



STRESS & DEPRESSION

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SITUATIONAL STRESSORS

Challenges	Solutions
<p>Inflexible time; sleep deprivation; fatigue and exhaustion</p>	<p>Adhere to reasonable limits for the number of hours spent in direct patient care</p> <p>Ensure mandated and personal days off</p> <p>Guard protected time (shared responsibility of residents and programs)</p> <p>Teach principles of time management</p> <p>Teach fatigue management</p> <p>Reduce/eliminate non-educational and/or "service" demands on residents</p> <p>Educate staff about resident sleep time, to prevent unnecessary paging, etc.</p> <p>Urge development of personal coping skills/resources with attention to balance in resident's lifestyle: social contacts, nutrition, exercise, meditation, relaxation, spirituality, and "play"</p>
<p>Heavy work load</p>	<p>Establish reasonable maximum number of admissions and number of patients cared for per resident (some specialties have already placed limits on this)</p> <p>Establish reasonable number of outpatient visits per ambulatory session (some specialties have already placed limits on this)</p> <p>Allow for the gradually increasing complexity of patients' medical problems</p> <p>Provide adequate supervision and provide relief backup if residents get too fatigued or overwhelmed</p> <p>Add members of the team (e.g. physician assistants, nurse practitioners), to relieve "service" demands</p>



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SITUATIONAL STRESSORS (CONT'D)

<p>Onerous clerical and administrative responsibilities</p>	<p>Plan for appropriate support staff and technical equipment (computers, phlebotomists, accessible medical records)</p> <p>Provide instruction on administrative roles/time management</p> <p>Encourage other team members to work up to their capabilities and not become overly dependant on residents</p> <p>Assign clerical functions to other team members; look at restructuring work tasks</p>
<p>Shortage of other members of the health care team (nursing, social services, laboratory workers)</p>	<p>Provide appropriate number of other team members</p> <p>Provide instruction about available resources and capabilities</p> <p>Encourage other team members to work up to their capabilities and perform the duties for which they were trained; discourage overdependence on residents</p>
<p>Difficult patients (e.g. drug and alcohol abusers, abusive personalities)</p>	<p>Offer support group meetings for residents to discuss the impact of patients on them as people, and to discuss the impact of what's going on in their lives on patient care</p> <p>Establish maximum number of difficult patients per resident</p> <p>Provide adequate supervision; if they feel well supervised, with ready access to faculty should they get "stuck," residents may feel better able to care for difficult patients</p> <p>Enhance faculty roles</p>
<p>Sub-optimal learning environment</p>	<p>Facilitate nurturing environment</p> <p>Provide formal instruction for attending staff to improve teaching skills</p> <p>Assure regular evaluation of and feedback to residents and teaching staff</p>



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SITUATIONAL STRESSORS (CONT'D)

Sub-optimal learning environment	<p>Honor protected time</p> <p>Formulate and enforce a zero tolerance policy for harassment or hazing of residents/trainees</p> <p>Provide strategies for teaching/learning/retention</p> <p>Identify opportunities to recognize and reward effort, competency, and caring</p>
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