



MAG Fact Sheet

'Physician Resilience in a Pandemic'

How to ensure physicians remain resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic

The Medical Association of Georgia's (MAG) Physician Resilience Task Force is encouraging health systems and medical practices to consider the following during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that their physicians, allied professionals, and staff remain resilient.

Pandemic Stages

Pre-distress. The hospital system/practice should design flexible processes and policies that can be implemented preferably before or quickly during a pandemic. The hospital/practice should also develop metrics and surveys to periodically assess hospital/practice policies and support ongoing improvements.

Peak of outbreak. Physicians and allied health care providers are at high levels of stress. Health systems and medical practices may have to contend with unique and especially challenging financial burdens.

Post-peak. Grief and post-traumatic stress are commonplace for physicians and allied health care providers. The health system/medical practice should conduct a strategic analysis to guide its recovery and restoration process.

System/Practice Resilience Leadership Framework

1. Senior hospital/practice leadership should organize a PANDEMIC "RESILIENCE TASK FORCE" to establish short-and long-term goals, update policies, and maintain an open communication network with all stakeholders.
2. The task force selects a "CHAMPION" to recruit and assist "FRONT LINE TEAM LEADERS" from the hospital community to assess any team member issues and concerns.
3. The champion will encourage teams to work together to ensure that its recommendations are successfully implemented.

Please [click here](#) for an explanation of Leadership Roles and Responsibilities.

Hospital & Medical Practice Pandemic Physician Resilience "R.E.S.C.U.E." Checklist

R – Resources. Make sure that your physicians and their staff know how to use and bill for telemedicine services. Make sure that your physicians/staff know how the 'CARES Act' applies to them. Make sure that they know what organizations like MAG are doing to protect them in the legislative and regulatory arenas. And make sure that they are up to speed on any new CMS and MIPS requirements.

E – Economics. Make sure that your physicians/practice managers know how to apply for a Small Business Administration loan. Make sure that they know how your local bank can help. Let them know if the practice has applied for any financial aid, and how that can help.

S – Safety. Make sure that your physicians and staff have the PPE that they need and/or to let them know what steps are being taken to obtain PPE. Ensure that applicable staff knows how to order PPE. Ensure that they have direct access to testing and/or that they know how to access referral pathways for testing. Make sure that you have a workplace relief rotation process to manage fatigue. And, make sure that you update your staff procedures as needed.

C – Communication. Have a clear pandemic team leader. Have an open-door process for physician/staff feedback. Provide clear and timely communications, and make sure that you respond to any physician/staff concerns and complaints in a timely way.

U – Unity. Make sure that your physicians understand the strategies that you have developed to address specialty-specific challenges. Use your communications to encourage peer support. Discuss your pandemic guidelines with your team.

E – Empathy. Provide your physicians and staff and patients with the information and resources they need to address their mental health needs. Monitor your physicians/staff's wellbeing to mitigate burnout. Develop strategies to update your policies for chart completion (e.g., accessibility to voice dictation, scribes, templates).

MAG members who have questions about MAG's Physician Resilience Task Force can go to www.mag.org/resilience or contact Lori Cassity Murphy at lmurphy@mag.org. Also visit the [MAG 'COVID-19 Resource Center'](#) for details on the 'CARES Act,' telehealth, SBA loans, payer/insurer issues, PPE, and more.

References:

Annals of Internal Medicine article: <https://t.co/gEtvzv4FqD>

McKinsey Report: <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/leadership-in-a-crisis-responding-to-the-coronavirus-outbreak-and-future-challenges>

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