

A Residency Wellness Survey: Developing Residency Program Specific Wellness Interventions

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Background

- Residency is a demanding period of training that requires long hours and prolonged periods of high intensity work. According to Parsons M et al., nearly half of all physicians experience burnout at some point in their career. It was originally believed that burnout was only experienced by physicians working for prolonged careers, however, recent studies in Emergency Residents shows a 65-76% rate of burnout in EM residents. Parsons M et al. discusses the various burnout screening tools available including barriers of cost and lack of specificity for physicians or resident training.
- The Inventory - Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) is the most commonly-used and studied in physician populations, however the cost is significant. A need has been identified for a screening tool specific to residency training and readily available for program use without significant cost.

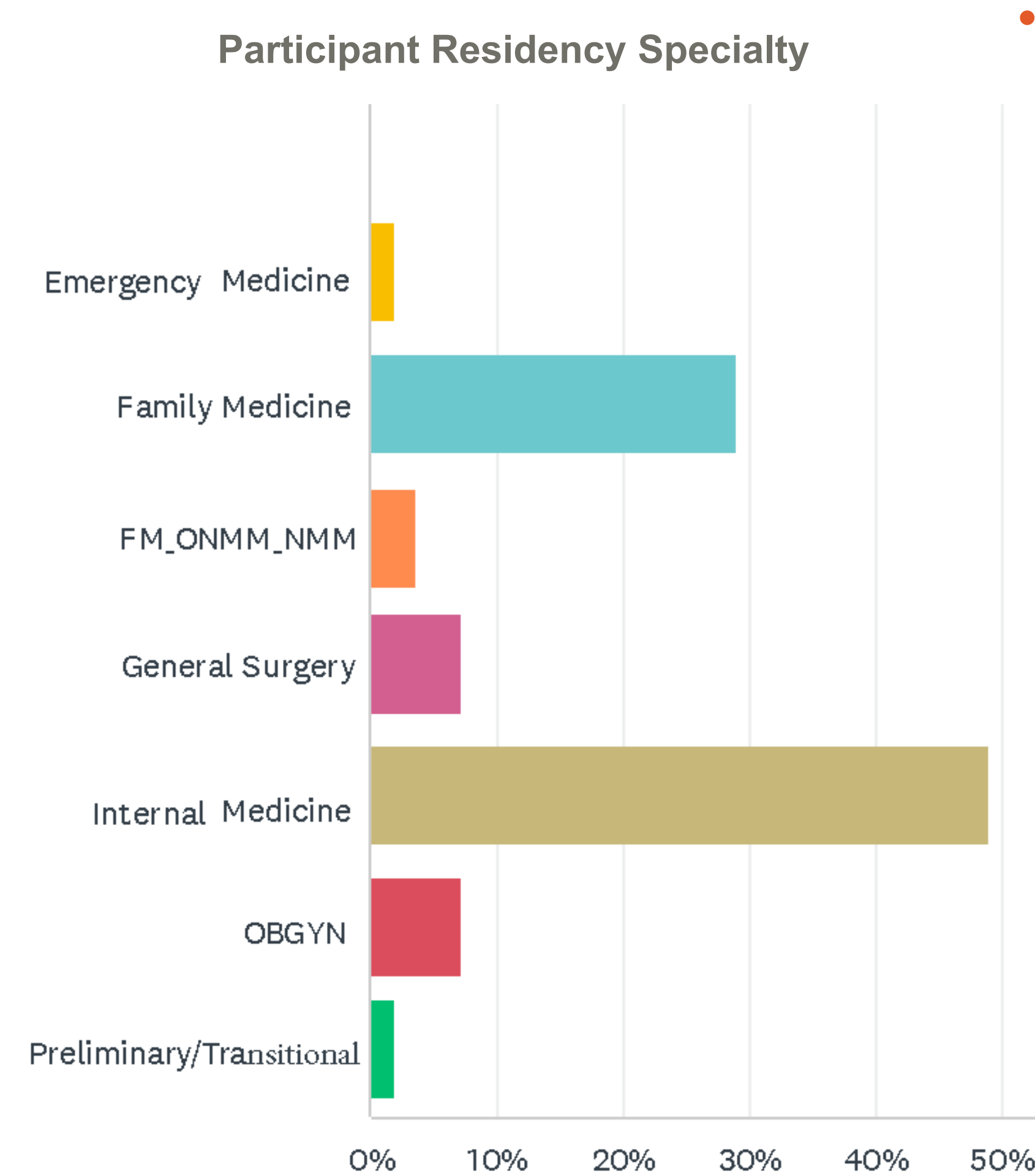
Objective

Examine the Utility of a Resident Wellness scale in a resident population and develop a residency program specific wellness initiative.

Methods

Residents from HCA Healthcare North Texas Consortium were invited to participate in an anonymous wellness survey. The study was open for responses from September to October 2022.

- Wellness Survey:** A 10-item psychometric survey was developed by two different residency program groups including 33 total residencies as described in Stansfield et al. A Clark and Watson 5-step framework was used to develop 10 wellness parameters that relate to basic needs, work satisfaction, and feeling of support.



- Participants:** 45 HCA Healthcare residents responded to the survey. Participants included 20 PGY1 residents (35.71% of participants), 23 PGY2 residents (41.07%), 12 PGY3 residents (21.43%), and 1 PGY4 resident (1.79%). 31 respondents identified as male (56.36%), while 22 identified as female (40.0%), and 2 participants (3.64%) did not disclose gender. Resident specialties included FM, IM, OBGYN, EM, General Surgery, and Preliminary/Transitional.

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Results

Medical City Resident & Fellow Wellness Survey Results

	NEVER	SELDOM	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN	TOTAL
Reflected on how your work helps make the world a better place	22.22% 10	20.00% 9	35.56% 16	17.78% 8	4.44% 2	45
Felt the vitality to do your work	8.89% 4	28.89% 13	42.22% 19	13.33% 6	6.67% 3	45
Felt supported by your co-workers	0.00% 0	11.11% 5	28.89% 13	28.89% 13	31.11% 14	45
Had an enjoyable interaction with a patient	0.00% 0	8.89% 4	48.89% 22	31.11% 14	11.11% 5	45
Was proud of the work you did	2.22% 1	13.33% 6	42.22% 19	31.11% 14	11.11% 5	45
Was eager to come back to work the next day	22.22% 10	31.11% 14	33.33% 15	11.11% 5	2.22% 1	45
You felt your basic needs are met	13.33% 6	26.67% 12	44.44% 20	13.33% 6	2.22% 1	45
You ate well	8.89% 4	24.44% 11	37.78% 17	24.44% 11	4.44% 2	45
Knew who to call when something tragic happened	4.44% 2	17.78% 8	24.44% 11	35.56% 16	17.78% 8	45
You felt connected to your work in a deep sense	8.89% 4	35.56% 16	33.33% 15	20.00% 9	2.22% 1	45

- 45 total residents and fellows responded to the survey questions. Top 3 weaknesses and strengths were identified in the GME populations based upon the tendency of answers for each item.
- Weaknesses:** Feeling of connection to work, feeling that ones work makes the world a better place, feeling eager to come back to work tomorrow
- Strengths:** Feeling supported by coworkers, knew who to call when something tragic happened, feeling proud of the work you did.
- The results indicate that overall feelings of satisfaction and connection to work are prevalent struggles within this resident community, however residents feel supported by colleagues and administration.

Discussion

- Resident wellness is a multifactorial topic that is influenced by residency-specific characteristics and work structure as well as the current healthcare environment. The 10-item psychometric survey utilized in this study invited residents to subjectively reflect on several aspects of wellbeing within the context of the workplace. Participant scores demonstrated medium to strong levels of satisfaction in the workplace, with support from coworkers and supportive resources contributing to subjective wellness within the program.
- Still, a significant proportion of participants feel less satisfaction in, connection to, and impact of their work. It is possible that increased case loads and increased isolation from patient interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique challenge to work satisfaction and connectedness to work. Other studies, including Stansfield et al., suggest that a decreased sense of autonomy in a program may be associated with decreased subjective wellness during residency training.

Discussion (continued)

- Chang et al suggests that PTSD prevalence in residency may have increased during the pandemic while subjective measures of burnout seem to have no significant change. Standardized screening for depression and PTSD may be useful interventions for identifying at-risk populations, and these populations may benefit from specialized wellness intervention plans. Chaukos et al.'s research on the SMART-R (Stress Management and Resiliency Training Program for Residents) suggests that even well-studied standardized residency wellness programs may not yield significant results in a majority of residencies. Subjective feedback from specific programs will likely be beneficial in addressing the specific wellness needs of each program.
- Study results may not accurately represent the demographic as only about half of the residency program responded to survey questions. It is possible that those who did not answer represent those who would rate their wellness more poorly on the scale.

Conclusion

- Medical residents face unique professional challenges and expectations, and resulting burnout may impact patient populations. Wellness surveys in the workplace serve as tools to gauge existing workplace satisfaction and start conversations about burnout, coworker relations, satisfaction, and health. While wellness surveys may not result in immediate changes to the work environment, the survey may open dialogue for residents to express health concerns and create residency-specific frameworks for quality improvement. No known existing framework or plan has proven consistent improvements in resident wellbeing, but concern for, and data about, wellness may be especially important during crises and high case loads, such as those seen in the COVID-19 pandemic.

References

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