

Physician Wellness

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What Is Physician Wellness and Why Does It Matter?

- It is difficult to define
- Wellness generally is the balance between mental and physical and financial health.
- Because of the rapid changes in health care, many are made without the expertise of physicians, the system is out of balance.
- It leads to physician dissatisfaction with the profession and physician burnout.



- Physicians dissatisfaction leads to higher risk of malpractice and patient dissatisfaction
- Early retirement and doctor shortages
- Surveys report up to 70 percent of physicians show at least one symptom of burnout
- Difficulties at home
- 75 % of physicians don't want their children to be doctors
- Suicide

CEOs Think Physician Burnout Occurs Because:

- Physicians are lazy
- They have a lack of resilience
- They don't get enough yoga and granola



Wellness Is Not Fixed by Yoga and Granola

- Telling physicians if they just meditate, eat yogurt and do some yoga all their problems will disappear.
- The system is broken and the people we want to fix it are the ones who broke it!



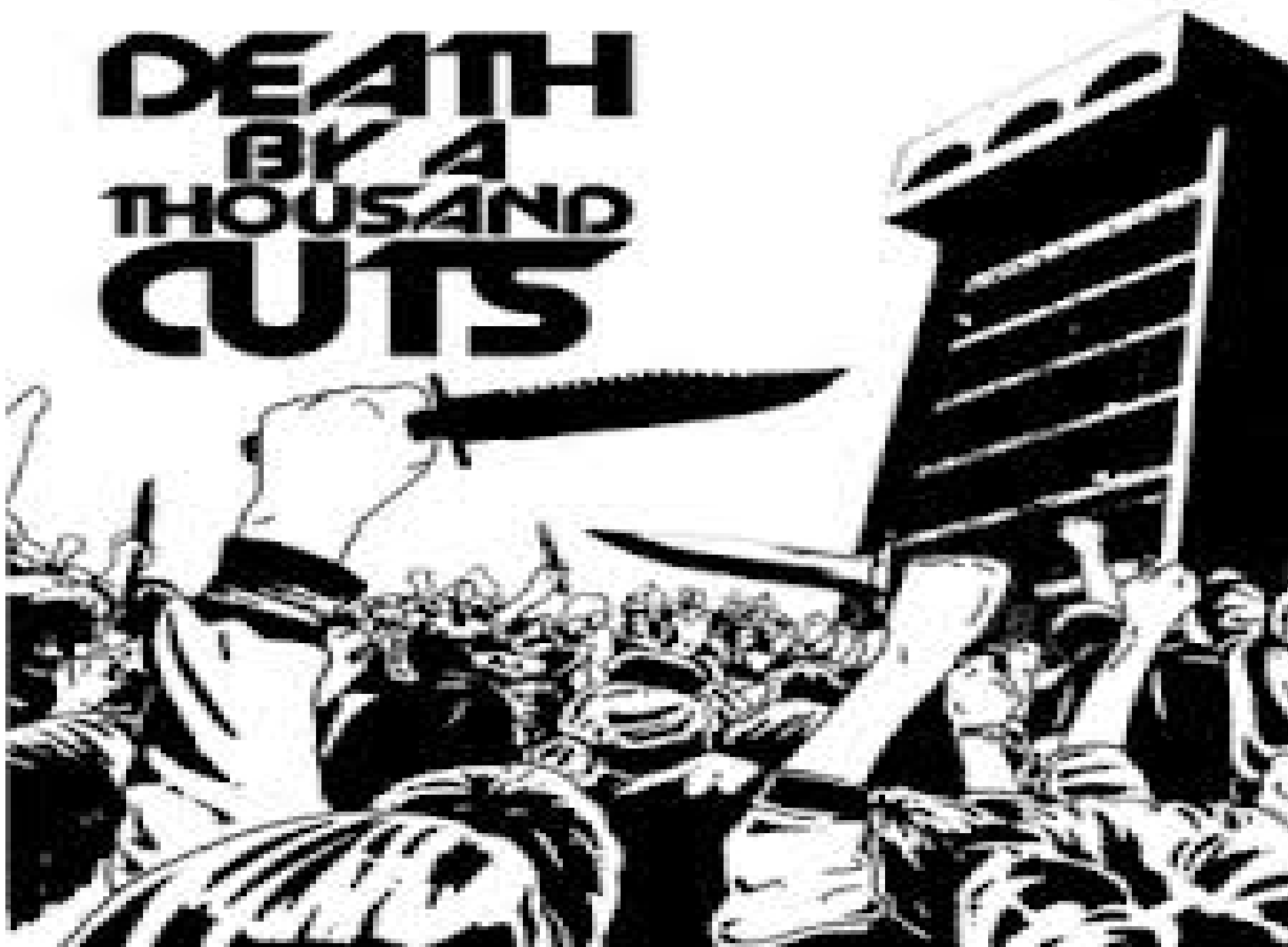
MYTHBUSTERS

- Physicians are very hardworking people
- Physicians sacrifice much time and money to become physicians. They sacrifice their 20's to be called Doctor.
- Meditation will not fix that pile of work that you have to do using a suboptimal EMR.

What Drives Physician Burnout?

- Moral injury: The concept that physicians want to do the right thing for their patients. However doing the right thing places one in conflict with his or her employer, the hospital or the patient's insurer
- Example: Do I spend extra time by missing my child's play getting that prior authorization done or do I just pick the less expensive, less effective treatment?
- Typically worse when a physician is employed as the physician has to serve a master other than his or her patient
- Loss of autonomy

How Did We Get Here?



So Many Problems



Physician Suicide

- Over 400 physicians kill themselves yearly in the US
- This is equivalent to losing one entire medical school to suicide yearly
- Often a manifestation of self loathing and shame caused by being unable to give patients the best care because of financial and bureaucratic restraints placed on physicians that many feel compromise their integrity
- Female physicians are more likely to commit suicide than their male counterparts

Figure 1

Suicide Rates in Men & Women: Physicians Vs the General Public

In an evaluation of individual studies of physician suicide:

Ratio of Suicide Rate

Male Physicians:
Men in General
Population

1.41:
1.00

Ratio of Suicide Rate

Female Physicians:
Women in General
Population

2.27:
1.00

Source: Schernhammer ES, Colditz GA. Suicide rates among physicians: A quantitative and gender assessment (meta-analysis). *Am J Psychiatry*. 2004;161:2295-2302.





PBCMS Physician Wellness Program

Crisis Hot Line

Physician Wellness Library

Wellness Events

How Do We Make It Better?

- LEARN TO SAY NO
- Examples, I won't fill out Prior Authorizations on inexpensive generic medications. I encourage my patients to use Good Rx.
- If your employed: You should.....
 - be paid for pajama time.
 - not subjected to forced over books.
 - have a seat at the table.
 - have no restrictive covenants on hospital based employment.

How Do We Make It Better?

Learn to fight back



Don't Be Afraid To Speak Up.

- I quit the ACP because.....



Join Organized Medicine

- They are here to help you become the physician you want to be



Have a voice

Participate it inoculates you from burnout

Give money to your local PAC

Consider Other Forms of Practice

- Private Contracting
- Concierge Practice
- Stay Independent – Independent practitioners in smaller groups experience the least amount of burnout get paid more and have more autonomy

You Spend Enormous Amounts Of Time
Learning To Be A Good Physician. Why Don't
Most Of Us Spend Time On Protecting our
Profession?



Stay engaged

- Help your local community
- Participate in your local free clinics
- Educate your patients and the public on problems in health care
- Mentor younger physicians
- Politics, Politics, Politics!

And Yes, I Do Like Yoga and Granola!



BUT I Won't Wear Yoga Pants!!

