

# **New survey identifies drivers of burnout and opportunities to improve clinician satisfaction**



What can hospitals and health systems do to help address employee burnout? That is one of the key questions confronting healthcare leaders today.

Burnout among clinicians was common even before COVID-19. The pandemic and the post-pandemic staffing shortages have only exacerbated the situation. To support workers, healthcare organizations are pursuing multiple strategies, including the use of various technologies to improve patient care, communication and collaboration, while reducing administrative burden.

To better understand current levels of burnout among healthcare workers and the role of communications technology in assisting with care delivery and boosting employee satisfaction, *Becker's Hospital Review* and Zoom recently collaborated on a survey involving healthcare leaders.

This survey was conducted among 255 respondents, about 80 percent of whom were clinicians — physicians and nurses — and the rest of whom were senior healthcare leaders and administrators.<sup>1</sup>

Among the key findings were that the level of burnout among clinicians remains high, workers using telecare tend to be satisfied with it, and workers see benefits of communications technologies that go beyond just care delivery.

## Burnout remains high

Among respondents, 73 percent reported they have recently experienced feelings of burnout, defined as feeling emotionally or physically exhausted.<sup>1</sup>

When asked about the primary drivers of healthcare professional burnout, COVID 19-related stress ranked relatively low as a contributing factor, as did leadership's concern for their physical safety.

Instead, the main drivers of burnout are staffing shortages, administrative tasks, increased patient load and increased demands from patients. Specifically, the top four drivers of burnout among survey respondents were:

- Staffing problems at my organization (77 percent)
- Increased administrative tasks (70 percent)
- Increased patient demands/expectations (54 percent)
- Increased patient load and volumes (53 percent)

Healthcare leaders must take into account the factors driving burnout when considering solutions to address this challenge.

1. Results based on an internal survey conducted by Zoom, in collaboration with Becker's Healthcare. This survey consisted of 255 healthcare professionals between July - September 2022.





## Healthcare workers that use telehealth see benefits

Respondents were asked if they use telehealth to deliver care to patients. About 37 percent of respondents said they are using telehealth to deliver care, with another 5.5 percent not using telehealth but planning to do so in the future.<sup>1</sup>

Among those using telehealth, levels of satisfaction were high. Responses indicated a four to one ratio of satisfied to dissatisfied.<sup>1</sup>

Among the ways in which respondents' work is improved by telehealth are better time management, improved patient satisfaction and more effective triage or prioritization of patients.

## Applications of video communication go beyond telehealth

While use of technology to deliver care via telehealth has received a great deal of attention, the survey found that healthcare professionals are using video communications for a wide variety of work-related purposes.

Apart from virtual patient visits, the most common uses of video communication by healthcare professionals identified by survey respondents were administrative meetings, medical education and care team/coordination meetings. In addition, medical professionals said they used video communication for patient communications along with patient education and wellness interactions.

The majority of respondents (63 percent) also indicated that outside of using telehealth technology to improve care delivery, they see healthcare communication and technology platforms as helping improve their personal satisfaction at work.<sup>1</sup>

The survey showed that the biggest drivers of satisfaction from these technologies:

- Enable greater efficiency
- Allow working remotely
- Save time
- Provide greater flexibility in scheduling

## Conclusion

While dealing with pressing financial challenges and profound staffing shortages, healthcare leaders are simultaneously focused on reimagining care delivery and doing everything possible to reduce employee burnout.

This survey indicates that video communications technologies have the potential to play a key role in how care is delivered — via telehealth — and how work is done throughout healthcare. Communications technologies help improve personal satisfaction, boost flexibility, allow for flexible work, save time and enhance efficiency — all of which will help with burnout. ●

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