



Caring for the Coordinator

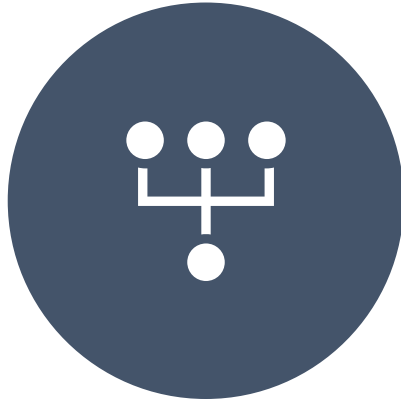
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Objectives

- Describe factors impacting Program Coordinators well-being, especially during COVID-19
- Distinguish the importance of well-being among Program Coordinators and lack of empirical evidence on this topic
- Provide examples of effective Program Coordinator well-being initiatives
- Provide recommendations for developing Program Coordinator well-being initiatives

Significance of Coordinator Burnout



COORDINATORS SERVE AS THE ADMINISTRATIVE “BACKBONE” OF PROGRAMS – THEY ARE INTEGRAL TO SUCCESSFUL TRAINING PROGRAM OPERATIONS



HIGH COORDINATOR TURNOVER RATES CAN HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE STABILITY OF PROGRAMS



WHILE ATTENTION TO COORDINATOR BURNOUT AND WELLBEING HAS INCREASED OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, IT IS STILL RELATIVELY UNDER-STUDIED

Coordinator Burnout: What does the literature tell us?

- In a national survey of Program Administrators, 52% (n=483) reported having thoughts of resigning from their position due to work-related stressors (Ewen et al., 2019)
- Residency coordinators in 76% of surgical programs reported significant levels of burnout, and 60% reported that they had considered resigning from their position within the last year (Fountain et al., 2017)
- Fifty-one percent of family medicine program coordinator reported a moderate level of burnout (Ofei-Dodoo et al., 2018)
- Thirty-nine percent of OBGYN coordinators reported high levels of work-related burnout (Ofei-Dodoo et al., 2019)



Factors Impacting Coordinator Wellbeing:

What Does the Literature Tell Us?

- Range of roles and responsibilities
 - Administrator, liaison, compliance officer, travel agent, credentialing expert, confidante, counselor, mentor
(Ewen et al., 2018; Ofei-Dodoo et al., 2018; Ronna et al., 2019; Eckart, 2019)
- Insufficient training and support
 - No formal path for new coordinators to develop skillsets
(Dubois et al., 2017; Fountain et al., 2017; Ronna et al., 2019; Feist & Gilbert, 2019)
- High turnover among program directors/leadership
 - Loss of stability contributes to distress
(Fountain et al., 2017)
- Work overload
 - Unpredictable late nights; taking work home; inability to unplug
(Eckart, 2019; Ewen et al., 2019; Feist & Gilbert, 2019)

Factors Impacting Coordinator Wellbeing:

What Does the Literature Tell Us?

- Seasonal nature of work
 - Interviews, orientation, onboarding, graduation, exams, site visits, evaluations, committees
(Eckart, 2019)
- Tremendous responsibility but limited authority
 - Title and pay often do not reflect the level of responsibility, managerial job functions, and knowledge/expertise
(Dubois et al., 2017; Fountain et al., 2017; Nickel et al., 2018; Eckart, 2019; Feist & Gilbert, 2019)
- Unclear or non-existent career advancement track
(Ronna et al., 2019)
- Some program specialties may have higher burnout risk
(Ewen et al., 2019)

PC Job Satisfaction: What does the literature tell us?



Working with residents and fellows

(Fountain et al., 2017; Ofei-Dodoo et al., 2018)



Feeling of contribution to medical education

(Fountain et al., 2017; Ofei-Dodoo et al., 2018)



Good relationships with program leadership – high trust, valued input

(Ronna et al., 2019; Nickel et al., 2018)



Professional development opportunities

(Dubois et al., 2017)

Anecdotal Coordinator Feedback

- “We work in seasons”
- “Once I get through _____ it will be less stressful, but then the next thing comes”
- “Jack of all trades”
- “Hard to turn off at night – some things can’t wait until the next day”
- “Some specialties have it harder than others”
- “Not sure people realize how much responsibility we have”
- “I have learned so much”
- “Residents are the best part of the gig”





COVID impact on GME

- Residents and faculty are stressed – this extends to the people who support them
- Reinventing interview season virtually
- Working from home and childcare/family challenges
- Concerns for personal health and safety
- Compassion fatigue



National Survey Data

- Stanford Professional Fulfillment Index
- Send nationwide via AHME
- Launched October 26th and closed November 20th, 2020
- 309 participants

How true do you feel the following statements are about you at work during the past 2 weeks?

- I feel happy at work
 - Moderately true (36%)
 - Very true (32.73%)
- I feel worthwhile at work
 - Moderately true (28.36%)
 - Very true (34.55%)
 - Completely true (16.36%)
- My work is satisfying to me
 - Moderately true (23.55%)
 - Very true (41.67%)
- I feel in control when dealing with difficult problems at work
 - Somewhat true (24%)
 - Moderately true (30.91%)
 - Very true (30.91%)
- My work is meaningful to me
 - Moderately true (30.91%)
 - Very true (30.91%)
 - Completely true (29.35%)
- I am contributing professionally
 - Moderately true (30.91%)
 - Very true (30.91%)
 - Completely true (29.35%)

To what degree have you experienced the following? During the past 2 weeks I have felt...

- A sense of dread when I think about work I have to do
 - Very little (26.18%)
 - Moderately (32%)
 - A lot (21.45%)
- Physically exhausted at work
 - Very little (25.27%)
 - Moderately (31.14%)
 - A lot (19.05%)
- Lacking in enthusiasm at work
 - Very little (27.64%)
 - Moderately (34.18%)
 - A lot (17.82%)
- Emotionally exhausted at work
 - Very little (21.17%)
 - Moderately (28.10%)
 - A lot (22.26%)
 - Extremely (11.31%)

During the past two weeks my job has contributed to me feeling...

- Less empathic with my Residents/Fellows
 - Not at all (42.91%)
 - Very little (29.09%)
 - Moderately (18.55%)
- Less empathic with my colleagues
 - Not at all (38.91%)
 - Very little (28.73%)
 - Moderately (21.09%)
- Less sensitive to others' feelings
 - Not at all (44.20%)
 - Very little (29.71%)
 - Moderately (19.57%)
- Less interested in talking with Residents/Fellows
 - Not at all (51.27%)
 - Very little (25.09%)
 - Moderately (15.27%)
- Less connected with my Residents/Fellows
 - Not at all (37.45%)
 - Very little (20.36%)
 - Moderately (23.64%)
- Less connected with my colleagues
 - Not at all (31.27%)
 - Very little (23.64%)
 - Moderately (26.55%)

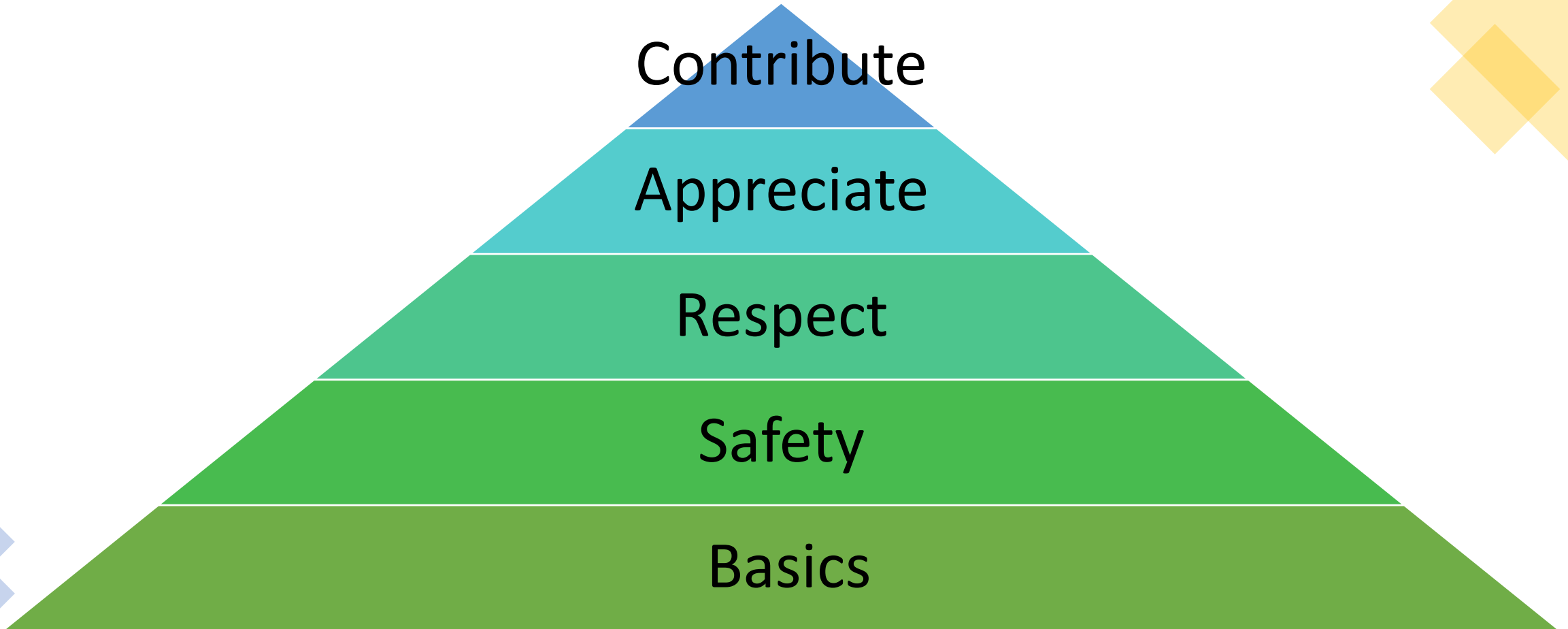


Preliminary Conclusions

- This data aligns with previous literature
- Generally, Coordinators enjoy their work and find it fulfilling
- Approximately 20% of the sample population is struggling emotionally
 - Emotional exhaustion
 - Connection to Residents/Fellows and colleagues
 - Cynicism
- Approximately 10% of the sample population may meet criteria for burnout
- Additional research is needed to further understand the depth and breadth of Coordinators' well-being



Burnout and wellness Hierarchy



JPS Health Network

- Developing Coordinator Well-Being initiatives
- Finding ways to (re)connect
 - Coordinator forums
 - Virtual huddles
- COVID emotional/psychological health resources
- Advocate for and utilize support services



Northeast Georgia Medical Center

- Employee Fuel Gauge
 - Adapted from UT Southwestern's Resident Fuel Gauge
- Biweekly Coordinator Meetings
 - Discuss high-level issues impacting all programs; share best practices
- Work from home flexibility
- Additional administrative support for virtual interviews



Individual Well-Being Strategies

- Work-life integration
 - Identify personal and professional priorities
- Build and sustain community
- Fatigue mitigation strategies
 - Self compassion
 - Self-care
 - Setting and upholding boundaries
- Be an advocate for well-being for yourself and those around you

(Neff, 2020; Shanafelt, Dyrbye, & West, 2017)

