These meetings include checking in and discussion of topics such as difficult clinical situations, mindful communication, physician error and professionalism. Periodic assessments are made utilizing objective and subjective measures in order to evaluate the impact of the program. Resident feedback is highly valued, and curriculum development is ongoing.

In addition, Dr. Ratner, under the auspices of Dr. Hannah Valantine, Director of the Office of Diversity and Leadership, will pilot a year-long Faculty Wellness Program for 10 faculty members across the School of Medicine. After an offsite retreat, the group will meet once per month.

With physician wellness programs being created around the country, including at such centers as Yale, Dartmouth, and Duke, the Anesthesia Department is helping Stanford develop best practices for creating a supportive and resilient medical culture.

Calendar Events/Talks:

5/1 – Healthy Taste Fair
5/2 – Why Did I Eat that Again?
5/4 – Magazine & Feature Writing
5/8 – Medicine and the Arts
5/9 – De-clutter and De-stress
5/10 – 7th Annual Cardinal Walk
5/10 – Caregiving with Patience
5/10 – NPR Live: Jasper Ridge 40th Anniversary
5/11 – Liebeslieder with Stanford Chorale
5/13 – Compassion with Pico Iyer
5/14 – First Time Home Buying
5/15 – Poetry Out Loud Competition
5/17 – Calif. Coastal Photography
5/19 – Bay to Breakers
5/22 – Healthy Kitchen: Vegetable Sources of Protein
5/24 – Stanford Wind Ensemble

Sign up for a charity sports event!
5/11 – Stanford Powwow 5k
5/11 – Stanford Relay for Life
5/18 – Miles for Migraine
6/1 – Prevent Obesity
6/8 – Run for Wellness
6/9 – Silicon Valley Tour de Cure
6/16 – SF Marathon
6/23 – Packard Summer Scamper
6/29 – Run to End All Runs
6/29 – USO Salute our Heroes

CME at Harvard 6/21-22
“Lifestyle Medicine: Tools for Promoting Healthy Change”

For details of these and more events, plus CME wellness courses, see WellMD Calendar

Recent Research:

The impact of a program in mindful communication on primary care physicians.  
20 randomly selected MD participants in a year-long monthly mindfulness communication program at Univ. of Rochester that was shown to decrease burnout and distress were debriefed afterwards. Participants most valued the sense of community, the mindfulness skills to attentively listen to their patients, and their greater sense of personal awareness.

Walking Versus Running for Hypertension, Cholesterol, and Diabetes Mellitus Risk Reduction.  
(From Lawrence Berkeley National Lab)  
“Equivalent energy expenditures by moderate (walking) and vigorous (running) exercise produced similar risk reductions for hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, diabetes mellitus, and possibly CHD.” [For a list of campus trails/self-guided walking tours click Resources tab at top of Exercise and Fitness Webpage. Also see “Choosing Walking Shoes”.]