Patient Perceived Burnout Card Study Aggregated Report

SNOCAP
State Network of Colorado Ambulatory Practices & Partners

This study aims to investigate the patient's perception of healthcare staff burnout within the primary care setting and address self-reported levels of burnout among said staff. The patient perception of burnout has very little research associated with it, so this card study will serve as a valuable foundation for further research concerning burnout in the primary care setting from the perspective of those being treated.

What is burnout?

Burnout is the **breakdown of the psychological defenses** due to **intense job-related stress.**

The definition of burnout used on the patient survey was "**physical or mental collapse caused by overwork or stress**"

Effects of burnout include:

- Poor job performance
- Errors
- Lack of interest

Rationale

There are **HIGH** levels of burnout present within healthcare.

There are **FEW** articles on burnout from a patient perspective.

#1

Burnout was **PRIORITY TOPIC** in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

SNOCAP was tasked by CalAnet Patient Partners Research Council to complete a card study on the topic.

Methods

There were **TWO** surveys used in this study

PATIENTS were surveyed during their regularly-scheduled office visit using a "card study" method. Each practice distributed surveys over a 2-3 day study period.

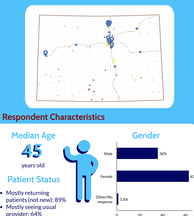
CLINICIANS and **STAFF** were surveyed regarding their own perceived burnout using light adaptation to the single-item burnout measure used in the Physician Work Life Study.

Patient Surveys

384 Combined patient survey responses

8 Practices were surveyed across Colorado

23-79 Survey responses per practice



Respondent Characteristics

Median Age

45 years old

Patient Status

- Mostly returning patients (not new): 89%
- Mostly seeing usual provider: 64%

Gender

Staff Surveys

All practice staff were asked to fill out the survey including providers, nursing staff, MAs, administrative staff, etc.

259 Combined staff survey responses

7 Practice sites surveyed*

*3 practice sites share staff, so we only surveyed this practice once

Results

Do you sense the staff (*MAs, nursing, behavioral health, front desk, lab tech*) in this practice are burned out or burning out? (n=384)

Patients in practices where fewer providers/staff reported burnout were more likely to respond 'No' when asked if they sensed that STAFF were burned out or burning out.

Results modeled on 'No' responses identified a statistically significant association (p=0.015) between staff burnout at an aggregated practice level and patient perception of doctor burnout, controlling for practice.

Do you sense the staff (*MAs, nursing, behavioral health, front desk, lab tech*) in this practice are burned out or burning out? (n=384)

Patients in practices where fewer providers/staff reported burnout were more likely to respond 'No' when asked if they sensed that the DOCTOR was burned out or burning out.

Results modeled on 'No' responses identified a statistically significant association (p<0.0001) between provider/staff burnout at an aggregated practice level and patient perception of doctor burnout, adjusting for practice.

Do you sense the staff (*MAs, nursing, behavioral health, front desk, lab tech*) in this practice are burned out or burning out? (n=384)

A 5-point scale was used to determine staff/doctor's self-perceived burnout, but this burnout measure is often dichotomized as ≤2 (no symptoms of burnout) vs. ≥3 (1 or more symptoms of burnout)

52.5% were experiencing **1** or more symptoms of burnout

Summarizing Research Questions

Research Question 1

Do patient perceptions agree with self-reported burnout in staff and clinicians?

YES **STAFF**

Patients in practices where fewer staff reported burnout were more likely to respond 'No' when asked if they sensed that staff were burned out or burning out. (p=0.015)

YES **DOCTOR**

Patients in practices where fewer staff reported burnout were more likely to respond 'No' when asked if they sensed that the doctor was burned out or burning out. (p=0.001)

Research Question 2

Are new patients more likely to accurately perceive that providers/staff are experiencing burnout?

STAFF

Being a new patient was not significantly associated with perception of burnout in staff members after adjusting for practice-level burnout and clustering of patients within practice. (p-value = 0.1603)

DOCTOR

Being a new patient was not significantly associated with perception of burnout in doctors after adjusting for practice-level burnout and clustering of patients within practice. (p-value = 0.1603)

Research Question 3

If patients are seeing their usual provider are they more likely to accurately perceive that their provider is experiencing burnout?

Usual_provider was NOT significantly associated with perception of staff burnout after adjusting for practice-level burnout and clustering of patients within practice (p-value = 0.6544).

Patients who do not see their usual doctor are more likely to report 'Don't Know' or 'No' to doctor burnout (p=0.020) than patients who see their usual doctor after adjusting for practice-level burnout and clustering of patients within practice (p-value =0.02)*.

*This finding may be related to our inclusion of 'Don't Know' responses with 'No' responses as perceiving burnout. 'Don't Know' may mean something different in patients not seeing their usual provider

Conclusions

Research Question 1
Staff – Significant
Doctor – Significant

Research Question 2
Staff – Not Significant
Doctor – Not Significant

Research Question 3
Staff – Not Significant
Doctor – Significant

Limitations

- We hoped to start these surveys pre-COVID, but timing did not allow.
- We did not categorize by provider/staff, as we wanted this to be as anonymous as possible.
- Sample size was small in some practices.
- 'Don't Know' responses may mean different things to patients seeing their usual vs. non-usual providers

We couldn't have done this without existing relationships with state-wide practices! Thank you to all who participated to make this possible.

THANK YOU!

Questions? Contact SNOCAP Director: Donald.Nease@ucanschutz.edu

Department of Family Medicine
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS