

## 3 Ways Physician-Led, Team-based Care Can Help Reduce Healthcare Worker Burnout

Between the lingering aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic and widespread staffing shortages, many healthcare professionals have either left or are considering leaving the profession, and they are citing burnout as one of the primary reasons.

By now, many of us have read the headlines about the “Great Resignation,” where employees are retiring for good or taking another position where the stress is less or much more manageable. The issue is about to get worse for the healthcare industry.

Data analytics research firm Morning Consult found that [18% of healthcare workers quit their jobs](#) since the beginning of the pandemic and that another 19% have considered leaving the healthcare profession. Two of the primary reasons for resigning, not surprisingly, were burnout or being overworked.

In fact, the problem is so acute that the U.S. Surgeon General issued a [special advisory](#) on healthcare worker burnout and resignation on May 23, and estimated that there could be a shortage of more than 3 million essential healthcare workers in the next five years – and a shortage of around 140,000 physicians by 2033.

There is no magic wand to alleviate the short-term staffing shortage caused by burnout, but there is one solution that can help reduce stress in the long run so professionals remain in the profession, and that solution centers on implementing a team-based care model.

### How team-based healthcare works

A team-based approach to healthcare is pretty straightforward. Instead of having only a physician or only a nurse treat a patient, the physician is responsible for leading a team of professionals who each contribute to the patient’s care. The team often includes a registered or licensed nurse, nurse practitioner and a Physician’s Assistant. Each day, the team huddles to discuss patient visits, treatment plans and related care programs for each patient.

The benefits of a team approach can be significant, including:

#### 1. Being part of a team can help prevent burnout

Meaningful and consistent communication among team members can go a long way toward keeping healthcare professionals engaged in their work. When employees are engaged – in a positive way with their colleagues and superiors – they are less likely to be impacted by some of the key reasons that contribute to worker burnout. According to a [Gallup poll](#): unfair treatment

at work, unmanageable workload, lack of role clarity, lack of communication and support from their manager, and unreasonable time pressures all contribute to burnout.

## **2. Healthcare teams can provide care more efficiently**

A team-based approach has the potential to improve patient care because the group can brainstorm and collectively problem-solve health issues better than having the family doctor solely develop a plan. That, in turn, can result in more effective and efficient treatment for each patient.

When working together, the team can identify optimal care plans, eliminate unnecessary tests and drug prescriptions – all of which can help save their patients time and money and provide better care. A study by the [American Medical Association](#) found that physician-led primary care teams scored higher on nine of 10 metrics for quality patient care.

## **3. Leveraging each member's unique qualifications – without exceeding them**

A patient-centered, team approach also allows members of the group to fully utilize their individual expertise and experience when treating patients. With clearly defined roles, each professional can administer care that is commensurate with their training and certification.

A team-approach is a win-win for patients and healthcare professionals. Healthcare professionals win because by collaborating they can achieve a more efficient workflow through treating patients and coordinating care. And patients benefit from the collective wisdom and experience of a wide variety of experts, each under the leadership of an experienced physician.

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