



Cooling off: How practitioners can beat burnout

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A guide for practitioners and clinic owners
to support employee wellbeing.

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Introduction

The topic of burnout has continued to grow in importance among physiotherapists. Burnout is a state of extreme emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged and excessive stress. Avoiding burnout leads to a happier, healthier and more productive workforce which in turn can lead to better patient outcomes.

The prevalence of burnout within physiotherapy is a challenge. That's because burnout not only impacts your wellbeing but also affects your ability to provide the best patient care.

As a healthcare practitioner, you'll be all too familiar with the challenges and stresses of working in healthcare. As you guide your patients on their journeys to achieve better health, you'll also understand how rewarding your role can be.

This guide dives into the world of burnout in physiotherapy, exploring its effects on treatment quality and patient outcomes. You'll also learn why burnout rates are increasing in physiotherapy, what the evidence reveals, and how you (and your colleagues) can avoid burnout while supporting each other. This guide will also provide you with insight into creating a supportive work environment that promotes wellbeing.

The purpose of this Whitepaper is to raise awareness, inspire discussion, and offer practical strategies to mitigate burnout risks among healthcare professionals. While we strive to provide valuable insights it is essential to note that this document is not a substitute for professional medical or mental health advice.

Pressed for time?

Discover 3 key report findings

1

What factors contribute to clinician burnout?

Factors contributing to clinician burnout encompass personal and professional elements, with job stress and organizational climate uncertainty being significant influences. A study revealed that 58% of physical therapists and occupational therapists experience high levels of burnout, primarily due to the impact of uncertainty in the organizational climate and job stress. ^[3]

2

How to combat burnout in your clinic

Many factors can contribute to addressing burnout. Here are the key steps to combat burnout in your clinical setting: fostering a supportive work environment, introducing work-life balance activities, promoting overall wellbeing, encouraging regular breaks and establishing boundaries with patients, seeking professional assistance, and ultimately, harnessing digital tools to save time and enhance efficiency.

3

Tried-and-tested tips from the frontline

Ensure you locate the section where our experts provide recommendations for enhancing work well-being in both hospital and private practice settings. You might discover new tips to implement in your professional life or simply satisfy your curiosity by hearing from your colleagues.

Source: [3] Patel RM, Bartholomew J. Impact of Job Resources and Job Demands on Burnout among Physical Therapy Providers. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2021 Nov 28;18(23):12521. doi: 10.3390/ijerph182312521. PMID: 34886248; PMCID: PMC8656566.

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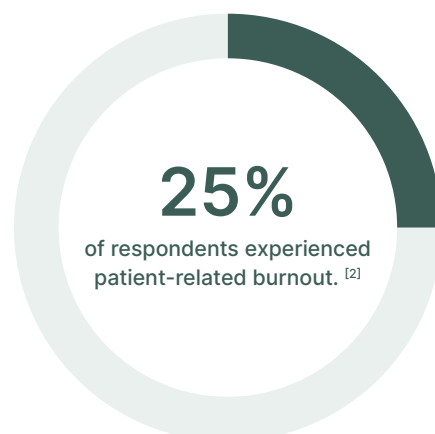
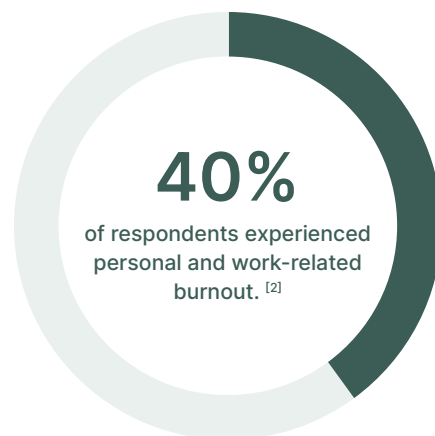
What is burnout?



According to WHO, burn-out is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.^[1]

Burnout can be seen through three different lenses:

- Experiencing a sense of depleted energy or overwhelming exhaustion.
- Developing a greater emotional disconnect from one's job or harboring negative and cynical sentiments towards it.
- Witnessing a decline in professional effectiveness and competence.^[1]



Source: [1] WHO. (2019) 'Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International Classification of Diseases.' WHO, 28 May. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019-burn-out-an-occupational-phenomenon-international-classification-of-diseases> 18.09.2023

[2] Jácome, Cristina et al. "Burnout in Portuguese physiotherapists during COVID-19 pandemic." *Physiotherapy research international : the journal for researchers and clinicians in physical therapy* vol. 26,3 (2021): e1915. doi:10.1002/pri.1915

From treating patients to battling burnout

I felt this come to a head during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the United States, virtually everything in person was shut down while health care businesses were allowed to stay open. In my practice, I was basically the only person my patients were interacting with face to face besides immediate members of their family. I spent the whole day not only treating their aches and pains, but also listening to the struggles they were going through personally, often in relation to isolation. I listened to patients discuss marital and family problems, anxieties, and the struggles of the human experience we were all going through at that time.

Emotional sharing is common from patient to rehab professional as there is a level of trust that is built with appointments over weeks and months. During the pandemic, I saw this reach a whole new level as many people were struggling mentally and emotionally.

As a professional, I did my duties as a physical therapist, but I also lent my ear and my patience for 10+ hours a day. After already doing this with patients for years, the pandemic really pushed this over the edge.

When I got home, I was spent. I would get so frustrated and lose my temper at my husband and my kids over nothing because I had no patience left in me after such a mentally tolling day. I realized pretty quickly it was not fair for my family to get the short end of the stick as my work day was causing physical and emotional exhaustion.

I knew I had to make changes around how I provided care. This meant non-negotiable

breaks when I wouldn't schedule patients, as well as making space for decompression after the work day, like listening to a meditation podcast in the car on the way home from the office before engaging with my family.

I owned my practice so I was able to make these changes, but it also meant less money because I saw fewer patients to impart these changes. I ultimately decided my mental health was worth the cost, but I also know as staff PTs, we don't often have the option to change our schedules in this way when management drives decisions by productivity and reimbursement for service.

It is challenging to put your personal needs over those of patients you are treating. It is even more challenging to find space for breaks and mental rest in a demanding industry where you don't have any control of your schedule. While acknowledging the difficulties, we as practitioners must find ways to make self care paramount if we are to effectively care for those around us - both personally and professionally.

“ When I entered the workforce as a new grad, after several years in the outpatient ortho space, the demanding patient caseloads and long hours without breaks led to burnout. My stress levels were high and ever present both at work and home. This negatively impacted my quality of life as well as the care I provided my patients.”





Impact of burnout among physiotherapy clinicians

A growing body of research underscores the detrimental effects of burnout on healthcare professionals and the patients they work with. We did a quick scan to literature to learn what kind of effects burnout may have and who are at increased risk.

The impact on clinicians experiencing the burnout

Burnout can significantly harm one's overall well-being and behavior. It is linked to negative outcomes, including reduced empathy, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization. Moreover, burnout can make clinicians more susceptible to developing additional mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

Healthcare professionals experiencing burnout face an elevated risk of alcoholism and substance abuse, which can adversely affect not only their own lives but also the well-being of their families and friends.^[3]

In a cross-sectional study published in the *Annals of Medicine*, researchers examined the correlation between burnout and empathy in physiotherapists. The study revealed that depersonalization and emotional exhaustion were factors that impeded the professionals' ability to engage effectively in fostering high-quality therapeutic relationships ^[4].

Source: [3] Patel RM, Bartholomew J. Impact of Job Resources and Job Demands on Burnout among Physical Therapy Providers. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2021 Nov 28;18(23):12521. doi: 10.3390/ijerph182312521. PMID: 34886248; PMCID: PMC8656566.

[4] Rodríguez-Nogueira Ó, Leirós-Rodríguez R, Pinto-Carral A, Álvarez-Álvarez MJ, Fernández-Martínez E, Moreno-Poyato AR. The relationship between burnout and empathy in physiotherapists: a cross-sectional study. *Ann Med*. 2022 Dec;54(1):933-940. doi: 10.1080/07853890.2022.2059102. PMID: 35377264; PMCID: PMC8986192.

The impact of burnout in the workplace

Burnout can lead to increased rates of employee turnover, absenteeism and lower productivity. These trends have the potential to set off a chain reaction of adverse consequences within an organization, burdening clinic managers and potentially affecting colleagues. Clinic owners may experience operational inefficiencies as a result, resulting in reduced patient capacity, extended wait times and financial stress.

According to one study, the repercussions of burnout extend beyond clinicians' personal lives; they also impact their professional outlook. Burnout can lead to lower morale, diminished job satisfaction, decreased productivity, and an increase in work absenteeism.^[5]

By gaining insight into the factors that make clinicians susceptible to burnout and understanding its extensive consequences, clinicians and their workplaces can collaborate on developing strategies to tackle the root causes and mitigate the harmful effects of burnout on clinicians, patients, and the healthcare system as a whole.

Burnout can lead do:

- Lower morale
- Diminished job satisfaction
- Decreased productivity
- Increase in work absenteeism ^[5]

The impact of practitioner burnout for patients

Clinician burnout has been linked to an increase in medical errors, hindering clinicians in establishing strong therapeutic relationships and **ultimately diminishing the quality of care**. In physiotherapy, where the foundation lies in fostering a therapeutic connection with patients built upon empathy and understanding, any disruptions in these relationships can potentially lead to broader adverse consequences. These consequences may include lower levels of patient satisfaction, reduced engagement and suboptimal rehabilitation outcomes.^[6]



Source: [5] Nowakowska-Domagala K, Jablkowska-Górecka K, Kostrzanowska-Jarmakowska L, Mortoń M, Stecz P. The Interrelationships of Coping Styles and Professional Burnout Among Physiotherapists: A Cross-Sectional Study. *Medicine (Baltimore)*. 2015 Jun;94(24):e906. doi: 10.1097/MD.0000000000000906. Erratum in: *Medicine (Baltimore)*. 2015 Jul;94(28):1. PMID: 26091455; PMCID: PMC4616538.

What predisposes clinicians for burnout?

Many things contribute to developing Many things contribute to developing burnout. Some factors are from our personal lives and some are related to our professional lives. One study reported that uncertainty in the organizational climate and job stress affect practitioner burnout. [3]



Another study in Korea examined the different practitioner groups working in hospital settings and who were at highest risk to experience burnout and how to reduce burnout rates. [7] Here are the main findings:

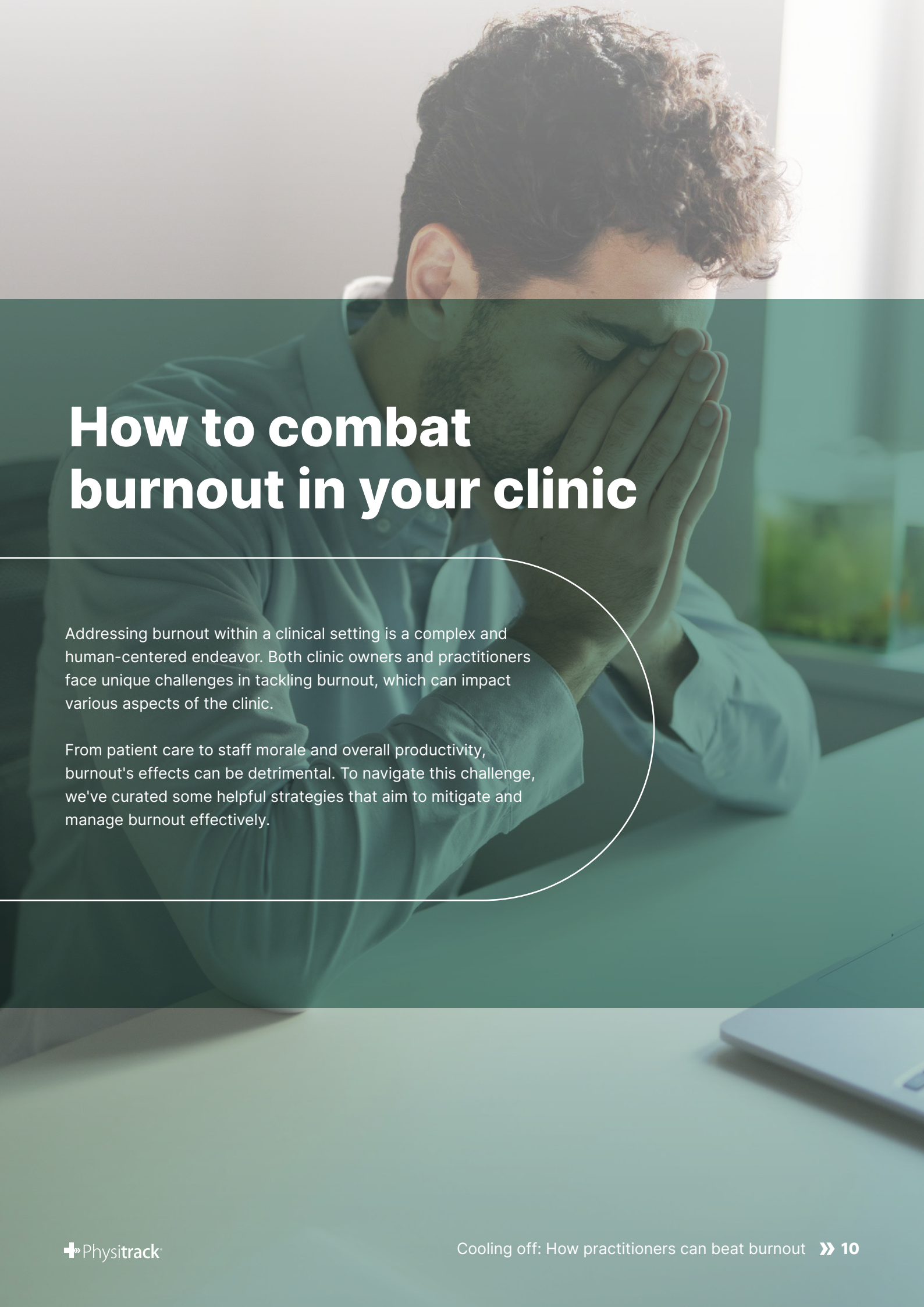
- The burnout rate for female therapists in their 20s at small or medium-sized hospitals is the highest among different practitioner groups.
- The key to reducing burnout risk is to understand and reduce the workload of therapists, improve their efficiency and create conducive work environments.
- To improve healthcare provision and protect vulnerable therapists, hospitals and society must provide ongoing support to therapists' emotional well-being and job satisfaction.[7]

These findings underscore the need for solutions that can help physiotherapists manage their workload effectively, reduce stress and so lower their risk of developing burnout.



Source: [6] Hall LH, Johnson J, Watt I, Tsipa A, O'Connor DB. Healthcare Staff Wellbeing, Burnout, and Patient Safety: A Systematic Review. PLoS One. 2016 Jul 8;11(7):e0159015. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0159015. PMID: 27391946; PMCID: PMC4938539. [3] Patel RM, Bartholomew J. Impact of Job Resources and Job Demands on Burnout among Physical Therapy Providers. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2021 Nov 28;18(23):12521. doi: 10.3390/ijerph182312521. PMID: 34886248; PMCID: PMC8656566.

[7] Kim, Ju-Hyun, Ae-Ryoung Kim, Myung-Gwan Kim, Chul-Hyun Kim, Ki-Hoon Lee, Donghwi Park, and Jong-Moon Hwang. 2020. "Burnout Syndrome and Work-Related Stress in Physical and Occupational Therapists Working in Different Types of Hospitals: Which Group Is the Most Vulnerable?" International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health 17, no. 14: 5001. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17145001>



How to combat burnout in your clinic

Addressing burnout within a clinical setting is a complex and human-centered endeavor. Both clinic owners and practitioners face unique challenges in tackling burnout, which can impact various aspects of the clinic.

From patient care to staff morale and overall productivity, burnout's effects can be detrimental. To navigate this challenge, we've curated some helpful strategies that aim to mitigate and manage burnout effectively.

1. Foster a supportive work environment

One of the fundamental steps towards combating burnout is the cultivation of a supportive and inclusive work environment. This can be achieved by:

Psychological safety:

Encourage an environment where team members are comfortable to openly share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas.

This open communication can enhance a sense of belonging among staff, foster a collaborative atmosphere, and enable the identification and resolution of potential issues at their early stages.

It is vital to create avenues for these discussions, be it through regular team meetings, suggestion boxes, or one-on-one sessions.

Recognizing effort and achievement:

One of the simplest but most impactful ways of boosting morale and motivation is by acknowledging and rewarding the hard work of your team.

This recognition can take many forms, from a simple verbal acknowledgement to more formal recognition like awards or bonuses. It's also important to celebrate both individual and team accomplishments. This not only validates efforts but also instills a sense of pride and ownership in work.

Providing professional development opportunities:

Engaging in continuous learning and professional development is a powerful tool for keeping your team motivated.

Providing opportunities for training, attending workshops, and participating in relevant conferences enables staff to upskill, grow in their roles and stay updated with the latest trends and advancements.

This not only enhances staff professional competence, but also sends a clear message that the clinic is invested in their career growth, thereby fostering a sense of value and loyalty.

These strategies, while not exhaustive, serve as a solid foundation in creating a work environment that actively works towards preventing burnout. It is essential to remember that the fight against burnout is an ongoing one, requiring consistent effort and commitment from the whole of the clinic team.

2. Implement work-life balance initiatives

The significance of work-life balance in preventing burnout cannot be understated. Achieving this balance allows employees to feel more in control of their lives, leading to reduced stress levels and increased job satisfaction. Implementing work-life balance initiatives demonstrates your clinic's commitment to staff wellbeing, directly contributing to staff retention and productivity.

- **Wellness programs:**

Incorporating wellness programs into your clinic's culture is another important step towards promoting work-life balance and overall staff wellbeing.

These programs should aim to cater to wellbeing in its broadest sense (physical, mental, emotional and financial), providing an outlet for stress and promoting healthier habits among your team. Programs could include activities like yoga classes or gym memberships to encourage physical health. Mindfulness sessions or meditation classes can help in managing stress levels and promoting mental health.

Consider organizing team-building events such as retreats or outdoor activities to foster camaraderie among staff and provide a break from the everyday work environment. Offering health education workshops or providing access to counseling services can also be part of a comprehensive wellness program.



Backed up by evidence

Champion Health, a workplace wellbeing tool, published a comprehensive workplace health report in the UK that found the following:



Financial stress ranks as a primary source of anxiety, as reported by 37% of employees. It has now taken the lead as the foremost external stressor, with 76% of individuals experiencing moderate to high stress levels, reflecting a 13% increase compared to the previous year. ^[8]



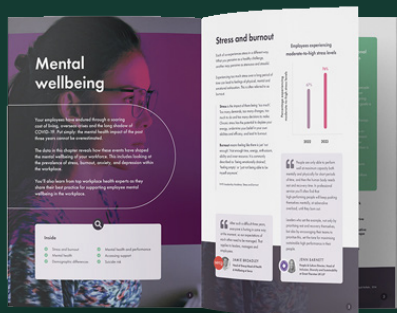
A significant 61% of individuals grapple with reduced productivity attributed to tiredness. Fatigue stands out as the primary factor responsible for diminished productivity, prompting 42% of employees to actively seek ways to enhance their energy levels. ^[8]



Anxiety and depression symptoms tend to impact female employees more significantly, with a 22% higher likelihood of experiencing anxiety and a 20% higher likelihood of experiencing depression compared to their male counterparts. ^[8]



An exciting 98% of individuals are driven to enact positive changes in their lives. Despite the obstacles they encounter, this strong motivation opens the door for employers to create a meaningful impact on their well-being, presenting a valuable opportunity. ^[8]



To learn more about the findings by Champion Health download the report

HERE

Source: ^[8] Champion Health. (2023) 'The Workplace Health Report', Champion Health, 2023. Available at: <https://championhealth.co.uk/insights/guides/workplace-health-report/> (Accessed 18.09.2023)

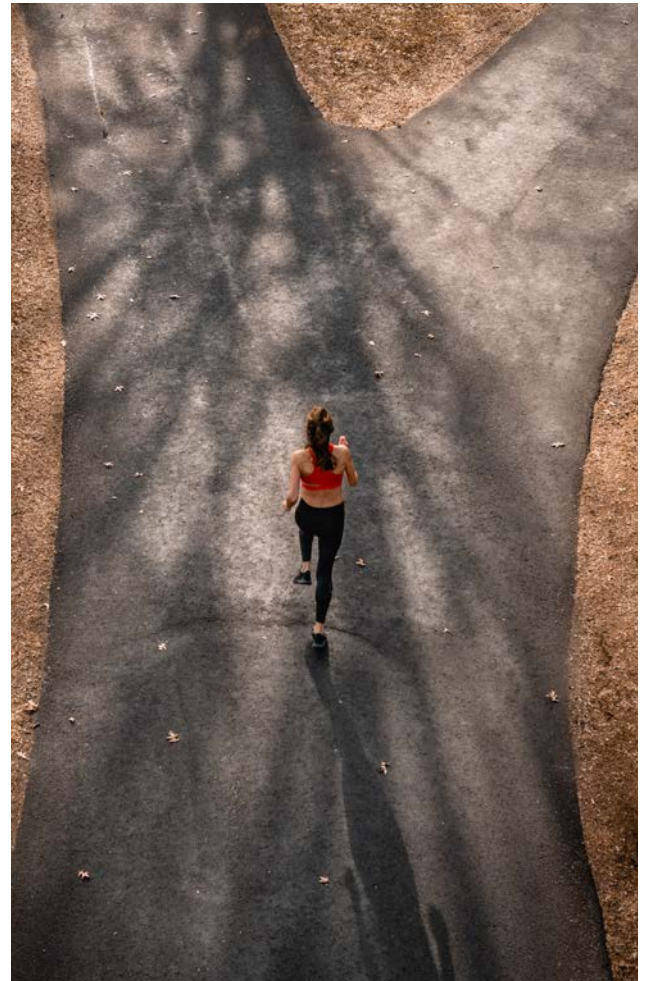
3. Promoting wellbeing: exercise and meditation

You are probably well aware of the benefits of exercise and meditation, and when combined it can improve your overall wellbeing.

Exercising isn't just about getting strong or fit – it can also help you be in a better mood and feel less stressed. With regular endorphins spikes, or as we like to call them, 'natural mood boosters', you will have more energy to stay focused throughout the day and tackle problems when they arise.

Meditation is also a popular way of looking after your wellbeing, and for good reason. Meditation helps you to calm down your thoughts and feel more focused. Meditation doesn't necessarily mean for long amounts of time, when even a minute of conscious breathing will make an immediate difference.

When you put exercising and meditation together, it's a bonus for both your body and mind. It can help you handle things as they arise, improve your quality of life and make you feel more calm.



TIP: Ever heard of box breathing?



It's often used to reduce stress and anxiety, improve focus, and promote a sense of calm.

The technique involves inhaling for a specific count, holding the breath for the same count, exhaling for the same count, and then holding the breath again for the same count. The pattern creates a square-like shape, hence the name "box" breathing. For example, you might inhale for a count of 4, hold for 4 counts, exhale for 4 counts, and then hold again for 4 counts, completing the "box."

This structured breathing can help regulate your breathing and activate the body's relaxation response, making it a useful tool for managing various situations that might lead to stress or anxiety.

4. Encourage regular breaks and set clear boundaries

The importance of regular breaks and clear working hours in the work schedule cannot be overstated when it comes to combating burnout in the clinic.

Breaks serve as essential "recharging" periods that help prevent fatigue, maintain focus, and ultimately enhance productivity.

Moreover, it's important to respect and protect lunch breaks. This is a time when employees should disconnect completely from work-related activities, providing a mental break and an opportunity to refuel with a nutritious meal. A true lunch break – away from the desk or workspace – can result in a more productive and focused afternoon.

Modern technology has revolutionized the workplace and our lifestyles, however it has also seen work and home life blur together. To combat this, regularly practice switching off outside of work hours. You can set clear boundaries with your patients by communicating your response hours and availability. By setting these boundaries it can help you reduce thinking and worrying about patients at home and over weekends, which ultimately is contributing to your quality downtime and selfcare.



I told patients I would not answer emails or text when I was outside of working hours to set that boundary."

Lastly, consider integrating relaxation techniques or activities into these breaks. This could be as simple as deep breathing exercises, short meditation sessions, or even a brief walk outside. These activities can help your team clear their minds and reduce stress levels.



TIP:

Try to schedule in time between your patients, even if it's just 2-3 minutes to reload mentally for your next patient.



5. Seek professional help

Burnout is a serious issue that can have profound effects on an individual's mental and physical health. It's crucial to remember that severe burnout is a condition that may need professional intervention. If a team member is showing persistent signs of burnout such as chronic fatigue, decreased productivity, cynicism, or feelings of detachment, it may be time to encourage them to seek help from a mental health professional.

Mental health professionals, such as psychologists or psychiatrists, are equipped with the knowledge and tools to provide effective strategies to manage stress and prevent burnout. They can offer therapy sessions, recommend coping mechanisms, and in some cases, prescribe medication.

Additionally, consider inviting a mental health professional to your clinic for a workshop or seminar to provide all employees with valuable information about recognizing and managing stress and burnout. This can help to de-stigmatize mental health conversations and ensure everyone on your team understands that it's okay to ask for help when they need it.

In conclusion, burnout can have serious implications, but by fostering a supportive work environment, promoting work-life balance, leveraging digital tools, encouraging regular breaks, and seeking professional help when necessary, you can help protect your team from its effects.

5 Worthy Mental Health Resource Sites

1. WHO - Mental Health
2. Physiopedia - Burnout and wellbeing
3. NHS - every mind matter resource (UK)
4. Mental Health America (US)
5. Head to Health (AUS)



6. Leverage digital tools

Digital health is a trending topic in healthcare. If implemented correctly, digital health tools help with workload pressure, enhance patient interactions, and ultimately, mitigate the risk of burnout. So, how can digital health help you and your clinic?

The automation provided by these tools reduces the administrative burden on practitioners, allowing them to allocate more time and energy towards actual patient care.

1. Streamlining administrative tasks

Every clinic sees a number of administrative duties, including patient onboarding, record-keeping, treatment planning, progress tracking, and more. This is where digital tools like Physitrack can free up practitioners from paperwork to focus more on patient care.

By record keeping, quick exercise prescription and seamless patient communication practitioners can devote more time to their core responsibility - healing.

In addition, integrating Physitrack with an EMR provider (electronic medical record) makes patient compliance and other administrative tasks seamless and easy. For example, Physitrack integrates with multiple EMRs.



The fact that Physitrack integrates with other EMRs and everything is in one place makes me happy. I can write an ACL rehabilitation program in 3 minutes. That is how accessible it is.

- **Marcus**, Clinic Owner

2. Enhancing patient engagement

An integral part of any treatment plan's success lies in the patient's commitment and adherence. A motivation can be boosted with clear exercise videos, educational content, and progress tracking tools.

Physitrack's free patient app, PhysiApp, offers fully narrated, high-definition exercise videos that patients can access round the clock. Such interactive tools make it easier for patients to understand and follow their treatment plan, leading to improved outcomes.

3. Providing actionable insights

One of the biggest advantages of digital tools is the real-time, data-driven insights. Data collecting, organizing, and analyzing patient data, provides valuable insights into patient's progress and responsiveness to treatments.

Features like Physitrack's outcome analysis give a transparent view of each patient's progress, helping practitioners make informed decisions to tweak treatment plans for optimal results. These insights can lead to more personalized care and better patient outcomes.

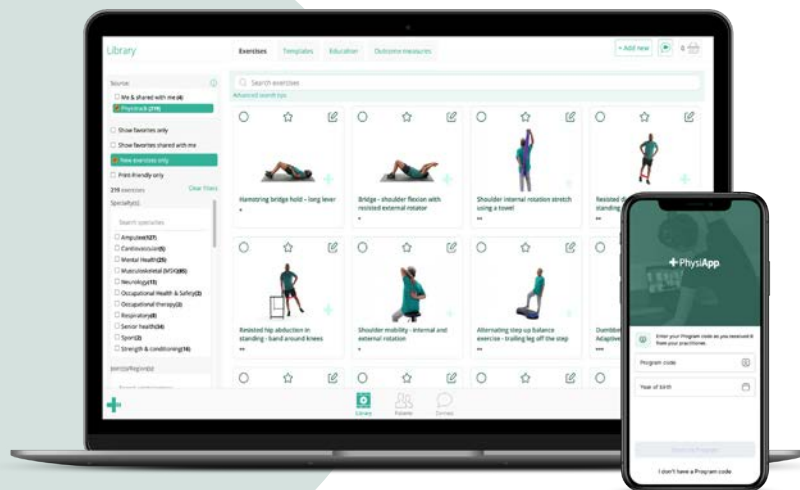
4. Facilitating remote care

The recent surge in telehealth, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has highlighted the importance of remote patient care.

Digital platforms serve as enablers of telehealth services, allowing practitioners to provide care from a distance. This capability doesn't only broaden access to care for patients but also promotes flexible work arrangements for practitioners, reducing their risk of burnout.

Digital health: your convenient time saver

While digital tools aren't a magic bullet for eliminating burnout, they certainly hold substantial potential in reducing the factors contributing to it. By strategically integrating these tools into your practice, you can create a more efficient, productive, and sustainable work environment, which ultimately fosters a healthier and happier clinic community. Consider Physitrack as your streamlined time saver.



Tried-and-tested tips from the frontline In a private practice

1
Don't have your work emails on your phone.

2
Don't give your mobile number out to your patients.

3
Schedule regular breaks into your diary as a routine.

4
Have a mentor that you can discuss complex patients/situations with.

5
Have regular social interaction outside of work with your colleagues to build community and improve relationships.

6
Schedule in at least a few days of Personal Time off (annual leave) every three months.

7
Schedule in regular slots in your diary to get on top of administration such as patient notes, doctors letters, creating Physitrack exercise programs etc rather than booking your diary full of patients and then having no time to do these admin tasks.

8
Short 15-30 minute weekly check-ins with your manager to discuss any issues within the clinic.

9
Use technology to improve clinic efficiencies ie exercise prescription tool, EMR such as Cliniko/Nookal/Juvonno/Power Diary, and an accounting software such as Xero.

10
Regular salary reviews- every 6-12 months to ensure that you are being rewarded for your hard work.

11
Actually take break during work and not work during your breaks (I made that mistake often in the clinic when I answered emails during my lunch break and therefore still did not relax).

Tried-and-tested tips from the frontline In a hospital setting

1
Take advantage of any wellbeing and occupational health benefits that your hospital provides.

4
Find a mentor who you can share any concerns or stresses with.

6
Seek ways to be active in your lunch break.

8
Try to minimize work talk outside of work. Your evening and weekends are for you.

2
Consider having separate personal and professional social media accounts to keep your personal and professional lives separate. Constant access to CPD, professional opinion, and debate on platforms such as X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn is a great resource, but this can sometimes bleed into downtime away from work and cause rumination in the evenings or weekends.

7
Discuss complex patients with your colleagues within in-house discussions.

9
If you are feeling overwhelmed then seek support sooner rather than later.

3
Seek support from your seniors.

5
Remember, you can't help everyone. Patients don't progress as expected for several reasons. My tip would be to try and 'switch off' outside of work hours. I was/am guilty of thinking and worrying about patients at home and over weekends, ultimately contributing to burnout through poor quality 'downtime'. I've found mindfulness and exercising being useful for me.

10
Don't overdo your CPD!

11
Ensure you set yourself realistic goals. You can only take on so much!

Approaches to tackle burnout

Leveraging digital resources like Physitrack can significantly alleviate burnout. These resources should be complimented by the following approaches.

Emphasize the importance of self-care

It's essential to underline the importance of self-care in preventing burnout. Encourage your team to participate in activities that facilitate relaxation and rejuvenation, such as pursuing hobbies, exercising or meditating. It's important to remember that taking time out for oneself isn't a selfish act - it's an essential practice for preserving one's well-being and performing effectively as a therapist.

Cultivate an environment of respect and empathy

A healthy and positive work environment can significantly deter burnout. Cultivate an environment characterized by respect and empathy, where every individual's contribution is acknowledged, and their concerns are understood. Such an environment can foster a supportive environment that enhances mental well-being.

Offer accessible mental health resources

Ensure that mental health resources are readily accessible for your team. These resources could encompass information regarding stress management techniques, contacts for mental health professionals, or access to employee assistance programs.

Encourage routine check-ins

Frequent check-ins can help in early detection of burnout symptoms. Promote transparent and sincere communication about how individuals are feeling and the obstacles they are encountering. Such practice ensures that everyone feels listened to and supported.

Elicit feedback and implement changes

Regularly solicit feedback from your team regarding work environment improvements and stress reduction strategies. Be receptive to making changes based on this feedback. Remember, mitigating burnout is a collective effort.

By employing these strategies, coupled with digital tools like Physitrack, you can foster a healthier, more productive work environment that is advantageous for both your team and your patients. Bear in mind, while burnout is a grave issue, it isn't invincible. With the right strategies and resources in place, you can empower your team to remain enthusiastic, engaged, and efficient in delivering the highest standard of care.

4 tips to better self care during workdays

1

Take your lunch break away from your computer - go outside in nature, go for a walk etc.

2

Arrive at least 15 minutes before your first patient is booked in to prepare for your day.

3

Try to implement meditation into your life and days. Worthy apps to check out: Headspace/Calm etc.

4

Create boundaries around patient care, IE, patients should not be called/emailed or otherwise contacted by you directly outside normal working hours.

Expert contributors: Mike Blackwell & Leah Gillespie



Burning out: is this the future for physiotherapists?

Burnout is a significant and potentially debilitating challenge facing physiotherapists today. It can have serious implications not just for the individual's mental health, but also for the quality of treatment provided, patient outcomes, and the productivity of the clinic.

However, as overwhelming as it may seem, it's important to remember that with a proactive approach and the implementation of strategic measures, this challenge can be effectively managed.

In this paper, we've explored numerous strategies that can be employed to combat burnout, as well as emphasized the importance of maintaining a continuous commitment to the wellbeing of healthcare practitioners. Here's a recap of the key points we've addressed.

7 Key takeaways

1 Understand the impact:

Recognizing the potential and detrimental effects of burnout is the first step towards effectively managing it. The impacts are wide-ranging, from decreased quality of care, lower patient satisfaction, and reduced productivity to an increased risk of mental health issues among practitioners.

2 Create a supportive environment:

Cultivate a positive and inclusive work culture that encourages open communication, acknowledges hard work and achievement, and provides opportunities for continuous learning and professional development.

3 Promote work-life balance:

Make sure to implement initiatives that support a healthy balance between work and personal life. This could involve offering flexible work arrangements and incorporating wellness programs that target mental and physical health.

4 Promote wellbeing: exercise and meditation:

When you put exercising and meditation together, it's like a double bonus for your body and mind. It can help you handle things in life a bit easier, improve your quality of life and make you feel more calm.

5 Leverage digital tools:

Make the most of available technology like Physitrack, which can help to streamline administrative tasks, enhance patient engagement, and provide actionable insights for optimizing treatment plans.

6 Prioritize self-care and mental health:

It's essential to advocate for self-care among your staff, provide readily accessible mental health resources, and foster an environment where empathy and respect are the norm.

7 Seek feedback and implement changes:

Regularly solicit feedback from your team members and be open to making changes based on their inputs to create a more fulfilling and supportive work environment.

Remember, addressing burnout isn't a one-off solution but requires ongoing commitment and effort.

With these strategies in place, you can foster a happier, healthier and more productive work culture that is beneficial for your team and ultimately leads to better patient outcomes.

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