MAY 2015 UPDATE

From Dr. Rebecca Smith-Coggins
Chair, SCPSS
Stanford Committee for Professional Satisfaction and Support

BURNOUT PREVENTION

Physician burnout is a prominent issue in medicine these days, with burnout being strongly associated with poorer safety culture, teamwork climate, patient care and outcomes (see review article). Dr. Jochen Profit, MD, MPH, a neonatologist at LPCH, has previously shown that about a quarter of NICU providers experience burnout. He also found that well-executed Leadership Walkrounds are associated with lower burnout rates. He is now studying if various positive psychology tools can improve resilience and help providers in one of our most stressful environments, NICUs.

Working off of the "3 Good Things" model from Dr. Bryan Sexton of the Duke Patient Safety Center, in 2014 Dr. Profit conducted a small pilot study of Stanford NICU and PICU MDs, RNs and other providers. The 3 good things intervention provides evening email prompts to write out 3 good things that happened that day. Stanford participants, similar to prior research from Duke and other medical centers, experienced decreased symptoms of burnout, better sleep, improved self-care and higher happiness index scores after two weeks. Data from a one year follow-up is pending. Eighty-five percent would want to participate again and to learn about other resilience activities.

Dr. Profit has applied for a grant for a more comprehensive multi-center intervention which would involve modules with various online short (10 min.) resilience practices. He would like to show that burnout can be addressed in high stress settings using tools that are not time or cost burdensome and are easy to do. This study might begin in early 2016, and may be open to departments other than the NICU.

Our committee encourages research such as this to help provide physicians and trainees with tools to enhance their fulfillment in medical practice.

Recent Research:


"The author describes the cultural imperative, beginning in medical school, to sacrifice self-care for productivity and individual achievement...There is a power our medical culture exerts on us all...How early do we create the contradiction between what we recommend to patients and how we care for ourselves?" Evidence-based recommendations are made.


Retirement decisions may be significantly influenced by impending loss of self-identity in the medical role with threats to self-esteem, sense of belonging, and sense of meaning. Physicians and academic institutions need better late-career transition preparation.

Calendar:

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

5/1 Fresh Perspectives on Diversity
5/3 Campus Walk to Fight Suicide
5/5 Walking: Windhover Labyrinth
5/5 Weeding Your Way to Wellness
5/5 Human Rights High Comm’r.
5/6 Healthy Taste of Stanford
5/6 Global Health in an Interconnected World
5/7 Equine-imity – Stress Reduction with Horses
5/7 How Anxious Animals Help Us Understand Ourselves
5/7 Changing the Public Perception of Autism
5/8 Cardinal Walk
5/9 Stanford Powwow Fun Run
5/9 All Day Writer’s Workshop
5/12 Ebola, Global Health Security: A Surgeon’s Journey at CDC
5/12 The Stories Our Words Tell with James Pennebaker
5/12 Wayne Thiebaud: The Inaugural McMurtry Lecture
5/14 Bike to Work Day
5/14 Minding the Body Dr. Spiegel
5/16 Mindfulness Class
5/16 Relay for Life
5/16 Stanford Med Community Day
5/19 Stanford Poetry Out Loud
5/19 Exploring Life in the Human Body through Poetry
5/20 Infections, Cancer and Global Inequity
5/21 Student Grief and Loss
5/21 Compassion w/ Thupten Jinpa
5/21 The History of Lesbian/Gay Parents and their Children
5/27 Film: Waste Land
5/28 Managing Perfectionism and Procrastination
5/30