

Results From Wisconsin Medical Society’s Physician Satisfaction Survey Are Cause for Concern

Donn Dexter, MD

The Wisconsin Medical Society (Society) represents over 12,800 Wisconsin physicians, with a mission to improve the health of the people of Wisconsin by supporting and strengthening physicians’ ability to practice high-quality patient care in a changing environment. Advocating for the profession is a key focus for our organization; and one of the most poignant areas is physician satisfaction. Overwhelmingly, our physicians are reporting high rates of professional burnout and dissatisfaction. Not only is this detrimental to individual physicians and their career and family, but also to our patients. If our healers themselves are

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not well, how can we expect them to treat and heal patients?

Research—which is referenced elsewhere in this issue—indicates that when physicians are burned out or dissatisfied, this translates directly to our patient’s health outcomes. Patients are less likely to follow through on treatment plans, and their quality of care suffers. Certain specialties within the field—specifically primary care—are experiencing higher rates of burnout and physicians are leaving their practices for roles in administration or switching careers entirely, adding on to the already existing physician workforce shortage.

Because of these rising concerns, the Society surveyed Wisconsin physicians to determine the source of their satisfaction—and dissatisfaction. The findings from this survey echo and align with findings from similar research nationwide. The study published in this issue

of *WMJ* outlines our survey results, while also presenting a review of the current and emerging literature on physician satisfaction. Also in this issue is a commentary by Christine Sinsky, MD, American Medical Association vice president of professional satisfaction, on the Society’s findings, as well as advocacy for the “Quadruple Aim”—which adds a fourth component of physician satisfaction to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement’s Triple Aim—to bring back the “joy in practice.”

The Society is committed to moving forward the advocacy and professional development recommendations outlined in the study. To that end, a physician satisfaction task force has been launched to begin our efforts. Please feel free to contact me directly with feedback or opportunities for dialogue. We were drawn to the profession of healing as a vocation; it is our duty now to also work to heal the profession.

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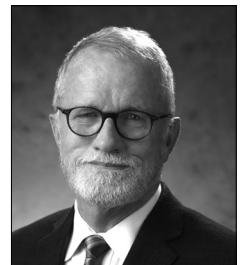
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