

RESOLUTION

Subject: Physicians' Moral Injury
Submitted by: Greater Louisville Medical Society
Referred to: Reference Committee

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization recognizes burnout as a syndrome with three components. The three components of burnout are: emotional exhaustion, replacement of usual empathy with cynicism, negativity, and feeling emotionally numb, and having a low sense of professional effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, burnout is a measurement of chronic distress associated with one's job and 76% of health care workers reported burnout in September 2020; and

WHEREAS, physicians are experiencing burnout at an alarming rate. The top five work settings where physicians are experiencing burnout include large integrated systems; outpatient clinics; office based multispecialty group practice; non-hospital academic settings; and hospitals. Women physicians are experiencing burnout more than their male counterparts; and moral injury is being recognized as a top cause of physician burnout. Moral injury describes the challenge of simultaneously knowing what care patients need but being unable to provide it due to a variety of constraints that are beyond a physician's control. Fifty-eight percent of physicians identify too many bureaucratic tasks as a cause for moral injury. Thirty-seven percent see too many hours spent at work and a lack of response from other staff as a cause of moral injury. Thirty-two percent have moral injury from insufficient compensation and 28% have moral injury from a feeling of lack of control/autonomy; and

WHEREAS, that the American Medical Association (AMA) is leading a movement to fight the system level drivers of physician burnout; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that KMA promote technological solutions (such as streamlined EMRs), reduce administrative burdens (such as telemedicine to improve workflow, less clerical work, prior authorizations), support modified work schedules (flexible work schedules and time banking, residency work hour restrictions) and encourage self-care (supporting mental health services, instituting medical school self-care curriculum) to help stop moral injury amongst physicians; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA continue to study moral injury and partner with key stakeholders and the General Assembly to implement practices that will decrease the rate of physicians' moral injury in the Commonwealth.

References:

- 1 National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM) Foundation. <https://nihcm.org> Physician Burnout and Moral Injury: The Hidden Health Care Crisis