

Instilling Wellness into the EM Student

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Wellness versus Burnout

Wellness: Health promotion and protection strategies that encourage the health and safety of employees (CDC)

Physician wellness: No generally accepted definition
A concept focusing on maximizing the quality of life of the physician (student)

Burnout: Syndrome of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, depersonalization, decreased feelings of personal accomplishment and decreased effectiveness at work

Goal: Focus on wellness to prevent burnout

Benefit:

- Increased employee productivity
- Better workplace moral
- Reduced healthcare expenses
- Decreased absenteeism

The Problem

2003-2004 survey of residents and medical students:
Approx 20% had signs or symptoms of depression
Rates of depression and suicidal ideation were *higher in medical students* than residents

2016 ACP Survey
10% of doctors are not satisfied with their jobs
31% self-report being “burned out”

Your Role

Clerkship directors and program directors can make a difference!
Resident survey found that nearly 1/3 suggested formal wellness screening by the PD, half suggested informal screening. Only 1% felt screening was not the role of the PD.
If you don't ask, you won't be told. Residents are concerned about looking weak if they share symptoms of depression or burnout.

Do Clerkship Directors Care?

19 of 34 (57%) CD surveyed felt that wellness was an important part of the EM clerkship experience
15 of 34 (43%) discuss wellness with students during the EM rotation

What Wellness Topics do Clerkship Directors Prioritize?

- Coping with stress related to clinical practice
- Adjusting to shift work and altering your circadian rhythm
- Recognizing depression and suicide risk among students and physicians
- Teaching how to cope with death and dying

How To? Tools to Promote Wellness

- Have students write a mission statement for their clerkship experience (educational, emotional, physical, spiritual, social)
- Seminar on how to deal with the difficult patient
- Seminar on how to deal with the stressful situation
- “Great save” case presentations
- Forward rotating shift schedule
- Individual de-brief after a death
- Discuss wellness