



ISSUE

Promote well-being in Minnesota's healthcare workforce

MMA Position

The MMA supports legislative action to address healthcare worker burnout and improve well-being to ensure Minnesota has a healthcare workforce that can support Minnesotans, now and in the future.

Background

In the U.S., up to 54% of nurses and physicians, 60% of medical students and residents, and 61% to 75% of pharmacists, have developed symptoms of burnout – high emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, or a low sense of personal accomplishment from work (*Jones et al.*, 2017, *NASEM*, 2018; *Patel, et al.*, 2021). Legislation is needed to address burnout from multiple angles.

Health Condition on Credentialing Applications

Credentialing applications must not contain questions that inquire about an applicant's past health conditions. These questions have no impact on a person's ability to practice and are intrusive and discourage physicians from seeking treatment. The inclusion of questions on credentialing applications should be limited only to current untreated conditions that could impact an applicant's ability to practice medicine.

SafeHaven Legislation

Legislative changes are needed to create a "safe haven" through which physicians can seek and obtain confidential care for career fatigue and wellness in a way that will not impact their careers. The SafeHaven program provides care for career fatigue and work/life balance. Legislation is needed to create confidentiality protections for physicians participating in such programs.

Awareness and Education Campaign to Normalize Seeking Support

A one-time investment in a statewide campaign is needed to educate the healthcare workforce about the importance of clinician well-being, reduce the stigma of mental health treatment, promote mental health support services for clinicians, and foster a culture of safety.

Minnesota Physician Well-Being Recognition Program

System and clinic leaders have a responsibility and opportunity to address system issues at the root of workplace stress and burnout. A recognition program is needed to publicly recognize Minnesota healthcare institutions that have committed to creating and sustaining positive work environments that prevent burnout, foster professional well-being, and support quality care.

Talking Points

- Burnout is a longstanding issue and fundamental barrier to professional well-being. Legislative action to address the factors contributing to burnout is needed to foster professional well-being and ensure a thriving healthcare workforce.
- Credentialing application questions about past medical conditions are not relevant to a physician's current ability to practice and discourage physicians from receiving needed care.
- Physicians and other healthcare professionals who seek professional support to address career fatigue, burnout and behavioral health concerns should have confidentiality and civil immunity protections to encourage them to get the help they need.
- Physicians and other healthcare providers often do not pursue needed care because of stigma. The stigma associated with seeking services must be eliminated to encourage treatment.
- Systems and clinics that address physician well-being must be recognized to ensure that a culture of well-being is integrated into program operations.