



eEDUCATE

An electronic brief for clinical faculty of The Commonwealth Medical College

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Burnout and Stress in Medical School

Are you burned out? Burnout is defined as the state of being incapable of producing a desired effect or result and is characterized by decreased productivity and job satisfaction. Burnout is a psychological diagnosis that is characterized by three major components: 1) depersonalization 2) emotional exhaustion and 3) professional inefficacy.

Burnout is endemic in medical education and is frequently unrecognized. Up to 50 percent of all medical students report symptoms of burnout at some point during their medical school experience and up to 10 percent of these students contemplate suicide. Causes of burnout include lack of control, unclear performance expectations, dysfunctional workplace or learning environment dynamics, extremes of activity/work, lack of social support and work-life imbalance. While structured social interactions and events can help minimize the occurrence of burnout, effective time management, routine exercise and learning how to manage stress are critically important.

"While we all realize that medical school is a high-stress experience, we do not always appreciate the impact major life events can also have on the health and well-being of our students," reports Dr. William Lobst, vice president for academic and clinical affairs and vice dean. The University of Birmingham has developed the Stressor Scale provided on page two to highlight the impact such life events can have on the health of a student. A score of 50 points using this scale predicts up to a 50 percent risk that a "major illness" could occur within the next six months.

As our students enter the middle of the academic year, we would all be well served to look for evidence of burnout and for the impact major life events such as those profiled in the Birmingham Scale can have on the health and well-being of our students.



William Lobst, MD
vp for academic
and clinical affairs
and vice dean

Do You Know You Are At Risk?

Burnout---Physicians vs. General Population

Physicians

Burnout Symptoms

46%

Dissatisfaction Work/Life Balance

40%

60 Hour Work Week

38%

General Population

Burnout Symptoms

28%

Dissatisfaction Work/Life Balance

23%

60 Hour Work Week

10%

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Spring Regional Meetings (CME)

West

6 PM, May 18th, DiSalvo's Restaurant

Guthrie

6 PM, May 19th, Patterson Building

South

6 PM, May 24th, The Woodlands

North

6 PM, May 26th, TCMC

Spring Keystone Symposium (CME)

Opiate Addiction

April 2, 2016

8 AM to 12:30 PM

TCMC Auditorium

Child Abuse:

a medical/legal CME event

April 28, 2016

5-9 PM

TCMC Auditorium

Stress is Inevitable..... Burnout is Preventable.

If you suspect your student is suffering or at risk for burnout or the adverse effects of a major life stressor, please contact Student Affairs at 570-504-9635 to arrange for the appropriate evaluation.

For more information on dealing with stress and burnout visit:

American Medical Association

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/ama-wire/post/student-sos-7-ways-avoid-distress-medical-school>

Stanford Medicine Well MD

<http://wellmd.stanford.edu/healthy/stress.html>

HelpGuide.org

<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/preventing-burnout.htm>

Stressor Scale University of Birmingham

Death of a parent	50
Death of a close relative	40
Death of a close friend	30
Serious health problem	25
Surgery	25
Pregnancy	25
Engagement	25
Marriage	25
Legal trouble	22
Relationship break up	19
Not part of the crowd	16
Lack of recognition	9
Feeling of frustration	6