

## **Abstract:**

### **Prevalence and Predictors of Burnout Among Resident Family Physicians**

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#### **Purpose:**

Resident physician burnout may affect career choices and empathy. This national study examined associations between family medicine residents and program characteristics and burnout in the last year of training.

#### **Methods:**

We used data from the 2019-2021 American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) Initial Certification Questionnaire. We defined burnout as a binary variable defined as reporting callousness or emotional exhaustion once a week or more. This unique data source annually captures responses from all graduating residents seeking ABFM certification. We evaluated associations using bivariate and multilevel multivariable regression analyses.

#### **Results:**

Among 11,570 graduating residents, 36.4% (n=4211) reported burnout. This prevalence did not significantly vary from 2019 to 2021. Females reported higher rates of burnout (39.0% vs. 33.4%, OR=1.29 (1.19-1.40)). Compared to White race (39.2%), Black race was associated with lower odds of burnout (30.5%, OR=0.71 (0.60-0.86)), as was Asian race (32.3%, OR=0.78 (0.70-0.86)). We observed lower burnout rates among international medical graduates (26.7% vs. 40.3%, OR=0.54 (0.48-0.60)), those planning to provide outpatient continuity care (36.0% vs. 38.7%, OR=0.77 (0.68-0.86)), and those who attended smaller programs (31.7% with <6 residents per class v 36.3% with 6-10 per class, 40.2% for those with >10 per class, p <0.0001). Educational debt over \$250,000 was associated with higher burnout than no debt (OR=1.29 (1.15-1.45)).

#### **Conclusions:**

More than a third of recent PGY3 family medicine residents reported symptoms of burnout before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The burnout rate varied significantly related to resident and program characteristics. Program directors, researchers and policymakers should be concerned by such a high rate of burnout as physicians emerge from training and into the workforce, especially given its potential impact on career choices. These findings suggest need for further investigation, mitigation, and prevention of trainee burnout and the option to look at programs that are positive and negative outliers.