

American Psychiatric Association

Organizational Commitment to Addressing Physician Well-being and Burnout

Professional burnout and increased rates of depression and suicide are significant concerns affecting physicians in training and practicing physicians. Professional burnout can impact physicians' health and quality of life, the quality of care they provide, and their productivity and workforce participation. There is substantial evidence of burnout among psychiatrists, and psychiatrist well-being can be enhanced through research, education and evidence-based interventions. Moreover, psychiatrists are in an ideal position to provide expertise and knowledge to others in the health care professions, especially with regard to distinguishing between burnout and depression and the best approaches to both conditions.

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) is fully committed to the development of activities and products to enhance well-being and combat burnout among its members and to contribute to the well-being of colleagues in other specialties. We will work in the following four areas:

- **Data:** Analyze available data and collect new information through an online assessment portal, town hall meetings and online programming to assess APA members' wellness, professional satisfaction and experience with burnout.
- **Resources:** Curate and develop resources:
 - Review and summarize research relevant to psychiatrists and the potential roles for psychiatrists in addressing the problem with other medical professionals;
 - Create a Well-being Ambassador Toolkit to support psychiatrists engaging in education regarding this issue and to support assessment and direction for the health care organizations of which they are a part;
 - Curate and promote an online Well-being Resource Center on the web at www.psychiatry.org/wellbeing;
 - Update the APA's existing position statements on well-being and burnout, the distinctions between burnout and depression and best practices for referral to treatment for psychiatrists, as well as physician colleagues.
- **Education:** Recommend and develop specific educational and self-care activities related to physician well-being, work-life balance, desirable practice parameters and self-care for APA members, residents, medical students and other physicians.
- **Communications and Partnerships:** Develop a communication strategy to promote these products and opportunities and work with other organizations in medicine that are focusing on this issue. This includes advocacy regarding appropriate mental health screening in licensure and regarding the significance of physician well-being as an important organizational quality indicator.

To accomplish this task, the APA Board of Trustees established a Workgroup on Psychiatrist Well-being and Burnout consisting of a diverse group of national experts who represent psychiatrists from across the developmental spectrum, from residency through retirement. The Workgroup will coordinate its efforts with the work of allied organizations, including AMA, AAMC, ACGME and NAM, in addressing this problem.

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The American Psychiatric Association, founded in 1844, is the oldest medical association in the country. The APA is also the largest psychiatric association in the world with more than 37,000 physician members specializing in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses. The APA's vision is to ensure access to quality psychiatric diagnosis and treatment. For more information, please visit www.psychiatry.org.