Physician burnout is an epidemic — hurting doctors, costing American healthcare organizations billions, and putting patients at risk. The reason many physicians decided to practice medicine in the first place — to help patients — is getting lost among too many other tasks. Tasks that diminish the physician/patient relationship and, ultimately, the physician's wellbeing.

Unrealistic and inflexible shift scheduling, little time off, and insufficient work-life balance are all catalysts for physician burnout, yet, many health care organizations still rely on manual processes to schedule physician shifts. As a result, many physicians are faced with long and unpredictable work hours, leading to dangerous levels of fatigue. [Lightning Bolt Solutions](#) believes these burnout triggers can be prevented and clinician well-being improved through AI-optimized physician shift scheduling.

Committed to bringing balance to medicine, Lightning Bolt's mission is to help hospitals and health systems prevent and eradicate physician burnout. Lightning Bolt's AI-based physician shift scheduling technology, the same technology used by the NFL, MLB, and major airlines, optimizes physician shift schedules to meet projected patient demand and physician supply, without having to increase physician hours or add more physicians. Physicians can work fewer hours, take more vacations, practice at the top of their license, spend more time with patients, and achieve a safe, healthy, work-life balance.

Physician shift scheduling is incredibly complex — the number of possible shift schedules can be greater than the number of atoms in the universe — which is why manual scheduling is so ineffective. If all of the numerous variables aren't seamlessly aligned (hundreds of intricate scheduling rules and individual physician preferences and needs across a 24/7 work week) the impact on physicians can be detrimental.

Three best practices Lightning Bolt recommends to prevent physician burnout include:
- Schedule Physicians Fairly -- physician shift schedules should be fair and transparent. Rule-based scheduling technology can show exactly how call times and night shifts are distributed among physicians.
- Provide Physician Control -- Smart scheduling technology is designed for flexibility, allowing for easy shift trades and time-off request approvals.
- Analyze and Optimize -- Measure physician satisfaction regularly and evaluate the results in the context of scheduling decisions. Use data to uncover what matters most for the wellness of your own healthcare team.

Technological advancements, like AI and machine learning, are poised to impact today's most immediate health care challenges for the better. Yet, what often garners attention in the industry surrounds how AI will eventually power robot doctors or replace physicians with software. Lightning Bolt's promise to the medical community is to continue their practice of research to further explore how physician shift scheduling impacts burnout, thoughtful collaboration with their distinguished team of physician group leaders, and data science to provide the medical community a proven AI-solution to one of healthcare's biggest problems, one that requires action today—physician burnout.