

# Advancing Well-being Among Neurology Residents: A Data-Driven Approach

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## Objective

To assess whether the creation of a formal structure to measure and promote wellness among neurology residents would facilitate the development of interventions associated with measurable improvements.

## Methods

In 2018 we founded the Resident Wellness Committee for the Department of Neurology at our institution. The Resident Wellness Committee was led by resident and staff neurologist co-chairs and had as its vision to promote well-being through initiatives centered in work-life integration, emotional and physical well-being, and social engagement. Web-based surveys assessing various aspects of well-being were administered at baseline and 1 year after launch, comprising the period June 21, 2018, through June 30, 2019.

## Results

Response rates were high at baseline (21 of 34; 62%) and follow-up (25 of 33; 76%). Interventions pursued in the interim included education on handling unexpected absences, adjustments to holiday schedule policies, infrastructure for nutrition and respite, and a team-based department fitness challenge, among others. Overall, at both timepoints more than 80% (18 of 21; 21 of 25) of respondents endorsed at least mild burnout symptoms, although clinical workload, independence, and education were overwhelmingly viewed positively throughout. Notable improvements at follow-up included greater comfort with adjusting schedules at times of need, increased camaraderie within the program, and a smaller proportion of respondents endorsing substantial burnout symptoms.

## Conclusion

Through deliberate and sustained efforts backed by data, our work demonstrates that concrete changes can be successfully pursued to promote well-being among neurology residents. Given that Neurology has one of the highest burnout rates among medical specialties, our approach may serve as a model for other programs to replicate.