



How to Drive Work-Life Balance in Healthcare

A CHECKLIST FOR LEADERS

The COVID-19 pandemic – and its aftermath – demonstrated the serious consequences of health worker burnout. Over-worked and over-stressed employees are more likely to make medical errors, putting patient safety and care quality in jeopardy. As the healthcare industry continues to grapple with worker shortages, health systems are looking for new strategies to encourage work-life balance and combat burnout.

[Addressing Health Worker Burnout](#), an in-depth report from the U.S. Surgeon General, shows what the health community needs to do to prioritize work-life balance. It offers specific recommendations and resources for many different healthcare stakeholders. Below is a summary of some key points from the report that resonated with us here at Visante.

Over-worked and over-stressed employees are more likely to make medical errors, putting patient safety and care quality in jeopardy.

»» Focus on health and safety for all workers

- Make well-being part of your leadership model.** Consider establishing a Chief Wellness/Well-being Officer role, with dedicated resources and decision-making powers. Develop and measure well-being key performance indicators.
- Regularly assess and respond to signs of burnout.** Consider using annual engagement surveys as well as validated tools from the [National Academy of Medicine Resource Compendium for Health Worker Well-Being](#).
- Encourage your staff to take advantage of breaks and leave time.** This includes paid leave, sick leave, family leave, and rest breaks. Leverage your leaders as role models to communicate these opportunities and model their use.
- Establish a workplace violence prevention program.** This should include a zero-tolerance policy for violence. For additional guidance, review the [Joint Commission's workplace safety standards and resources](#).
- Increase access to mental health and substance use care.** Ensure that all workers have access to confidential mental health services for themselves and their families, including hotlines and Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).

»» Prioritize connections with patients, colleagues and the community

- Invest in peer support programs to discuss current challenges.** Consider virtual or in-person meetings on specific topics, or a buddy program to help improve discussion and knowledge-sharing around common issues and obstacles.
- Reduce administrative burdens.** Review and improve scheduling and care team delegation plans. Consider conducting an audit to identify specific opportunities to reduce duplicative administrative work.
- Optimize technology to increase time with patients.** Simplify Electronic Health Record (EHR)-based workflows and increase virtual care options to address patient and health worker usability issues.
- Increase work schedule flexibility and autonomy.** Offer flexibility for shift start and end-times. Consider hiring temporary contract workers to support job-sharing and periodic shift coverage.
- Promote diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.** Diverse teams can help address structural racism, microaggressions and bias. They have also been shown to improve the quality of patient care.

»» Finding the “Goldilocks zone”

New data from Slack’s Workforce Index reveals that achieving the ideal balance of focus time, collaboration time, social connection, and downtime is key to worker productivity. But finding this “Goldilocks zone” for work-life balance – and staying there – is tougher than it looks. To help workers reach this ideal zone, health systems can use the checklist above to prioritize well-being in their processes, workflows, and culture.

For more tips on how to maximize productivity and reduce burnout in the world of pharmacy, check out our blog article, [How to address pharmacy technician burnout](#).



Visante helps health systems accelerate their financial and operational performance. With our deep expertise and innovative solutions, we can drive significant value by optimizing your health system pharmacy program. Contact us at solutions@visanteinc.com or call (866) 388-7583 to learn more about how we can support your organization.