

Healthcare Provider Burnout: A Rapid Scoping Review

Summary

This review was conducted in 2021, after over a year into the COVID-19 pandemic. It completes necessary research related to the chronic, and worsening, burnout seen in direct patient care providers. Researchers looked to determine what the current strategies were for assessing and dealing with burnout. The studies reviewed determined that a useful strategy to create a positive culture in the workplace was removing as much of the hierarchy as possible to allow for collaboration between various levels of staff.

Implications

Moving forward, this research will be a steppingstone to allow changes within the work environment to reduce the burnout levels currently faced by direct patient care providers. The most useful tool to begin this process is to decrease the hierarchy of direct care workers and management to increase the ability for concerns to be heard.

Reference: Godfrey CM, Rodgers J, Pare GC, Alsius A, Ross-White A, Belbin S, Sears K. (2021). Healthcare Provider Burnout: A Rapid Scoping Review. SPOR Evidence Alliance.

Patient partner acknowledgement: Janet Gunderson

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What is the current situation?

- Direct patient care providers have been pushed to extremes in their working conditions during COVID-19, leading to an increase in burnout.
- With chronic burnout levels at an all-time high, research focusing on the current practices used by healthcare system leaders is needed to identify burnout and intervene with staff at the bedside.

What is the objective?

- This review looked at the current methods of assessing and managing burnout in direct patient care providers who were providing direct patient care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

How was the review conducted?

- The review was conducted using multiple databases to gain information related to the topic. This was done by two independent reviewers, where data for the study was then presented using tables and diagrams. A summary of the findings was also included for full clarification.

What did the review find?

- When multiple workplace challenges and stressors are present for direct patient care providers, burnout can be present, which can result in feelings of energy depletion and exhaustion, increased mental distance from one's job and reduced professional productivity.
- This review highlighted that maintaining strong communication channels within the healthcare system could go a long way to reduce the stress level and burnout experienced by direct care providers.
- Several approaches were suggested to increase the strength of communication, including flattening the managerial hierarchy, asking for and listening to concerns, and finally responding to raised concerns, to facilitate in creating a positive culture.
- An area for future research includes looking at the prevention of burnout.