



Research Update



AAP studies examine prevalence of burnout, strategies to reduce occurrence

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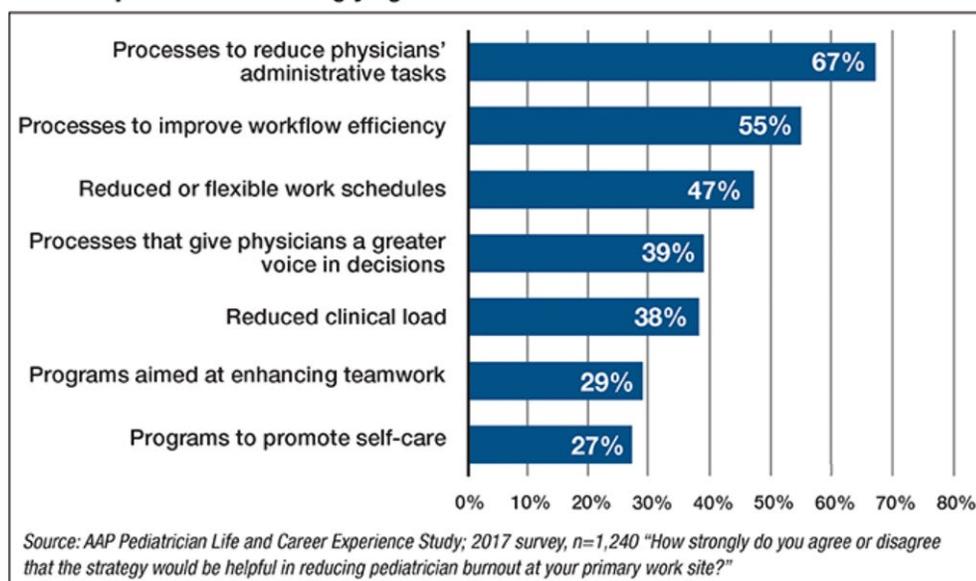
In a national survey, more than 80% of early and mid-career pediatricians reported they were satisfied with their career and would choose their specialty again. At the same time, as many as half reported they were “burned out.”

What accounts for this seeming contradiction? What strategies do pediatricians think might help reduce burnout?

A recent article using data from the AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study (PLACES) confirms what might be expected—how you define burnout and how it is measured make a substantial difference in levels of burnout found in surveys (Byrne BJ, et al. *J Pediatr*. <https://bit.ly/3cBxGU7>).

In the study, three commonly used domains of burnout were examined: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low personal accomplishment. The study also looked at ways burnout can be defined and calculated—comparing high scores in one domain or high scores in all three domains. When burnout is defined as high emotional exhaustion or high depersonalization alone, up to 50% are categorized as burned out. When burnout is defined as high emotional exhaustion, high depersonalization and low personal accomplishment, very few are categorized as burned out (5% or less).

Methods pediatricians strongly agree would reduce burnout



Other data from PLACES participants, provided outside of this paper, offer insight into what pediatricians believe is most important to reduce burnout (see chart). Over two-thirds strongly agreed that reducing physicians' administrative tasks would help reduce burnout. Fewer (27%) reported that programs to promote self-care would be helpful.

PLACES tracks pediatricians' career and life choices and experiences across their careers. This study of burnout examined data collected in 2017 from 1,279 pediatricians who graduated residency in 2009-'11 and 2002-'04 and practice primary, hospital or subspecialty care.

RESOURCES

- For more information on the AAP Pediatrician Life and Career Experience Study, visit <https://www.aap.org/places> or contact Liz Gottschlich at 630-626-6627 or lgottschlich@aap.org.
- The health and wellness of pediatric health care providers is an AAP strategic priority. For information, contact Monique Phillips at 630-626-6639 or mphillips@aap.org or visit <https://bit.ly/3TKd10S> and <https://bit.ly/2KIKWkt>.
- For resources on electronic documentation burden, see the AAP policy statement *Electronic Documentation in Pediatrics: The Rationale and Functionality Requirements*, <https://bit.ly/38GStDE>, and AMIA 25x5: Reducing Documentation Burden and Optimizing the Electronic Health Record (EHR), <https://amia.org/about-amia/amia-25x5>.