

UDK 005.311.12:331.101.3:[61

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Burnout Syndrome Among Residents of Family Medicine

DOI: 10.7251/SMD1301033J

(Scr Med 2013;44:33)

Dr. Stanetić et al.<sup>1</sup> studied burnout syndrome among residents in Family Medicine, using the Maslach Burnout Inventory, a well-known questionnaire. Using this method, they assessed the influence of gender, marital status, and number of children in the families of participants and reported that 77% of the respondents had high level of stress.

However, in similar studies,<sup>2</sup> severe burnout syndrome (also measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory) was reported in about 50% of critical care physicians. Those who work in Intensive care units (ICU) also have a high level of work-related stress, a factor known to increase the risk of burnout syndrome. In addition, physicians who work in the ICU have a high number of working hours including a number of night shifts and limited vacation time.

This syndrome is also prevalent among medical oncologists. Whippen and Canellos<sup>3</sup> surveyed members of the American Society of Clinical Oncology and reported that 56% of participants fulfill the criteria for burnout syndrome. On the contrary, medical students at the University of Sao Paulo exhibited a low prevalence of burnout syndrome (10.3%).<sup>4</sup> Other studies estimate that burnout syndrome affects between 10% and 45% of medical students.<sup>5</sup>

Unexpectedly, severe burnout syndrome that was reported by Stanetić et al affects family practice residents more often than critical care physicians. If the family medicine residents in the Republic of Srpska did not exaggerate their

answers, the authors should offer some possible explanations for this discrepancy. Perhaps they should note additional factors that increase burnout syndrome among the family residents, such as vacation time, moonlighting, or other contributing factors. For vacation time, the report should include physicians' satisfaction both with vacation duration (<15 days; 15-30 days; >30 days) and quality (consider vacation time sufficient: *yes* or *no*). Vacation time is an important factor that may prevent/cause burnout at work, not only in physicians and nurses, but in many other workers as well.

Dr. Miroslav Jerinić  
Regional hospital Liberec, Husova 10  
460 63 Liberec 1, Czech Republic

## References

1. Stanetić K, Tešanović G, Burgić-Radmanović M. Sindrom sago-revanja na poslu specijalizanata porodične medicine. *Scr Med* 2011; 42:14-7.
2. Papazian L, Kentish-Barnes N, Embriaco N, Pochard F, Azoulay E. Burnout syndrome among critical care healthcare workers. *Curr Opin Crit Care* 2007;13:482-8.
3. Whippen DA, Canellos GP. Burnout syndrome in the practice of oncology: results of a random of 1,000 oncologists. *J Clin Oncol* 1991;9:1916-20.
4. Costa EF, Santos SA, Santos AT, Melo EV, Andrade TM. Burnout Syndrome and associated factors among medical students: a cross-sectional study. *Clinics (Sao Paulo)* 2012; 67:573-9.
5. Dyrbye LN, Thomas MR, Massie FS, et al. Burnout and suicidal ideation among U.S. Medical students. *Ann Intern Med* 2008;149:334-41.