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ACGME Launches New Tools and Resources Web Page Dedicated to Physician Well-Being

Resources Compiled to Support Local Efforts to Improve Resident, Fellow, and Faculty Member Well-Being, Help Physicians in Distress

CHICAGO, Ill (March 27, 2018)—The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) recently launched a new, comprehensive [Tools and Resources page](#) for institutions, programs, residents/fellows, and faculty members to support and promote well-being in the clinical learning environment.

The ACGME’s Task Force on Physician Well-Being Tools and Resources Subcommittee created this collection of materials and other references for residents and faculty members to assist with improving well-being and wellness, and to help identify solutions that best meet local needs.

“We have written requirements around this important dimension of the learning environment, but we have now taken the important step of providing our program directors, residents, faculty members, and institutional leaders with a range of tools and practices that can assist them in going beyond meeting minimum standards,” said ACGME President and CEO Thomas J. Nasca, MD, MACP.

“This is an opportunity to change the culture. We’ve taken a big step forward to establish common goals which seek to improve the well-being of every member of the health care team,” he said.

The materials range from educational videos to toolkits to screening tools. They are organized into the following categories highlighted in Section VI of the ACGME’s Common Program Requirements:

- Promoting Well-Being
- Identifying and Addressing Burnout
- Assessing and Addressing Emotional and Psychological Distress/Depression/Suicide
- Improving the Learning and Working Environment
- Coping with Tragedy

“I am so pleased that the ACGME is continuing to provide resources for the well-being of every resident and health care team member. This big step forward will help training programs find the most effective programs and resources for optimizing resident mental health. This will translate into better resilience and patient care, including for the many patients at risk for suicide,” said [Christine Moutier](#), chief medical officer, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP).

Several resources from the AFSP are featured on the page, including the video "[Make a Difference: Preventing Medical Trainee Suicide](#)" created in collaboration with Mayo Clinic.

The page also includes a [bibliography of selected articles on physician well-being](#) and links to well-being initiatives led by ACGME partners and other organizations dedicated to this very important issue, including the [National Academy of Medicine's Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-being](#), for which Dr. Nasca serves as co-chair.

"The work of this committee has been invaluable in bringing to the forefront many resources that have proven successful in identifying and addressing burnout, assessing emotional and psychological distress, and promoting overall well-being in the graduate medical education community," said Carol Bernstein, MD, professor of Psychiatry and Neurology at the New York University School of Medicine, and co-chair of the ACGME Task Force on Physician Well-Being Tools and Resources Subcommittee.

"The ACGME and the Task Force are committed to continuing to gather and share resources, which provide support in this area," she said.

The ACGME invites additional submissions from programs and institutional representatives of tools and strategies that have proven useful in graduate medical education. E-mail wellbeing@acgme.org. Visit www.acgme.org/physicianwellbeing to review the current resources.

Background

The ACGME has been committed to physician well-being for as long as it has been serving the GME community. This dedicated tools and resource page supports [Section VI of the ACGME's Common Program Requirements](#) for accredited residency and fellowship programs that were revised in 2017 to address more comprehensively, among other critical elements, the issue of well-being. The requirements emphasize that *psychological, emotional, and physical well-being are critical in the development of the competent, caring, and resilient physician.*

The new standards reinforce a culture of patient safety and physician well-being in residency and fellowship programs by strengthening the focus on patient-centered, team-based care. Changes include requiring access to appropriate tools for self-screening, and program-provision of support to individual residents/fellows through 24/7 access to urgent and emergent care, and confidential mental health assessment, counseling, and treatment. Programs and the institutions that sponsor them are encouraged to review materials in order to create systems to identify burnout, depression, and substance abuse in faculty members, residents, and fellows.

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The ACGME is a private, not-for-profit, professional organization responsible for the accreditation of approximately 10,700 residency and fellowship programs and the approximately 800 institutions that sponsor these programs in the United States. Residency and fellowship programs educate approximately 130,000 resident and fellow physicians in 154 specialties and subspecialties. The ACGME's mission is to improve health care and population health by assessing and advancing the quality of resident physicians' education through accreditation.