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Breaking Burnout: Recognizing and Preventing Pharmacist Burnout

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Disclosure

I have no financial relationships to disclose.
Learning Objectives

Define “burnout”
Discuss factors that lead to burnout
Identify ways to prevent burnout
Test Questions

1. Which of the following is **not** a recommendation for dealing with burnout?
   a. Recognize
   b. Reverse
   c. Resilience
   d. Record

2. Which of the following is reason why pharmacists burnout?
   a. Shortages in resources (eg. labor, medications)
   b. Frequent intense interactions
   c. High demands + low support
   d. All of the above

3. Developing policies that allow for team decision making is a good way to mitigate burnout as an organization.
   a. True
   b. False
This Could Be You

- **Roles:**
  - Attends clinical rounds with medicine service
  - Sits on 2 committees – pain and P&T
  - Preceptor to pharmacy students 2 blocks/school year
  - Preparing for move to new hospital

- **Feelings:**
  - Stagnation, constant exhaustion, unable to concentrate, with a lack of enthusiasm and motivation
What is Burnout?

“Consequence of severe stress and high ideals experienced by people working in “helping” professions”

- Herbert Freudenberger (psychologist)

“Syndrome of depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and sense of low personal accomplishment that leads to decreased effectiveness at work”

# Stress vs. Burnout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRESS</th>
<th>BURNOUT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characterized by over-engagement</td>
<td>Characterized by dis-engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overactive emotions</td>
<td>Blunted emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produces urgency and hyperactivity</td>
<td>Produced helplessness and hopelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of energy</td>
<td>Loss of motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads to anxiety disorders</td>
<td>Leads to depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary damage is physical</td>
<td>Primary damage is emotional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/preventing-burnout.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/preventing-burnout.htm)
How is burnout diagnosed?

- No well-researched methods
- No clear definition
- Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), most commonly used questionnaire

MBI Survey
Addresses three general scales:

- Emotional exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Personal accomplishment

Higher Prevalence in Healthcare

- NIOSH estimates 26-40% of US workers suffer from stress-related job burnout
  - 40% of health care professionals more likely to have symptoms of burnout
  - 40% dissatisfied with work-life balance

- US work culture + changing health care environment may increase prevalence

- Healthcare professionals more prone to:
  - Substance misuse, depression, insomnia

http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/workorg/risks.html
Pharmacist Burnout Prevalence

2004 survey, n= 1,737 actively practicing pharmacists

- 67.2% of pharmacists satisfied with job
- > 68% experienced stress + role overload
- 48% experienced work-home conflict
- Levels of role ambiguity, role conflict, and job stress:
  - chain pharmacies and hospital settings >> independent settings

SURVEY TIME

Where are you?
- Right now?
- In your career?
You’re not busy. You just FEEL busy

Average hours on job, not only in US but around world, have actually been holding steady or decreasing in last 40 years
  ◦ = more time for leisure

So why do we feel busy?
  ◦ Our time is more fragmented
  ◦ Role overload: constantly switching from one role to the next ➔ creates feeling of time pressure
Why do we do this to ourselves?
Causes of Burnout

- Work-related
- Lifestyle
- Personality traits

Causes of Burnout

**Work-related**
- Little to no control over your work
- Lack of recognition or rewards
- Unclear or overly demanding job expectations
  - Chaotic or high-pressure environment
- Unchallenging or monotonous
Causes of Burnout (cont’d)

Lifestyle
- Working too much to prove one’s self
- Not enough time for relaxing or socializing
- Lack of close, supportive relationships
- Lack of sleep
Causes of Burnout (cont’d)

Personality traits

- Perfectionist tendencies
- Pessimistic view
- Reluctance to delegate
- High-achieving, Type A personality
S/Sx of Burnout

- Physical
- Emotional
- Behavioral
S/Sx of Burnout: Physical

- Frequent back pain, headaches, heartburn
- Lowered immunity
- Feeling tired and drained most of the time
- Δ appetite or sleep habits
S/Sx of Burnout: Emotional

- Loss of motivation
- Feeling alone
- Increasingly cynical or negative outlook
- Detachment or Alienation
- Feeling helpless, trapped, or defeated
- ↓ satisfaction and sense of accomplishment
S/Sx of Burnout: Behavioral

Behavioral

- Withdrawing from responsibilities, ↓ performance
- Procrastinating
- Using drugs, food, or alcohol to cope
- Taking out frustration on others
Burnout: Effects on Healthcare
As pharmacists, why do we burnout?

- Frequent intense interactions (e.g., patients, other healthcare professionals)
- High demands combined with low autonomy or support
- Exponential growth in IT
  - Major redesigns in care delivery systems
- Shortages in resources (labor, medications)
- Patient demographics

How Burnout Affects Health Care

- Burnout associated with multiple negative patient outcomes
  - ↓ patient satisfaction
  - ↓ patient safety
  - Inferior quality of care

- Strong consequences for both patients and learners/practitioners

Preventing Burnout
How do you currently deal with burnout?
Dealing with Burnout: The 3 R’s

- **Recognize**: Watch for the warning signs
- **Reverse**: Undo damage by managing stress and seeking support
- **Resilience**: Take care of your physical and emotional health

http://www.pharmacist.com/fight-burnout-three-rs
RECOGNIZE: Multitasking

- It’s really sequential tasking!
- We have “culturally generated ADD”
- Studies have shown, no two tasks done simultaneously can be done with 100% of one’s ability

Loh, KK. Higher media multi-tasking activity is associated with smaller gray-matter density in the anterior cingulate cortex. PLoS ONE 9(9):e106698
RECOGNIZE: Don’t Multitask!

- Distractions
  - Hamper our brain’s “spam filter”
- It slows you down and ↓ quality of work
- Fuels any existing difficulties with concentration, organization, and attention to detail
RECOGNIZE: What can I do?

- Write it all down
  - Brain dump
  - Writing decreases worry and organizes thoughts
  - To do lists

- Prioritize or fail
  - *Repeat after me – you cannot get it all done*
RECOGNIZE: What MORE can I do?

- Work like an athlete
- Single tasking, rather than multitasking
  - Peak hours and protect them
  - Focus on important things of the day - no interruptions, no emails, no calls
- Live in OHIO (only handle it once)
  - Make a decision
  - Reply, trash it, set a time to properly deal with it
  - Don’t revisit unimportant things over and over again
REVERSE

- Find a special project that’s meaningful to you
- Vent
- Treat yourself
- Look for an activity away from pharmacy
- Mentor
- Take time off to rejuvenate / leisure goals
- Meditation
REVERSE: Meditation

- Controlled longitudinal study
- Volunteers (n=16) enrolled in 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program
- Investigated pre & post changes in brain gray matter concentration

Holzel, BK, et al. Mindfulness practice leads to increases in regional brain gray matter density. Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging 2011;191:36-43.0
REVERSE: Meditation – It works!

Found measurable changes in posterior cingulate cortex, temporo-parietal junction, and cerebellum

- Learning and memory processes
- Emotion regulation
- Self-referential processing
- Perspective taking

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Mindful Meditation

- Awareness of perception
- Cognitive exercise – enhances quiet mind, teaches recognition, and control of intrusive thoughts
  - Acceptance of living in the present moment
- Focuses on 3 basic aspects: body, breath, and thought
Mindful Meditation: Body

- Choose quiet space + good and stable seat/cushion
- Hands rest on thighs, facing down
- Eyes are somewhat open and gaze rests gently on the floor in front of you ~4-6 ft away
  - Don’t stare. Let gaze rest where you've set it
- Front should be open and back strong
Mindful Meditation: Body
Mindful Meditation: Breath

- Concentrate on feeling and listening as you inhale and exhale through your nostrils
- Breathe in and out. In and out
- Deeply and slowly
Mindful Meditation: Thought

- Thoughts will naturally arise
- May have many thoughts, may even overlap
  - Not uncommon, esp. when 1st beginning
  - Observe thoughts – don’t get drawn in
  - Observe underlying feelings surrounding thoughts
- Keep mind focused completely in present
Mindful Meditation: Practice

- Sit for 10-15 minutes
- Practice being mindful of whatever happens
- *It is NOT about getting ourselves to stop thinking*
REVERSE: Better Time Management

EACH OF US MUST DO HIS PART TO SAVE ENERGY.

ZZZZZZ

I COULD BUILD A TINY HYDRO-GENERATOR FOR HIS DROOL.
REVERSE: Better Time Management

- Get enough sleep
- Know your prime hours and use them strategically
- Time meals and snacks for energy
- Set boundaries and learn how to say no
- Strategically use rituals that keep you positive and energized
- Schedule evening and weekend activities that recharge you
RESILIENCE: It can be learned

- Make connections
- Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems
- Maintain a positive and hopeful outlook
- Move toward your goals
- Become self-reflective
- Take care of yourself
How to Mitigate Burnout as an Organization

- Develop policies that enable team decision making (e.g., LEAN management, retreats)
- Recognize success
- Develop preceptors equipped to support new learner autonomy
- Create a supportive environment
- Instill meaning in the workplace
What’s one thing you might try to do to prevent burnout in next month?
Conclusion

- You are a role model!
- 1440 mins/day: accept that you can’t do it all, **focus on what’s important and do that well**
- Next time someone asks how you’re doing, don’t talk about how busy you are
  - Busy $\neq$ Important
- Recognize, Reverse, Resilience
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Questions?
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