

# PHYSICIAN BURNOUT

## Selected resources.

Sue Reid, April 2017

Hello everyone,

A recent article by Dr B.Doolittle in the Annals of Family Medicine (2016;14:57) is dramatically titled **Burnout as Zombie Apocalypse.**

“The Walking Dead, one of the most popular television shows in recent history, uses the plot of a zombie apocalypse as a lens into exploring the human condition. Amidst a particularly dangerous moment, the show’s hero references the human struggle to survive by remarking, “We are the walking dead. This offhand comment sheds light upon physicians’ struggles in medicine, in particular the high prevalence of burnout and the challenge to cultivate compassion and meaning.

This is an important question for our age and our profession. **Are we the walking dead?”**

Dr Victor Dzau, President of the US National Academy of Medicine, has said “Clinician well-being is essential to the functioning of the health care workforce, to patient safety, and to the health of our nation. It’s time we made this issue a national priority.”

<https://nam.edu/perspectives-on-clinician-well-being-and-resilience/>

In Canada, Dr Gigi Osler, President-Elect of the CMA is committed to making the CMA a leader in physician health. Here is her platform. <http://www.drgigosler.com/>

Physician burnout, mental health and suicide are issues that must be urgently addressed individually, collectively and by our health care organizations.

**If you are in Alberta, Canada the Physician and Family Support Line is PFSP line is 1-877-767-4637**

More resources here <https://www.albertadoctors.org/services/pfsp/i-need-help-now>

Link to all provincial physician health programs and help lines here

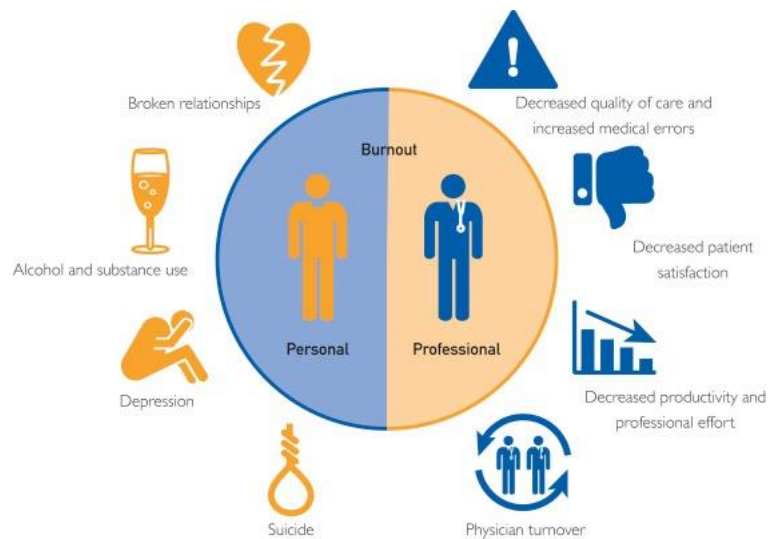
<https://www.cma.ca/En/Pages/provincial-physician-health-programs.aspx>

I have put together a number of resources in different formats to appeal to a range of readers. would work as a Personal Learning Project on Burnout for CME. More than CME credits I hope this encourages open communication and a sense that we are all in this together.

And together we can find solutions and support each other.

## OUTLINE

1. Burnout Basics
2. Recent medical literature, 2 important articles.
3. Resources from the Canadian Medical Association
4. Resources from the American Medical Association
5. The Doctor Paradox Podcasts
6. Physicians share experiences and solutions
7. Resident burnout
8. My experience
9. Conferences on Physician Health and Wellbeing 2017



Mayo Clin Proc 2017

### Burnout Basics

Burnout is characterized by:

Emotional exhaustion (e.g. feeling unable to care for others as 'nothing is left')

Depersonalization (e.g. compassion fatigue, cynical comments and impersonal or dehumanizing response toward patients or coworkers)

Perceived lack of personal accomplishment (e.g. negative self evaluation)

Dr Paddy Barrett is an interventional cardiologist who blogs at <http://thedoctorparadox.com/blog>

Go to website to download the free pdf **“The 10 things every physician needs to know about burnout.”**

1. **You are not alone**
2. Those who are burned out are often the last to know
3. What is burnout
4. There is a way to tackle it
5. Understand the difference between “ your job” and “ the practice of medicine”
6. Physician burnout happens for different reasons at different time
7. Burnout plays a role in physician suicide
8. Do more of what you like
9. Sleep
10. Master stressors that you can't eliminate

**Do you think of your medical career as a job or a calling?**

There is no right answer, but it is worth considering. Some research suggests that a calling is linked to a sense of meaning and may be protective. Patient connection is also important.

[http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org/article/S0025-6196\(16\)30770-4/abstract](http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org/article/S0025-6196(16)30770-4/abstract)

[http://practicinglexcellence.com/2017/01/12/connections-that-combat-burnout/?utm\\_campaign=shareaholic](http://practicinglexcellence.com/2017/01/12/connections-that-combat-burnout/?utm_campaign=shareaholic)

Dr Barrett makes a persuasive argument that viewing medicine as a calling may be more likely to produce burnout. I find this short video very helpful.

<http://practicinglexcellence.com/2017/01/31/a-vocation-or-a-job>



## Recent Articles

We will forward the pdfs of these articles by separate email to our subscribers.

### JAMA Internal Medicine 2017; 177(2) 195-205

Controlled Interventions to Reduce Burnout in Physician: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis  
Pangioti et al.

“Organizational changes – physicians workload and schedule, evaluation and supervision, and job control – were more effective in reducing burnout than interventions targeted to improving physicians’ personal coping strategies.” Accompanying Editorial.

This article has been widely discussed. Including at a Virtual Journal Club podcast from the Royal College.  
<http://keylimepodcast.libsyn.com/130-its-never-better-to-burnout-than-fade-away>

### Mayo Clin Proc Jan 2017; 92(1) 129-146

Executive Leadership and Physician Well-being: 9 Organizational Strategies to Promote Engagement and Reduce Burnout.

Shanafelt et al.

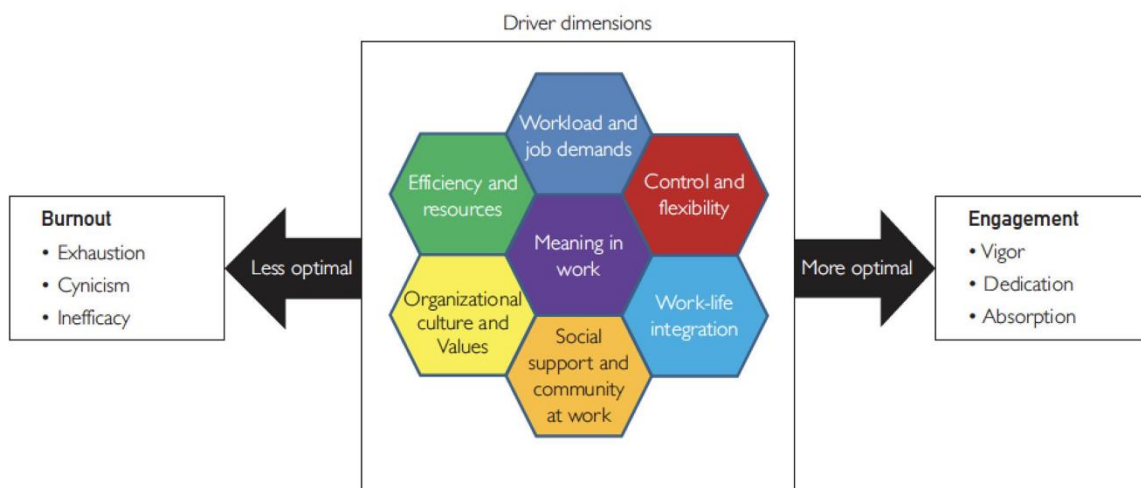


FIGURE 2. Key drivers of burnout and engagement in physicians.

## **From the Canadian Medical Association**

Hopefully we will see more updated resources from the CMA in future.

<https://www.cma.ca/En/Pages/what-makes-a-healthy-physician.aspx>

<https://www.cma.ca/En/Pages/building-resilient-medical-communities.aspx>

## **From the American Medical Association**

Lots of resources on their site <https://wire.ama-assn.org>

### **Incidence of burnout by specialty**

[https://wire.ama-assn.org/life-career/report-reveals-severity-burnout-specialty?utm\\_source](https://wire.ama-assn.org/life-career/report-reveals-severity-burnout-specialty?utm_source)

### **Straightforward practical discussion of burnout and steps to increase resilience.**

[https://www.stepsforward.org/Static/images/modules/12/downloadable/Improving\\_Physician\\_Resiliency.pdf](https://www.stepsforward.org/Static/images/modules/12/downloadable/Improving_Physician_Resiliency.pdf)

### **1 hour video lecture by Physician Coach on building resiliency.**

<https://www.acponline.org/meetings-courses/acp-courses-recordings/acp-leadership-academy/building-your-resilient-selfr>

### **Physician Family #3 focussing on work/life issues in active practice.**

<https://www.physicianfamilymedia.org/>

### **Various articles addressing strategies and solutions. Links are self explanatory re content.**

<https://wire.ama-assn.org/life-career/how-mayo-clinic-battling-physician-burnout>

<https://wire.ama-assn.org/life-career/4-physician-recommended-steps-work-and-home-life-balance>

<https://wire.ama-assn.org/life-career/avoiding-burnout-strategies-senior-physicians>

<https://wire.ama-assn.org/life-career/what-makes-doctors-great-also-drives-burnout-double-edged-sword>

<https://wire.ama-assn.org/education/ways-residents-have-found-conquer-burnout><https://wire.ama-assn.org/ama-news/burnout-busters-how-boost-satisfaction-personal-life-practice>

## Physician Experiences

Dr Michael Myers discusses physician suicide and resilience.

Scroll to page 90 to find his article in this issue of the World Medical Journal.

<http://www.michaelfmyers.com/files/wmj33.pdf>

Doctors share their experiences. Have to warn you these stories are heart breaking.

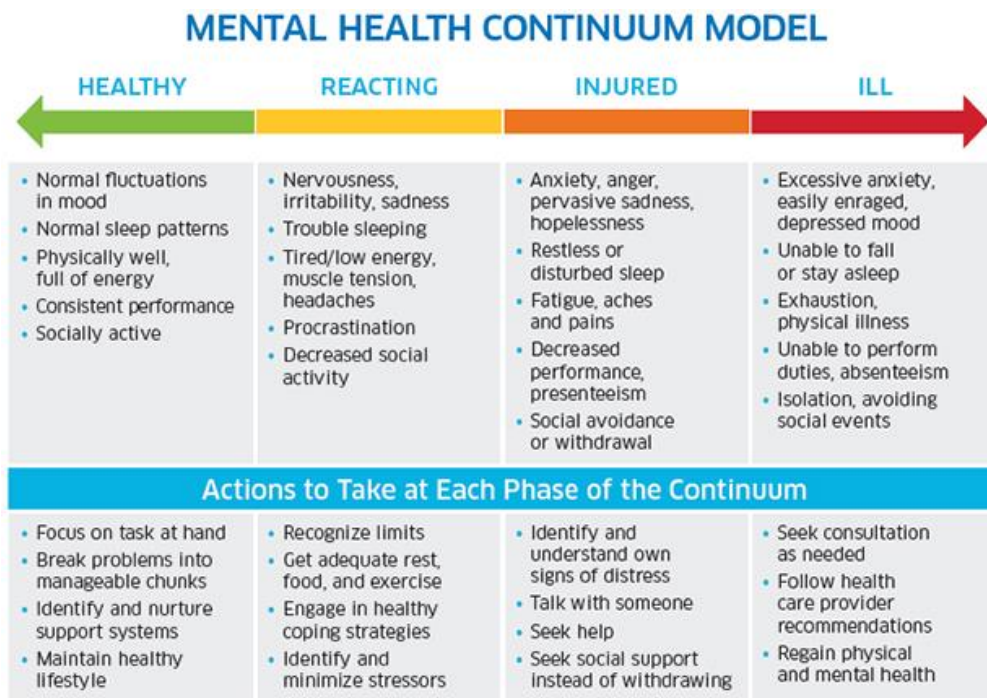
<http://news.nationalpost.com/features/wounded-healers>

Breaking the stigma: a physician's perspective on self care and recovery. NEJM 2017

[http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1615974?query=featured\\_home](http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1615974?query=featured_home)

In my 2<sup>nd</sup> year I became a bad person. Impact of a Canadian residency.

<http://medicine.utoronto.ca/news/uoftmed-alum-how-therapy-revealed-ills-residen>





## I Felt Alone but I Wasn't: Depression is Rampant Among Doctors in Training

Nearly **1 in 3** physicians in training is clinically depressed  
Mato, et. al., 2015

"Suicide is the threat that **lingers around us in training and beyond**; it calls attention to mental health disorders in residency that often **go ignored.**"


Rates of physician suicide are much higher than in the general population:  
AFSP, 2016

**2X**   
as high for men

**4X**   
as high for women

**A National Academy of Medicine Discussion Paper**

"Supporting physicians to be healthy will make it possible for them to be there physically and emotionally for us when we need them the most."  
- Dr. Elisabeth Poorman

 @theNAMedicine Read more: [nam.edu/Perspectives](http://nam.edu/Perspectives)

## Burnout in Residency

I believe that it is useful for us to remind ourselves that we are all regular people trying to get through our day. Resident, student or staff. I am not a fan of labels or “othering” as I saw it called recently.

Residency is stressful. Physically, mentally, emotionally. Those 5 years often coincide with many other major life events. Moving away from friends and family, exploring one’s sexual identity, experiencing significant relationships, marriage, pregnancy, trying to get pregnant, parenting, losing a parent. All while trying to study and demonstrate competency while sleep deprived and feeling constantly scrutinized and judged. Or was that just my residency .....

If you are a resident, you are a physician and any of the resources here are relevant to you. Social connections within your resident group and with family, friends and significant others outside work are vital. Make use of your mentor. If your official mentor isn’t comfortable with the stress and emotion side of things, find an additional unofficial mentor for that. There is also your Program Director and Dr Erica Dance at the Learner Advocacy and Wellness Office. And me as a last resort!

If you are experiencing burnout please get help.

You are not alone and you don’t need to battle this alone.

## **The Doctor Paradox hosted by Dr Barrett.**

Series of 45 min podcasts and linked resources about “Rediscovering passion in healthcare.”

<http://thedoctorparadox.com/blog>

“The Doctor Paradox is about addressing why despite having incredibly meaningful jobs, doctors are increasingly unhappy in their work.

Quite simply, it is a tragedy that we have allowed this to happen. That intensely passionate, dynamic and altruistic individuals have lost their core passions and found themselves adrift in the world of healthcare is unacceptable.” Dr Paddy Barrett

My top 6 selections below. Highly recommended. Listen in the car, on the treadmill, walking the dog etc.

### **The Inevitability of burnout**

<http://thedoctorparadox.com/anthonymontgomery/>

### **The biology of physician mental health**

<http://thedoctorparadox.com/srijansen/>

### **Are physician burnout and depression the same?**

<http://thedoctorparadox.com/douglasmata/>

### **Inside the mind of burnout**

<http://thedoctorparadox.com/joshcohen/>

### **Physician suicide and maintaining balance**

<http://thedoctorparadox.com/adamkaplin/>

### **Physician courage and vulnerability**

<http://thedoctorparadox.com/brenebrown/>



## UPCOMING CONFERENCES for 2017



5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Conference  
ON **PHYSICIAN HEALTH**

SAVE THE DATE  
September 7–9 2017  
Ottawa Westin Hotel  
Ottawa, Ontario

OMA  
PHYSICIAN HEALTH PROGRAM

ASSOCIATION  
MÉDICALE  
CANADIENNE

CANADIAN  
MEDICAL  
ASSOCIATION

1867-2017  
**150**

**Burning brightly, not out: engaging and energizing physicians.**

<https://www.cma.ca/En/Pages/ccph.aspx>

## **2017 American Conference on Physician Health: Creating an Organizational Foundation to Achieve Joy in Medicine**

**October 12 – 13. Palace Hotel - San Francisco, CA**



<https://med.stanford.edu/cme/courses/2017/wellmd17.html>

Hope something here was useful or interesting or food for thought. And CME credits!

Feedback always welcome.

Thank you for reading,

Sue

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