

UAB Medicine Commitment Statement

UAB Medicine is a non-profit organization whose mission is “To improve the health and well-being of society, particularly the citizens of Alabama, by providing innovative health services of exceptional value that are patient- and family-centered, a superior environment for the education of health professionals, and support for research that advances medical science.” The focus on well-being began several years with an initial effort to reduce organizational contributions to stress in response to faculty reports of increasing levels of stress. These efforts expanded to include a regular assessment of burnout using an annual faculty engagement survey integrated with established assessments of burnout among residents and medical students. A task force focused on physician burnout offered a number of recommendations including the appointment of a Chief Wellness Officer that was done in January of 2018. Efforts are now underway to gain input from faculty, staff, and learners about which specific programs would best improve well-being at UAB Medicine.

The following principles are guiding the development of our well-being program,

1. We must demonstrate a continued commitment to examine and reduce organizational stressors.

We agree that a major threat to well-being are the demands imposed by the organization often times prompted by extra-organizational forces. Eliminating and mitigating those stressors that are, in fact, modifiable is critical to our efforts to improve well-being.

2. We will institute the use of validated measures to evaluate individual and collective well-being, burnout and engagement.

It is essential that we regularly measure these constructs among all populations at the institution and report these outcomes in order to be transparent with our community about our effectiveness.

3. We will develop adopt and/or develop evidence-based stress management and resilience training interventions.

Equipping ourselves with practices proven to improve well-being and resilience is imperative as stressors in healthcare will change and stress associated with change will continue.

4. We will create leadership development related specifically to well-being.

The literature, both within and outside leadership demonstrates the profound influence of leaders on follower well-being. Current and future leaders must be educated about how they can positively influence well-being.

5. We will commit to improve the collective well-being of the entire healthcare team and UAB Medicine.

We will focus a considerable amount of our attention to clinician well-being given the unique rise in burnout rates in these groups and on the immediate impact that clinician burnout has on patients. However, we believe that we should broaden approach to consider the collective well-being of the entire healthcare team given the prominence of teams in our current health care delivery.

6. We will begin and sustain the process of cultural transformation.

We must become more sophisticated about the application of models that predict job satisfaction in making our decisions. Further, we must extend our value of caring for others to include our colleagues and ourselves in addition to our patients.