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QI Assessment of Attending Physician Burnout at Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) Using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

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Background
- There are higher rates of burnout in the field of medicine, relative to the general population.
- Professional burnout is characterized by loss of enthusiasm for work, feelings of cynicism, and a low sense of personal accomplishment.
- Burnout has risen 10% in the last 3 years alone, reaching an all-time high of 54% nationwide.
- No research yet at Lehigh Valley Health Network has looked into how these increased stressors are affecting attending physicians throughout the network.

Problem Statement
Using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), what is the current state of burnout in attending physicians in the Lehigh Valley Health Network?

Methods
- The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is a widely used and validated tool to measure burnout; the MBI-Human Services Survey was used.
- 22 Question Validated Survey; 7 point Likert scale
- Domains of Burnout:
  - Emotional Exhaustion (EE)
  - Depersonalization (DP)
  - Loss of Personal Accomplishment (PA)
- Researchers have created a dichotomous variable for burnout:
  - Burnout = either high EE or high DP
  - Engagement = having low EE, low DP, and high PA
- Cross-sectional analysis
- IRB approval deemed unnecessary due to QI nature
- Rights purchased from Mind Garden – survey platform
- 7 demographics questions & 2 qualitative questions added
- Surveys disseminated to all attending physicians within the network (N=1292) via anonymous, de-identified e-mail link to Qualtrics survey platform

Results
- Total # Surveyed: 1292 LVHN Attendings
- Total # Responses: 459 (35% response rate)
- 97% Completion Rate (447 surveys completed)

Results to qualitative questions:
1. What would improve your professional state?
2. What are the barriers to achieving these improvements?
- More autonomy
- More appreciation of the value of the work delivered
- Less reductionist measurement, especially when it isn’t clearly improving patient care
- Greater facility with the EMR
- More choices in scheduling, patient panels,
- More support, such as scribes and other assistance.
- Some want more money, others more time off, or less call.
- Many want better work-life balance.

Conclusions/Future Implications
- Burnout in physicians nationwide is increasing at alarming rate.
- Burnout rates at LVHN are on par with national levels: 58% at LVHN vs 54% nationally.
- More than half of attending physicians demonstrate some quality of burnout.
  - High emotional exhaustion drives the high levels of burnout at LVHN.
  - Depersonalization is moderately affected.
  - Personal accomplishment seems to be preserved in respondents.
- This study serves as a baseline for LVHN burnout rates and is to serve as a stimulus for wellness promotion.
- Ongoing discussions within the network are aimed at creating increasing physician engagement.
- It is the hope that this systems approach to assessing and addressing burnout will help promote engagement, improve patient-centered care, and increase physician involvement in leadership.