

Physician “Burnout” A Wisconsin Perspective

*Legislative Council Study Committee on Direct Primary Care
State Capitol
August 29, 2018*



Survey History

- 2008 and 2009
 - Society created and conducted a Physician Workforce study
 - Pre-widespread electronic health record (EHR) adoption
- 2014
 - Society created and conducted a Physician Satisfaction Study
 - Published Whitepaper on the findings
 - <https://www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org/professional/wmj/archives/volume-114-issue-4-august-2015/>



2017 Survey Methodology

- Funded by grant from Physicians Foundation
- Partnered with AMA to deploy mini Z survey
- Online survey distributed via email to physicians statewide, November 2017
- 1165 completions
- Wisconsin data results compared to 2016 national benchmark study by AMA
- Results compared to Society 2009 and 2014 survey findings, as available



“Mini Z” Burnout Survey

- Measures impact of “burnout” on physicians
- “Burnout” defined:
 - Cynical/Negative attitudes toward patients
 - Emotional Exhaustion
 - Feeling of decreased personal achievement
- National Benchmark: 1,000 physicians
- Wisconsin sample: 1,165 respondents
- 10 Questions: Job satisfaction, etc.



Survey Results

- Satisfaction levels of Wisconsin physicians are the lowest of any clinical group studied by AMA to date
- Over half describe themselves as burned out or having symptoms of burnout
- Only 13% have no symptoms of burnout



The Burnout Impact

Are you experiencing professional burnout?

Response	2014	2017	National Benchmark
Totally	6%	4%	1%
Significantly	17%	13%	6%
Moderately	24%	37%	22%
Somewhat	35%	33%	53%
	82%	87%	82%
Not at All	18%	13%	18%

The Workforce Impact

In the next 5 years, will you decrease your clinical hours or retire entirely from clinical work?

Response	2009 Retire	2009 <clinical hours	2014 Retire/ reduce	2017 Retire/ reduce
Yes	8%	21%	42%	45%
No	73%	56%	42%	32%
Uncertain	19%	23%	17%	18%



The Future of the Profession

Would you recommend a career as a physician to a prospective student?

Response	2014	2017
Yes	41%	39%
No	29%	29%
Uncertain	29%	27%



The Human Impact

Physicians: Far more likely to die by suicide than other professions. Between 300-400 physicians commit suicide annually – more than double the rate of the general population.

Medical Students: After accidents, most common cause of deaths among medical students is suicide.

Burnout: 25% increased chance of alcohol abuse/dependence; 200% increase: suicide.

Source: Dyrbe LN, TD Shanafelt, et al. Burnout Among Health Care Professionals. 2017. NAM Perspectives



Burnout Causes

Physicians experience job-related stress from a variety of sources, particularly lack of support for workloads:

- *Burdensome documentation requirements*
- *Systemic difficulties with using EHRs/EMRs*
- *Burdensome and arbitrary insurance and governmental policy requirements / restrictions*
- *A perceived lack of respect for physician skill and knowledge from management*
- *Prioritization of profits over patient care*



Burnout Causes

Wisconsin clinicians are extraordinarily frustrated by EHR/EMR demands and regulatory requirements leading many to seriously consider leaving the profession altogether. Clinicians express significant anger over current systemic practices which they feel undervalues their knowledge and training.

Top Stressors:

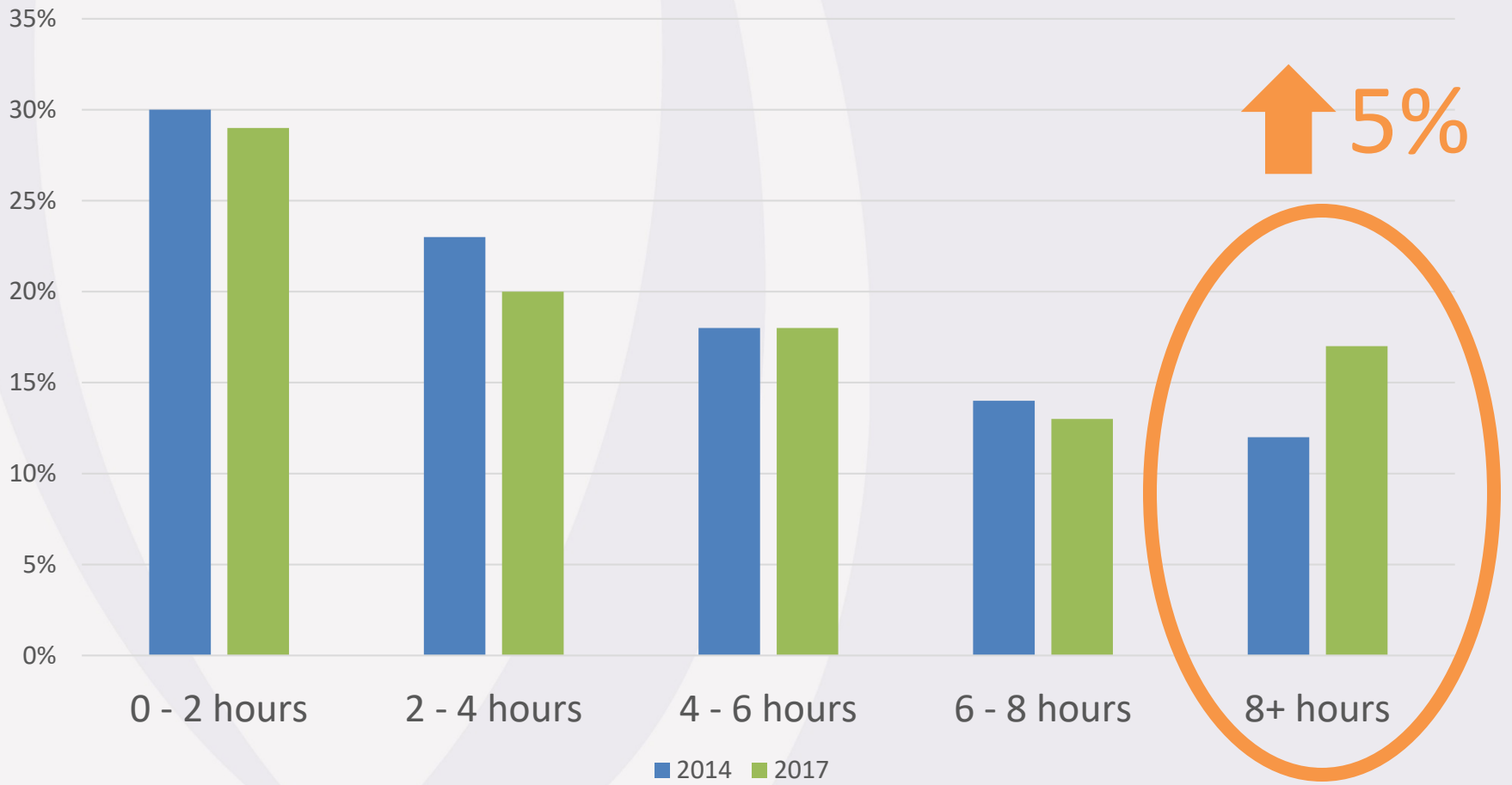
- **EMR / EHR documentation takes too long**
- **Difficulties with EMR / EHR IT systems**
- **Charting / documentation takes too long**
- **Insurance policy / requirements / restrictions**
- **Patient satisfaction surveys**
- **Management doesn't pay attention to physician concerns**
- **Poor compensation**
- **Would like more support staff**
- **Poorly set / unrealistic administrative goals**
- **Required to use EHR/EMR to meet billing goals**
- **Government policy / requirements / restrictions**

Suggestions from Clinicians:

- **Leave medicine altogether / retire early**
- **Assistance with documentation: scribes, administrative support staff should take responsibility**
- **Reduce total workload and work time, and increase quality of time with patients**
- **Management needs to pay more attention to physician concerns / feedback**
- **Provide adequate staffing levels and compensation**
- **Increase physician advocacy**



Time Spent on EHR Outside of Normal Work Week



EHRs' Impact on Physicians

Additional Research

- 49% of a physician's work day spent on EHR/documentation
- During the patient visit, physicians spend 37% of that time on EHR/documentation

<http://annals.org/aim/article-abstract/2546704/allocation-physician-time-ambulatory-practice-time-motion-study-4-specialties?doi=10.7326%2fM16-0961>

- 41% of physicians believe lobbying for a decrease in the number of regulations for medical documentation needs to be done

<https://catalyst.nejm.org/physician-burnout-endemic-healthcare-respond/>



Burnout Causes

Q: How has the consolidation of health care — with fewer independent practice physicians — affected doctor burnout?

A: “It’s a double-edged sword. A larger system has opportunities to think about the way work is distributed to provide more flexibility and to create systems of peer support. ... But by the same token, many health care organizations also restrict autonomy, and people have less flexibility than they might have had in a small group practice. ... They’re held accountable for productivity expectations and expected to overwork. We need to give people a voice. ... We need to help leaders not treat people as cogs or widgets.”



Tait Shanafelt, MD
Stanford Medicine

Source: Kaiser Health News interview, 08.03.18
<https://khn.org/news/stanfords-chief-wellness-officer-aims-to-prevent-physician-burnout/>

“Physicians Should Do Two Things”

- 1) Make Complex Medical Decisions
- 2) Establish and strengthen relationships with patients



Clyde “Bud” Chumbley, MD, MBA
Wisconsin Medical Society CEO

Moving Forward

October:

- Society white paper analyzing Mini Z sources of burnout; recommendations for improvement
- Society CEO Chumbley hosting CMO Summit

November:

- Hosting Physician Experience Summit (AMA)

Ongoing:

- Physician Experience Task Force



Moving Forward

“Burned-out physicians are more likely to [leave their jobs] or work part time, and that’s disruptive to the continuity of care for their patients.”

-- Tait Shanafelt, MD

