

Mayo Clinic: 9 Ways to Prevent Doctor Burnout



Burnout is one of the most urgent problems facing healthcare management with staff under pressure from a punishing workload that can lead to depression, substance abuse, poor performance and even suicide.

[Mayo Clinic has released a paper](#) suggesting nine economical strategies it has implemented to tackle this critical problem.

“The reality is that an engaged physician workforce is requisite to achieving institutional objectives, that small investments can have a large impact, and that many effective interventions are cost neutral,” say John H. Noseworthy, M.D., president and CEO of Mayo Clinic, and Tait D. Shanafelt, director of the programme on physician well-being at the organisation.

The Mayo Clinic suggests the following:

Admit there is a problem and then assess it:

Mayo Clinic routinely provides opportunities for physicians to talk about their problems with senior management and measures work-life integration each year.

Identify physician leaders:

Seek out healthcare leaders with leadership qualities who can engage with their colleagues and develop those skills.

Develop interventions to prevent burnout:

Mayo Clinic has identified units that had higher rates of burnout than the national average and discussed problems with staff. This led to doctors feeling empowered to work with leaders rather than feeling stuck in a broken system.

See Also: [Expert Tips on How to Train Doctor Leaders](#)

Encourage peer support:

Mayo has encouraged social interaction amongst doctors where they can discuss work difficulties and not feel so isolated. They have a meeting room stocked with refreshments and arrange regular meals at a local restaurant.

Offer incentives:

Financial rewards can backfire if they lead to more burnout so Mayo Clinic suggests compensation models or rewards that offer doctors the chance to pursue work most meaningful to them with more flexibility.

Make sure the hospital's culture will achieve its overall mission:

An all-staff survey introduced in 2011 has been used to this day to identify how well Mayo meets its values. It is an effective starting point for Mayo to pinpoint areas that need improvement and is also used in the recruitment process.

Encourage work-life balance:

With many doctors working 60 hours a week or more, introducing flexible schedules so they have the option to maintain a personal life is very important for work-life balance.

Give doctors resources for self-care:

[Support self-care](#) through encouraging work-life integration, fitness, sleep, diet, relationships and hobbies.

Support evidence-based strategies that promote physician engagement:

Follow a burnout benchmark in order to monitor and manage the phenomenon.

Source: [Mayo Clinic](#)

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