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Title

Family Physicians in Kansas Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Priority 1 (Research Category)

COVID-19

Presenters

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Abstract

Introduction The novel coronavirus infectious disease (COVID-19) has spread rapidly with vast global implications. This study assessed how family physicians in Kansas responded to COVID-19 and the effects of the pandemic on the physicians' well-being.

Methods. The authors conducted a cross-sectional survey of 113 family physicians in Kansas between May 22, 2020 and June 25, 2020. The study participants completed an anonymous, 18-item survey assessing family physicians' concerns about being exposed to COVID-19, levels of personal depression, anxiety, stress, and burnout in addition to demographic information.

Results. There was a 45.6% response rate, with 50.4% (n=57) of the respondents reporting manifestations of burnout. The physicians who personally treated any presumptive or confirmed COVID-19 patient, compared to those who did not, were more likely to report at least one manifestation of burnout (odds ratio[OR]=3.96; 95% confidence interval [CI], 1.38-11.36; P = .011), experience emotional exhaustion (OR=3.21; 95% CI, 1.01-10.10; P<.05), and feel a higher level of personal stress (OR=1.13; 95% CI, 1.01-1.27; P=.011).

Conclusion. Our findings demonstrate that the COVID-19 pandemic may be taking an emotional toll on family physicians in Kansas. This study provides a baseline from which to continue further monitoring of outcomes such as burnout, depression, anxiety, and stress, to determine the need for interventions, and influence the implementation of programs to support physician wellness. These data can help drive wellness and mental health support initiatives at local, state, and national levels to help diminish the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on physicians.