

Plenary Session: Shein Lecture
Friday, March 2, 2018

Presentation Title: Physician Wellness on the Front Lines of Medicine

Presenter: Rachel Pearson, MD, PhD

Panelists: Melissa Arbuckle, MD, PhD (moderator); Richard Summers, MD, Chandlee Dickey, MD, Heather Vestal, MD, MHS

Education Objectives:

By the end of the plenary, attendees will:

1. Have a greater understanding of the issues facing today's residents as they tackle issues of burnout and wellbeing.
2. Appreciate the importance of addressing physician wellbeing and burnout at both the organizational level and the individual level.
3. Be able to identify specific strategies to support physician wellbeing.

Practice Gap:

It has been estimated that over 50% of practicing physicians in the U.S. experience burnout (1). Physician burnout can influence "quality of care, patient safety, physician turnover, and patient satisfaction" (2). In efforts to address these issues the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education has emphasized the importance of actively addressing wellbeing within residency training (3). Although burnout is frequently addressed at the level of the individual physician (with efforts focused on self-hygiene and resilience), it is often driven by system level issues such as excessive workloads, clerical responsibilities, inefficiency in the practice environment, and a lack of control over work (1). As experts in "wellbeing," psychiatrists may be called upon by their local institutions to help develop hospital-wide wellness efforts. Addressing both individual and organizational issues will be critical in this effort.

Abstract:

When I told them I was terrified of allowing myself to truly experience all this grief, they suggested I light a candle...

Rachel Pearson, MD, PhD is a second-year pediatrics resident in Seattle, Washington who holds a PhD from the Institute for the Medical Humanities. Her memoir *No Apparent Distress* was released in May 2017 and highlights the gross inequalities in American healthcare. As lauded in the New York Times, "Her courage, honesty and doggedness are evident on every page." Her recent piece, "When Doctors Can't Afford to Feel," takes on the issue of physician wellness. In this session, Dr. Pearson will share stories of suffering and healing, using Aristotle's concept of *eudemonia* as a foil for contemporary notions of wellness. Attendees will be invited to consider what it means to be "well," whether and how wellness can be embedded into medical training,

and how residency training directors and residents might ally effectively to further wellness—or human flourishing—on both individual and systemic levels.

Scientific citations:

1. Shanafelt TD, Dyrbye LN, West CP. Addressing Physician Burnout: The Way Forward. *JAMA*. 2017 Mar 7;317(9):901-902.
2. Shanafelt TD, Noseworthy JH. Executive Leadership and Physician Well-being: Nine Organizational Strategies to Promote Engagement and Reduce Burnout. *Mayo Clin Proc*. 2017 Jan;92(1):129-146.
3. Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. ACGME Common Program Requirements. Effective July 1, 2017; Available at: https://www.acgme.org/Portals/0/PFAssets/ProgramRequirements/CPRs_2017-07-01.pdf