

## Burnout in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit: Myth or Reality?

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Much attention is being paid to the problem of burnout in health care professionals, including those who care for children. Is this problem getting worse in our field, and if so why and what can be done about it?

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Much attention is being paid to the problem of burnout in health care professionals, including those who care for children. Is this problem getting worse in our field, and if so why and what can be done about it? Tawfik et al. ([10.1542/peds.2016-4134](#)) looked at this topic in 41 California neonatal intensive care units (NICU) through a validated four item burnout questionnaire administered to neonatologists, nurse practitioners, nurses, and respiratory therapists who work in those NICUs. Sadly, the burnout prevalence was 26.7 +/- 9.8%, with burnout found to be highest when the average daily census and occupancy were high. The need to use electronic health records sadly did not help reduce the extent of the burnout. The prevalence of burnout in all NICU staff was common, although nurses appeared to have the highest rate of experiencing this problem.

If you think that NICUs are the only area to suffer from this problem, think again. As you think, consider what strategies might be implemented to promote wellness and resilience in NICUs and other pediatric care areas. There are strategies that might be implemented for an individual clinician, for a designated work area, for a division, department, and even an entire hospital—and fortunately this has become a priority strategic goal for the AAP in the year ahead. We look forward to sharing with you wellness strategies to overcome the problem of burnout, and welcome your ideas that are helping to keep spirits up in your work environment. Share with us your strategies by responding to this blog, uploading a comment with this article, or posting a comment on our Facebook or Twitter sites.

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