TITLE: The effects of resident wellness on morbidity and mortality in a neurosurgery residency.

SPEAKER: JONATHAN SCOVILLE  CITY/STATE: SALT LAKE CITY, UT

AUTHORS: Jonathan Scoville\(^1\), Evan Joyce\(^1\), Rob Davies\(^2\), Philipp Taussky\(^1\), Randy Jensen\(^1\).

ABSTRACT:

Introduction:

Physician burn out is a well-documented phenomenon characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. It has been recognized as one of the causes of increased rates of resident physician depression and attrition. Recently the development of resident wellness programs has shown positive results towards alleviating some of the causative factors of physician burnout. Little, however, has been done to study the effect of resident wellness programs on patient care. We therefore sought to establish a connection between improved resident wellness and patient morbidity and mortality.

Methods:

We obtained a grant from the graduate medical education office to create a wellness program among neurosurgical residents at the University of Utah. The program was based on the core wellness principles of socialization, mindfulness, trust, critical thinking, and endurance. These principles were instilled in the residents through activities and lectures over a 12-month period. We then compared the cases presented at our monthly morbidity and mortality conference from the 12-month period prior to the establishment of the program and the 12-month period during the integration of the program. Residents also participated in a survey evaluating their sense of wellness and inter-resident cohesiveness at the beginning and end of the 12-month period.

Results:

Overall there have been positive reception of the wellness program among residents, the effect on mortality and morbidity remains to be quantified.

Conclusion:

Resident and physician wellness is an important factor in combating burnout. More research remains to be done in order to understand the true effects of wellness on patient outcomes, and optimize the use of wellness principles to create life long wellness in physicians.