A Prescription for Pharmacist BURNOUT

Denise K. Kreckel B.S. Pharm
Peter A. Kreckel B.S. Pharm
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Pharmacology, Department of Physician Assistant Sciences St. Francis University

This program has been brought to you by PharmCon

PharmCon is accredited by the accreditation counsel for Pharmacy Education as a provider of continuing pharmacy education
A Prescription for Pharmacist BURNOUT

**Speaker:** Peter A. Kreckel R.Ph. is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy, Magna Cum Laude, Class of 1981. He served as the President of the Pharmacy School Class of 1981 for 3 years, and President of the Pharmacy School Student Council for 2 years. During this time he received the Upjohn Achievement Award for leadership and academic achievement.

Denise K. Kreckel is also a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy, Magna Cum Laude, Class of 1981. Denise currently works for a regional health care system in the clinics retail pharmacy

**Speaker Disclosure:** neither of the the Kreckels has any actual or potential conflicts of interest in relation to this program

This program has been brought to you by PharmCon

PharmCon is accredited by the accreditation counsel for Pharmacy Education as a provider of continuing pharmacy education © Copyright PharmCon 2008
Program Overview: At some point in your pharmacy career, you will experience burnout. Regardless of how much you like your job there will come a time when you just don't feel like doing it anymore. If you could choose between being sick enough to stay home (and not just lying about being sick) and going to work, you would actually choose to be sick. It would be far less aversive than facing your boss, your co-workers, your patients, and your desk. This program identifies the causes of burnout and helps you identifies ways to avoid burnout and enjoy your job and life to the full extent.

Objectives:
• Define burnout and stress.
• Compare and contract burnout and stress.
• Identify strategies that can be used to combat burnout.
The Kreckels

- Graduates of the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy, 1981
- Lab partners throughout school
- Married July 4, 1981
- Parents of 3 kids
  - Gretchen: to graduate from Pitts’ Pharmacy School in 2009
  - Elizabeth: Spanish Ed major at State Teachers College
  - Philip: Economics major at Pitt
Both worked for the same local small independent chain pharmacy (10 stores) in Central Pennsylvania.

Denise left that chain in April 2007.

Peter left that chain in June 2008.

Denise works for regional health care system in the clinics retail pharmacy.

Peter works for local 5 store chain
Three Stages of a Pharmacist Career

- Show me the Money $$$
- Show me the Schedule
- Show me the Conditions
Mostly includes new graduates

Money includes:

- Sign on bonuses
- Salary
- Loan Forgiveness
- Cars and other premiums
Pharmacist’s Salary

For the first time since Drug Topics conducted an exclusive salary survey, the average annual base salary of respondents cracked the six-figure ceiling. The average annual base salary of all 1,176 respondents to an online survey was $107,403 in 2007, compared with $94,927 in 2006.

Mar 10, 2008    By: Sandra Levy    Drug Topics magazine
Show me the Schedule!

- Usually pharmacists in practice from 3 years experience to about 25 years.
- Usually pharmacists with kids from age 2-20.
- Have families and need schedules that allow for family activity.
Show me the conditions!

- Pharmacists may accept salary decrease for better working conditions

- Better work conditions may involve:
  - Less prescription volume
  - More technician help
  - Less manager responsibilities
  - Less supervision and more freedom to practice
  - Time allotted for more patient counseling
Sound like your career?

- *Every* day on the job is a bad one.
- Caring about work seems like a total waste of energy.
- The majority of your day is spent on tasks you find either mind-numbingly dull or unpleasant.
- Nothing you do appears to make a difference in a workplace full of bullying, clueless, or ungrateful supervisors, colleagues, and clients.

Source: http://www.helpguide.org/mental/burnout_signs_symptoms.htm
Most respondents were satisfied with their positions, with 68% “more” satisfied and 32% “less” satisfied.

Pharmacists in independent and inpatient hospital pharmacies reported the highest rates of satisfaction (80% and 78%, respectively).

Pharmacists in chain pharmacies reported much lower rates of satisfaction (53%) than those in all other settings ($P < .05$) and were 66% less likely to be satisfied than those in independent pharmacies.

*Pharmacists’ Job Satisfaction: Variation by Practice Setting* Vittorio Maio, PharmD, MS, Neil I. Goldfarb, and Christine W. Hartmann, MSS

© Copyright PharmCon 2008
Why Pharmacist “bail out”

Among the respondents who are considering bailing out of their current position, the most common reasons cited:

- income (43%)
- professional advancement (43%)
- geographic location (28%).
Pharmacists who work at mass-merchandising pharmacies (79%) bellyached the most about their workload increasing within the past year.

Perhaps this has to do with the low- or no-cost generics many mass merchandisers offered last year, which drew in a lot of traffic.

Mass merchandisers were followed by 72% chain and 71% hospital pharmacists who also said their workload rose last year.
Making Pharmacists HAPPY! 😊

- Career change!
  - new people
  - new patients
  - new opportunities
  - new networks

- New opportunities in the same organization. “Climbing the ladder”
BURNOUT! The definition…

- Is NEVER an acute condition.

- 3 major dimensions
  - Cynicism: negative job and workplace attitude
  - Emotional exhaustion: feeling emotionally depleted, apathetic and indifferent.
  - Ineffectiveness: devaluing ones work that new tasks are meaningless.
STRESS defined

- STRESS IS CREATED WHEN ONE'S MIND OVERRIDES THE BODY'S BASIC DESIRE TO CHoke THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS OUT OF SOME JERK WHO DESPERATELY DESERVES IT!— (seen on a tee shirt)

- May cause emotional exhaustion

- Includes somatic symptoms

- Workers are aware of stress

- May be acute, where “burnout” may take months
## Burnout versus stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BURNOUT</th>
<th>STRESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disengagement</td>
<td>Overengagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blunted emotions</td>
<td>Overreactive emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helplessness/hopelessness</td>
<td>Urgency/hyperactivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of motivation &amp; ideals</td>
<td>Loss of energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads to detachment and depression</td>
<td>Leads to anxiety disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage is emotional</td>
<td>Damage is physical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seems life not worth living</td>
<td>May kill you prematurely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/burnout_signs_symptoms.htm

© Copyright PharmCon 2008
One BIG difference

- While you’re usually aware of being under a lot of stress, you don’t always notice burnout when it happens.

- The symptoms of burnout — the hopelessness, the cynicism, the detachment from others — can take months to surface.

- If someone close to you points out changes in your attitude or behavior that are typical of burnout, listen to that person.
OVERLOAD!

When workload exceeds expected levels.

- Work at work! Play at home!
  - Avoid e-mails and on-call demands

- Kreckel’s rule: the number of phone lines should NOT exceed the number of pharmacy techs!
  - 3 phone lines and 2 techs = stress.

- Pharmacists address patients needs; techs address problems!
STAFF COHESIVENESS

- Be fair with your staff. Reward good behavior. Address bad behavior.

- Once a month do something for your staff, a pizza or a luncheon.

- Once a year do something BIG for the staff
  - holiday party
  - gift cards
  - Pharmacy tech recognition day in October
Burnout “Prophylaxis” at work

- **Clarify job description**: some of the things you’re expected to do are not part of your job description. Use for leverage.

- **Request a transfer**: within the same organization to a different department.

- **Ask for new duties**

- **Take time off to rejuvenate**
THE PRESCRIPTION Rx#1 – Professional Involvement

- American Pharmacist Association
- State Pharmacist Association
- Local Pharmacist Association
- University Alumni Association

Panel discussion at Pennsylvania Pharmacist Convention
Professional Advancement Opportunities  Rx#2

- BS Pharm – complete the Pharm-D degree
- Immunization Certification
- Certified Diabetic Educator
- Attending Continuing Education programs both live and on-line through webinars
Serve as preceptors for pharmacy school students.

Designated as a “model practice” by the University of Pittsburgh.

We offer a “rural pharmacy experience”. We live about 2 & ½ hours from Pittsburgh. We provide housing and board at no charge. Students live with us for 5 week rotations.
Multi-tasking at it’s finest!
What do I have to offer?

- EXPERIENCE!!
- Clinical opportunities for students
  - Counseling
  - Blood pressure monitoring
  - Blood sugar meter demonstration
  - Writing letters to local physicians
  - Researching in depth questions from patients and physicians.
  - Medication Therapy Management (MTM)
What our students are exposed to

- Local wholesaler tour
- Teaching a topic to the Physician Assistant classes
- Lecture to a community group
- Review patient charts and make recommendations
- Newspaper article in local paper
  - Check out www.tyronepa.com
Teaching Opportunities Rx#4

- **Live Lecture**: Peter teaches at St. Francis University in the Physician Assistant Program. Teaches Pharmacology for all 3 semesters in the Didactic year for the Physician Assistant Sciences Program.

- **Web Based**: We both teach Advanced Pharmacology to Physician Assistant Clinical Year students involved in their clinical rotations. 15 weekly topics covered.

- **PharmCon**: share your skills with other health care professionals.
Teaching opportunities- Purpose

- Encourage inter-professional relations
- Demonstrate to the Physician Assistant students the level of expertise of the community pharmacist in the healthcare field
- Make a difference in the education of future prescribers
Teaching Opportunities

Tim Teaches TB

Rachel demonstrates MDI
Giving back to the Community

Teaching to Community Groups

- Elderly high rise apartments
- Elderly alumni villages
- Women's organizations
- Men's Organizations
- Organizations involving Youth
Potential Lecture Topics

1. Osteoporosis
2. MRSA prevention
3. Vitamins/ Herbal supplementation
4. FAST stroke recognition
5. Hypertension
6. Medicare “D”
7. How medications work in your body
8. Smoking cessation
Youth Organizations

- Girl Scouts

- Boy Scouts
  - Medicine Merit Badge (www.meritbadge.com)
  - Smoking, tobacco and Peer Pressure
  - Alcohol prevention
  - Drug Abuse Prevention

© Copyright PharmCon 2008
"It's hard to create humor because of the unfair competition from the real world." – Peters Almanac

"A person without a sense of humor is like a wagon without springs -- jolted by every pebble in the road." – Henry Ward Beecher

"Laughter is the closest thing to the grace of God." – Karl Barth
Top 10 quotes you will NEVER hear in a Pharmacy!

- #10 “Sure I can wait a half hour, I can see how busy you are”
- #9 “No, Humira® doesn’t require a prior authorization on your prescription plan”
- #8 “I’m in the donut hole, I love to pay my fair share.”
- #7 “Oh, yes your doctor called in that prescription as you were leaving the office”
- #6 “Here is my new insurance card, my birth date, and my current address.”
Top 10 quotes you will NEVER hear in a Pharmacy!

- #5 "I didn’t lose my Vicodin, I didn’t flush them, my dog didn’t eat them, and my purse wasn’t stolen. I took more than prescribed. I think I’m really addicted."

- #4 "A $60 copay is a great value for medication that is that effective."

- #3 "I can’t tell the difference between the brand and generic. They are equally effective"

- #2 "My Micardis is $70, I guess I’ll hold off on my Viagra, since blood pressure control is more important."

- #1 "I always go home and count my pills, and I think your tech gave me 5 extra. Could I reimburse you?"
There is an easier way…
And finally....