

Mobile app to improve doctors' wellness

Unmet Need

When compared to the general population, physicians are more likely to have symptoms of burnout and be dissatisfied with work-life balance. A recent study identified burnout in over 60% of academic neurosurgeons and over 50% of critical care providers. Burnout leads to physician turnover, reduced quality of care, medical errors and in extreme cases, physician suicides. Physician interviews expose the commonly occurring frustration related to the lack of recognition of their efforts, poor work-life integration and absence of programming unique to physician needs. While existing programs involving individual and organizational interventions can result in meaningful reductions in physician burnout, a simple mobile application that generates positive feelings throughout the program to enhance a physician's wellness and resilience is of a critical need.

Technology

Duke researchers have developed WellSpentMD, a mobile application to connect physicians to a positive feedback system in order to reduce burnout. It is built on the premise of recognizing the little moments that truly matter to both physicians and their patients. It provides a positive community for physicians to publicly recognize and show appreciation to one another through DocDollars. WellSpentMD also gives physicians access to a marketplace of time-saving services, products and resources. The proof-of-concept mobile app developed in collaboration with Oak City Labs was successfully tested among Duke neurosurgeons showing significant user engagement and indicating gain in a sense of meaning among the participating physicians that ultimately translates to positive work culture.



Advantages

- Addresses lack of meaning and appreciation among physicians
- Easy to use and has a very low organizational burden
- Proved to be broadly applicable

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Publication(s)

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