

Commitment to Faculty Vitality and Physician Well-Being at VTC School of Medicine & Carilion Clinic

Located in Roanoke, VA, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine is a relatively new, research intensive medical school which graduated its fourth class in May, 2017. It is a unique public-private partnership between a cutting-edge research university (Virginia Tech) and a major health care system in southwest Virginia (Carilion Clinic). Also headquartered in Roanoke, Carilion Clinic is the largest non-profit integrated health system in Western Virginia, serving nearly one million people with seven hospitals, a network of 700 multi-specialty physicians and 300 advance care practitioners, 220+ physician practice locations, a geographical footprint of over 200 miles, and 23 GME programs hosting over 200 residents.

As a response to growing concern about provider well-being, in 2014 our Office of Continuing Professional Development initiated a Professional Wellness Committee with the intention of providing a structure for work around professional well-being and serving as a repository and catalyst for initiatives throughout the system. This committee brought together interested thought-leaders from all sectors of the organization. Since that time, there has been accelerated movement to address these issues.

Examples include:

- The Professional Wellness Committee has evolved further into Faculty Vitality and Physician Well-Being Committee and hired a new manager to help advance this work.
- Individual clinical departments have started their own committees to address this work. For instance, the Department of Family and Community Medicine has started a “4th Aim Better Life Team” charged with creating action plans for addressing the most pressing issues/concerns regarding clinician well-being and burnout.
- The support group processes for both residents and faculty physicians have become more visible, and there is more active sharing of successes between the various groups.
- The Office of Graduate Medical Education has begun addressing resident well-being and burnout as part of its response to new accreditation requirements.
- The medical school has launched a comprehensive wellness program guided by an oversight committee and focusing on the specific needs of our medical students.
- Nursing leadership has begun an initiative that will concentrate on identified wellness needs of nursing staff across the system.
- Processes are underway to more closely align the work of both the Physician Well-Being committees and the 2nd Victim TRUST team with the work of Carilion Clinical Advancement and Patient Safety, which oversees all quality, safety, compliance, and risk management work.
- Expanded efforts to provide education and development for physician leaders and administrative leaders based on data regarding the impact of leadership on clinician well-being and burnout.
- New programming designed to comprehensively address factors at the individual provider level, the care team level, and the organizational level that may impact well-being
- Presentation of research data and ongoing work in local, regional, and national venues as well through publications.

Our entire organization (comprised of both the medical school and the hospital system) is committed to sustaining our current growth in addressing these issues in a variety of ways, thus enabling our clinicians to thrive and our learners to sustain their commitment to the practice of medicine.