

PRIORITIZING WELLNESS: EVALUATING THE ROLE OF PEER SUPPORT IN MITIGATING BURNOUT AND BUILDING JOY IN PRIMARY CARE

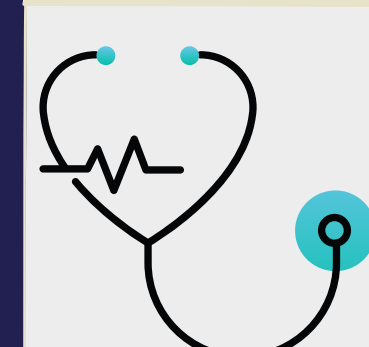
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Introduction



Rates of primary care physician burn out are at an all-time high with fewer physicians choosing primary care as their specialty of choice (1,2,3). Peer coaching has been highlighted as a method to enhance professional well-being, reduce burnout and help improve job satisfaction amongst physicians (4). The *Peers for Joy* program was developed to mitigate burnout and facilitate finding joy in practice. Within this program, primary care physicians were trained to be "Guides" and support fellow physician "Learners" to identify their goals and find ways to create joy in their work.

Research Question

Does the Peers for Joy program help primary care physicians mitigate burnout and increase joy in work?



Methodology

- 1 Thirty Guides were trained to facilitate three, thirty minute sessions with their respective thirty-one Learners.
- 2 Guides and Learners were provided with baseline and post-session surveys as well as a weekly one question survey asking how likely they would be to recommend their job.
- 3 Interviews were conducted with Learners and focus groups were conducted with Guides to explore their experiences.
- 4 Interviews and focus groups were transcribed and coded using thematic analysis.

Preliminary Findings

Learner Interviews

Motivation for Joining the Program and Expectations

- Theme of program "Joy in Work" resonated with learners
- Looking for support with burnout
- Seeking validation

Benefits of the Program

- Validation through shared experiences
- Sounding board to help troubleshoot pressure points in work
- Feeling less alone and improved mood
- Received resources, recommendations and strategies

Recommendations

- More standardized materials for optional learning
- Prompts/templates to help guide sessions
- Striking a balance between structured and unstructured sessions



Guide Focus Groups

Motivation for Participation

- Desire to help others find joy in work
- Interest in coaching and mental health
- Wanting to make a difference

Benefits of the Program

- Rewarding/ sense of accomplishment
- Learnt techniques that they continue to use with other colleagues
- Increased their own joy
- Helped shift their perspective regarding their work

Challenges

- Challenging to guide learners to find their own answers
- Outlining boundaries
- Scheduling conflicts



Discussion

Preliminary findings highlight the program's potential for mitigating burnout and enhancing joy in practice. Despite the reported benefits, several recommendations and challenges were identified by both Learners and Guides. Implementing solutions for these issues can help to better tailor the program to suit the needs of primary care physicians. Data collection and analysis are ongoing.

Next Steps

- Continue compiling data from Learner interviews, Guide focus groups and surveys to identify key concepts
- Report findings from the program's evaluation and outline the experience of participants
- Identify and implement improvements in the next iteration of the program in the Fall
- Explore, spread and scale the program to support primary care physicians across Ontario

References

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