

## **AAFP Statement on Commitment to Clinician Well-being and Resilience**

The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) is concerned about the high rates of professional burnout among clinicians in the United States. In addition to the toll it takes on clinicians, burnout can negatively affect patient safety and the quality of patient care. It can also result in clinicians leaving the workforce, which reduces patients' access to health care services. Reducing clinician burnout is critical to achieving the goals of redesigning the health care system and improving the health of patients, families, and communities in the United States.

Clinician burnout is a system problem, not just an individual concern. The AAFP is committed to help individual clinicians develop personal resilience skills, as well as taking a systems-based approach to identifying and combating root causes of burnout.

In 2016, the AAFP adopted the following as one of its top strategic priorities:

***“The AAFP will assist members in achieving well-being in order to enjoy a sustained career in family medicine.”***

**We aspire to be our members' trusted partner in optimizing their well-being.**

The AAFP acknowledges that well-being and professional satisfaction are not simply the absence of burnout. Family physicians and other clinicians perform their professional activities and duties in a highly complex environment that poses many challenges, including regulatory burdens, mandatory documentation, organizational policies, practice inefficiencies, and a culture of physician self-sacrifice. The AAFP takes a holistic view of the factors affecting clinician well-being and addresses them from five points of entry:

**Health Care System** – Advocating to ease regulatory and documentation burdens that affect clinician well-being and quality patient care

**Organization** – Promoting leadership skills to help clinicians succeed within organizational processes and policies

**Practice** – Improving efficiencies to optimize clinicians' time and promote a more sustainable practice

**Individual** – Focusing on individual well-being habits to address burnout with resilience and mindfulness techniques

**Physician Culture** – Addressing the mindset of physician self-sacrifice as a cultural norm, and encouraging self-care and peer-to-peer support

### **The AAFP's Commitment**

The AAFP is committed to helping solve the burnout crisis so that clinicians can sustain successful, meaningful practices and provide quality patient care. We strive to support clinicians in their pursuit of well-being and professional satisfaction by providing practical resources and addressing dysfunction in

the health care system. In particular, it is critical to reduce administrative burden and reform payment systems to reward clinicians for the quality and outcomes of care, not simply the volume of care.

As an inaugural sponsor of the Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being and Resilience, the AAFP is fully engaged in efforts coordinated by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM). Working together, we can significantly improve clinician well-being and professional satisfaction to benefit clinicians and the individuals and communities they serve.

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*Founded in 1947, the AAFP represents 129,000 physicians and medical students nationwide. It is the only medical society devoted solely to primary care.*

*Family physicians conduct approximately one in five office visits -- that's 192 million visits annually or 48 percent more than the next most visited medical specialty. Today, family physicians provide more care for America's underserved and rural populations than any other medical specialty. Family medicine's cornerstone is an ongoing, personal patient-physician relationship focused on integrated care.*

*To learn more about the specialty of family medicine, the AAFP's positions on issues and clinical care, and for downloadable multi-media highlighting family medicine, visit [www.aafp.org/media](http://www.aafp.org/media). For information about health care, health conditions, and wellness, please visit the AAFP's award-winning consumer website, [www.familydoctor.org](http://www.familydoctor.org).*