

Living with Chronic Pain as a Healthcare Provider

Presented by


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Topics of Discussion

- **Working while unhealthy & impacts to care - Does it make sense to take a break while navigating illness?**
 - **Provider Physical & Mental Health – What does self care look like**
 - **Who's in your corner- provider professional/personal supports**
 - **Professional Boundaries - Working to live, or living to work?**
 - **Setting patient expectations - What is going on with my provider?**
 - **Setting organizational expectations - What is going on with my provider?**
 - **Financial expectations- FMLA/PTO for providers**
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What is a chronic illness?

Chronic illnesses last a long time, often for a year or more. You may also have a need for ongoing medical care and difficulties doing the things you need to do every day. These behaviors, called activities of daily living, include things like using the toilet and getting dressed. These difficulties can also affect your family and employment.

Current Thinking

- Physicians may not think that self-care is a priority, perhaps assuming they will “get around to it later.”
- Often delay getting help when they first notice symptoms of an illness.
- Concerned about being wrong in their self-diagnosis or may not want to “bother” colleagues
- Physician-patients often deny or minimize their symptoms
- Self-medicating, changing medications or dosage, or discontinuing medications on their own.



Current Thinking

- Anxious about the outcome of the illness and have fears of being disabled
- Some physician-patients react with anger, frustration, and protest at being unable to prevent or fix their illness.
- Feel the injustice of contracting a disease that they think they do not deserve.
- Guilt can arise when they acknowledge the added burden their illness places on their families at home and their colleagues at work
- Their practice or the inflexibility of their work schedule makes it hard to take time on short notice.



Working while unhealthy & impacts to provider's care

Increase in org. psychosocial stress

Reduced quality of life

Financial Stress

Impacts and strain on relationships

Compassion Fatigue

Impacts to mental health



**Why take a break while
navigating chronic
illness?**

Provider Physical & Mental Health – What does self-care look like?

Self-care = Healthcare

Not answering emails from home	Regularly participating in hobbies and spending time with friends	Participating in relaxing activities like mindfulness or yoga
Receiving supervision or speaking with colleagues about professional challenges	Scheduling short breaks throughout the day	Saying “no” when necessary
Maintaining an exercise routine	Not overloading your caseload with too many clients	Seeing your own therapist

Who's in your corner- provider personal supports

- Dispelling provider invincibility
- Who is in your personal support network?
- Do you understand your treatment plan?
- Power of Attorney/Emergency Directive/Active will
- Who is your Therapist?



Setting Organizational Expectations -Minimize Psychosocial stress

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- What is my relationship with my organization (we good?)
 - How to set healthy boundaries
 - Understanding State/Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
 - Open communication
 - PROs / CONs of Provider Self-Disclosure



Benefits of Healthcare Provider Transparency

PROs

- Building trust with client
- Providing clients with alternative care options
- Who is in your personal & professional support network?
- Demonstrating “practice what you preach”

CONs

- Inconsistency of care
- Triggering for some clients
- Scheduling challenges
- Potential loss of client

Financial expectations- FMLA/PTO for providers

Do you understand org. requirements
Electronic Healthcare Record Access (EHR)
State/Federal profile already made?
Who is your HR Representative



Thank you for Listening!!!

