

Topic Guide

Strategies to Prevent Burnout among Postgraduate Medical Trainees and Program Directors in a Medical Center in Lebanon: An Interview Based Study

For Postgraduate Medical Trainees: Please skip any question that the participant refuses to answer.

Demographic information: Gender and age (be flexible to what the trainee would like to mention).

1. What do you know about burnout?
2. What do you do to deal with stress?
3. How did you learn about burnout?
4. If you ever feel burnout, will you report it?
5. How does burnout develop over time?
6. How can we best help burned-out individuals?
7. Any advice to give to new residents to help prevent burnout?
8. How do you prevent burnout in a demanding role?
9. Does your work offer any resources to help you prevent burnout?
10. Do you think burnout increased during uncertain times in Lebanon such as COVID-19 pandemic, economic unrest, port explosion, conflict in neighboring countries? How?
11. Please list top reasons for burnout from work according to you (in case you feel burnout).
 - a. Other residents/fellows (not necessarily all)
 - b. Faculty members (not necessarily all)
 - c. Patients
 - d. Salary
12. Which ways are useful to reduce the symptoms of burnout during uncertain times? Give these options after they answer: What about?
 - a. Implementing free wellness programs (yoga, exercises, swimming, hiking, etc.).
 - b. Receiving moral support by program director on regular basis during meetings.
 - c. Social gatherings/outings in presence of program director and/or chairperson.
 - d. Reducing working hours (even less than the ACGME 80 duty hours per week rule).
 - e. Offering more annual leaves when needed.
13. How do you maintain work-life balance?
14. Present our two study results and get the feedback of trainees on the findings: 188 trainees. Females 113 (60.1%) and males 75 (39.9%). PGY1 52 (27.7%), PGY2 26 (13.8%), PGY3 42 (22.3%), PGY4 35 (18.6%), PGY5 17 (9.0%), PGY6 14 (7.4%), PGY7 2 (1.1%). Date: February 2022.
 - a. The Oldenburg Burnout Inventory. The prevalence rates of high burnout are 37.2% for disengagement and 51.1% for exhaustion.
 - b. The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory. The prevalence rates are 68.6% for personal burnout, 63.3% for work-related burnout, and 35.1% for patient-related burnout.
15. How would you define leadership? What are the characteristics of a good leader?
16. Is there anything that you would like to add?

For Program Directors:

1. Kindly introduce yourself (year of birth, specialty, and year in profession).
2. How does burnout develop over time?
3. What are the symptoms of burnout?
4. What are the precursors of burnout?
5. What are the barriers to overcome burnout?
6. What processes or systems do you have in place to ensure fair distribution of work across your team members?
7. Can you share about a time when you noticed a team member showing signs of burnout? How did you address it?
8. How would you proactively address burnout if you noticed it increasing amongst your team?
9. What training or resources have you sought to enhance your abilities in preventing and addressing staff burnout?
10. What do you see as your role and responsibility when it comes to mitigating burnout risk factors?
11. What training resources are available focused on stress management, resilience, or preventing burnout?
12. What proactive steps does the organization take at leadership level to try to minimize burnout risks?
13. How would you describe the work culture here in terms of supportiveness?
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 - a. The Oldenburg Burnout Inventory. Results: The total number of valid responses are 188. The prevalence rates of high burnout are 37.2% for disengagement and 51.1% for exhaustion.
 - b. The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory. The prevalence rates are 68.6% for personal burnout, 63.3% for work-related burnout, and 35.1% for patient-related burnout.
15. Check if there is anything else that the interviewees feel has been missing and anything that they did not get a chance to discuss fully.

References:

1. Yacoubian, A., Demerouti, E., Degheili, J. A., & El Hajj, A. (2023). A survey-based study about burnout among postgraduate medical trainees: implications for leaders in healthcare management. *Frontiers in public health*, 11, 1209191.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1209191>.
2. Yacoubian, A., Degheili, J. A., Der-Boghossian, A., Najdi, J., Andraos, R., & Zeineldine, S. (2023). Burnout among postgraduate medical trainees in Lebanon: Potential strategies to promote wellbeing. *Frontiers in public health*, 10, 1045300.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.1045300>.