

Turning Off Turnover

BY TOM GALLO, MS, MDA



As ACCC President 2018-2019, I have dedicated my term to identifying the sources of burnout among multidisciplinary cancer care providers and improving the

resilience of oncology care teams across all care settings. We've taken great strides in just a year.

In the newly released results from the 2018 *Trending Now in Cancer Care* survey, a collaboration between ACCC and the Advisory Board's Oncology Roundtable, numerous causes for burnout were identified, including workflow inefficiencies, heavy workloads, and a lack of proper work-life balance.

Though stemming burnout at the source is vital work, it is also important to recognize and alleviate symptoms as they appear. One such symptom is decreased workforce retention. Survey data identified "personal reasons" as the number one reason why physicians, advanced practitioners, and nurses left their jobs, but other factors contributed to turnover, including:


- Too many bureaucratic tasks (physicians and advanced practitioners)
- Difficulties with employer and/or health system (physicians and administrators)
- Compensation (advanced practitioners and nurses)
- Inflexible scheduling or lack of scheduling options (nurses).

These results are indicative of the systemic frustrations that cancer care professionals face every day. Caring for patients in various stages of serious illness is difficult enough as is; organizational and healthcare-wide

inefficiencies only compound these issues. Learn more at acc-cancer.org/trends.

Before we can begin to address the causes and effects of burnout, we need to know how pervasive this problem is among members of the multidisciplinary cancer care team. In January 2019 ACCC invited members to take the Mini Z burnout survey, a clinically validated tool developed by the American Medical Association. Results from this survey can be found on pages 56-57 of this edition of *Oncology Issues*. In the article, Julie Oehlert, DNP, RN, chief experience officer at Vidant Health, explores the many facets of burnout and resiliency—both personal and institutional—and how healthcare leaders can take the next steps toward ensuring a healthy and resilient workplace. Future articles in *Oncology Issues* will detail programs and resources that ACCC members have developed to foster resiliency and wellness in their cancer care teams.

The issues of resiliency, burnout, and workplace inefficiencies also took center stage in a Deep Dive Workshop at the ACCC 45th Annual Meeting & Cancer Center Business Summit on March 20-22. Attendees who participated in the workshop listened to case studies and participated in group exercises designed to identify individual and organizational behaviors that can bolster resiliency and reduce burnout at their programs and practices.

In my final President's Message column, I want to thank the ACCC staff and members who have worked diligently to address these issues that are crucial to the future of cancer care. "Reflect, Renew, Reignite: Creating a Resilient Oncology Team in Your Community" is not just a slogan for me; it is a statement of purpose that drives my work. To stay on top of ACCC's efforts to support oncology team well-being, visit acc-cancer.org/resilience. 

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