

## **DESPITE GREATER AWARENESS OF PHYSICIAN BURNOUT, DEPRESSION, AND SUICIDE, MEDSCAPE 2019 NATIONAL REPORT FINDS LITTLE PROGRESS**

### **PHYSICIANS WORKING LONGER HOURS AND FEMALE PHYSICIANS EXPERIENCE HIGHER BURNOUT LEVELS**

**NEW YORK, JANUARY 16, 2019** – Burnout and depression rates among U.S. physicians failed to improve in 2019, despite growing efforts by healthcare organizations, hospitals, and academic centers to address the issue through wellness programs and other interventions.

Nearly 44% of U.S. physicians reported feeling burned out, with female physicians 28% more likely to experience burnout than male physicians, according to the results of the 2019 Medscape National Physician Burnout, Depression & Suicide Report. The report found a correlation between the number of hours worked per week and the percentage of physicians experiencing burnout: From 48% to 57% working more than 50 hours per week reported burnout, versus about one-third of those working between 31 and 40 hours. More than 15,000 physicians across 29 specialties responded to the survey.

Click Here to View Report: <https://www.medscape.com/2019-lifestyle-burnout>

Urologists, neurologists, and physical medicine and rehabilitation specialists reported the highest rates of burnout this year, at 54%, 53%, and 52%, respectively. Pathologists, nephrologists, and public health specialists experienced the lowest levels. Nearly 60% of physicians responding said that the bureaucratic demands of medical practice, such as charting and paperwork, are the main reasons for burnout, followed by long hours (34%).

#### **Physicians Not Likely to Seek Help**

Depression and thoughts of suicide were reported by 15% of physicians. (Regarding those reporting depression, that number is more than double that of the general population.)<sup>1</sup> Fourteen percent of physicians responding said they have thought of suicide. (1% said they have attempted suicide, and 6% preferred not to answer.) The report found that 43% of these physicians spoke to no one about their suicidal thoughts, and only one-third discussed them with a therapist. The equivalent of one doctor per day commits suicide each year.<sup>2</sup>

About half of physicians said their problems with burnout or depression have not become bad enough to seek help, while others cited potential career-damaging stigma should they seek mental health care, or a belief that the problem lies with the medical system, not them.

“While bringing awareness of burnout and depression among physicians is positive and necessary to help rectify the situation, the Medscape Report on Burnout, Depression and Suicide shows that physicians are still struggling,” said Leslie Kane, MA, senior director, Medscape Business of Medicine. “In addition to the ongoing issue of bureaucratic demands, we saw in this year’s report a correlation between long hours and burnout. Regardless of compensation, a lack of work/life balance has an impact. Physicians are making changes to their work life when and if they can, but much remains to be done.”

1. American Psychiatric Association. "What Is Depression?" [Source](#) accessed October 22, 2018.
2. Anderson P. "Doctors' Suicide Rate Highest of Any Profession." WebMD. May 18, 2018. [Source](#) accessed November 1, 2018.

### **Medscape Survey Methods**

The 2019 Medscape National Physician Burnout, Depression & Suicide Report was completed by 15,069 physicians representing more than 29 specialty areas, including Medscape members and nonmembers. Respondents were invited to respond to the online survey. The margin of error for the survey was +/- 0.80% at a 95% confidence level.

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