8 WAYS PRACTICES CAN PREVENT PHYSICIAN BURNOUT

By Iulia Filip
“The [current EHR] systems, by and large, are not intuitive, and require extra time and effort from the physician in order to meet Meaningful Use criteria, insurance, and Medicare requirements, and requirements of specific healthcare systems. What we need is EHRs that are intuitive and easy to navigate, and voice recognition software that doesn't leave our notes looking like a jumble of nonsense.”

Sarah A. Samaan, cardiologist
Legacy Heart Center and the Baylor Heart Hospital in Plano, Texas
“Despite [increasing] mandates, in most cases there is no time added to the patient visit, and no additional compensation for the physician. Furthermore, thanks in part to easily accessible information on the Internet, patients are becoming more involved in their care, and frequently bring in more complex questions about diagnosis and treatment. This is a good thing, but these discussions take time. As a result of these and other demands, physicians feel pressured to move faster through each visit.”

Sarah A. Samaan, MD
"I was introduced to this model by a group of three gastroenterologists who shared two full-time equivalent jobs. Two physicians would always be on duty, and the third would be on vacation. In their case, they each worked approximately eight weeks on, then four weeks off, so each had four one-month vacations per year. The working doctors still had call and weekend coverage with each other, so they would get some time off during their two-month shifts."

Keith C. Borglum, practice management consultant
Professional Management & Marketing, Santa Rosa, Calif.
"A daily relaxation or meditation practice can help relieve stress and boost feelings of joy and well-being. Even a few minutes in the middle of an overwhelming day can help you feel more centered."

Regina Mixon Bates, CEO
The Physicians Practice S.O.S. Group, Atlanta, Ga.
"A client had two offices, one in upstate New York and one in St. Thomas, in the British Virgin Islands. He commuted between the two, every two weeks, for 12 years, until the island office was lost to a hurricane, at which time he replaced it with an office in the Carolinas."

Keith C. Borglum
"I have a tech that scribes for me in the exam room. I have another tech that does all the extra testing, as well as all the ordering of retail items such as contact lenses and e-scribing medications. I have another employee who has taken over advertising. I have hired a payroll service. I still do my own bookkeeping, merely because I want to have my finger on the pulse of my practice, but everything else I have delegated."

Catherine A. Darling, optometrist
Darling Eye Center, Hilton Head Island, S.C.
“When I feel that what I am doing is getting a little mundane, I start investigating new technologies or procedures. It keeps me ahead of the game, makes my practice a full-scope practice, and makes every day new and fun because I’m not doing the same thing."

Catherine A. Darling, OD
“I constantly have to remind myself that these patients chose me to help them. In some cases, that is a vulnerable state to be in, and I try to remain flattered with each and every one of my patients.”

Catherine A. Darling, OD