

### Factors that Cause Burnout

Burnout can be caused by a variety of factors, but Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter found that the most common correlates are:<sup>10</sup>

**Job-related factors** such as having too much to do and not enough time to do it, working with too many patients or many patients with highly complex issues, facing competing demands at work, and lack of adequate information or control to do their job well.

**Occupational-related factors** such as lack of support from supervisors and colleagues, being treated disrespectfully, inappropriate or insufficient feedback about performance, and lack of freedom to practice or make career decisions autonomously.

**Personal factors** like emotional exhaustion, which can occur when physicians work with severely ill patients frequently, experience incongruence

between their individual values and those of their employer, possess low levels of hardiness, maintain an external locus of control, employ a passive communication style, or can be caused by being in an early stage of one's career.

A recent study found that almost half (45.8%) of physicians are currently experiencing at least one symptom of burnout.<sup>11</sup> Consider the Symptoms of Burnout checklist. Are you currently experiencing any symptoms of burnout?



## SKILLS & STRATEGIES TOOLBOX

### Know Your Limits

When the focus of your work is care for others, taking care of your own needs is essential. Make a list of signs and symptoms indicating you are reaching your limit.



- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

**PAY ATTENTION** to these signs and symptoms. Notice when they arise.

**CHECK-IN** with yourself. What do these signals tell you about how close you are to your limit?

**STOP** and take a break. Walk, stretch, breathe deeply, meditate, talk with a friend or co-worker. Take care of your physical needs (Are you hungry or thirsty? Do you need a bathroom break? Are you tired?).

**LISTEN** to what your body and emotions tell you. Treat yourself with the same care and respect you give to patients.