

Wellbeing and Burnout in Oncology

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Disclosures

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Member of the ESMO Resilience Task Force (2020-now)

Recipient of the ESMO Leaders Generation Programme (2023-2024)

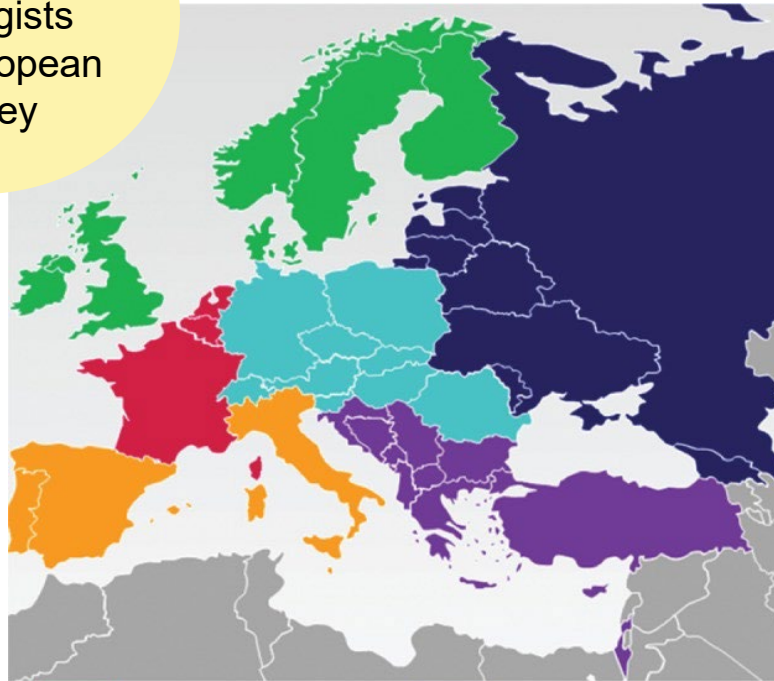
Outline



1. Wellbeing and burnout
2. Personal risk and contributing factors to burnout
3. Why is oncology unique? (or not?)

Burnout in oncology

Burnout in
Young
Oncologists
Pan-European
Survey



52.3% Northern Europe & British Isles

63.4% Western Europe

84.2% Central Europe

73.0% Eastern Europe

79.1% SouthWestern Europe

82.9% SouthEastern Europe

Banerjee et al. *Ann Oncol* 2017

52-84%

young oncologists (≤ 40 yo)
(n=737, 41 countries)

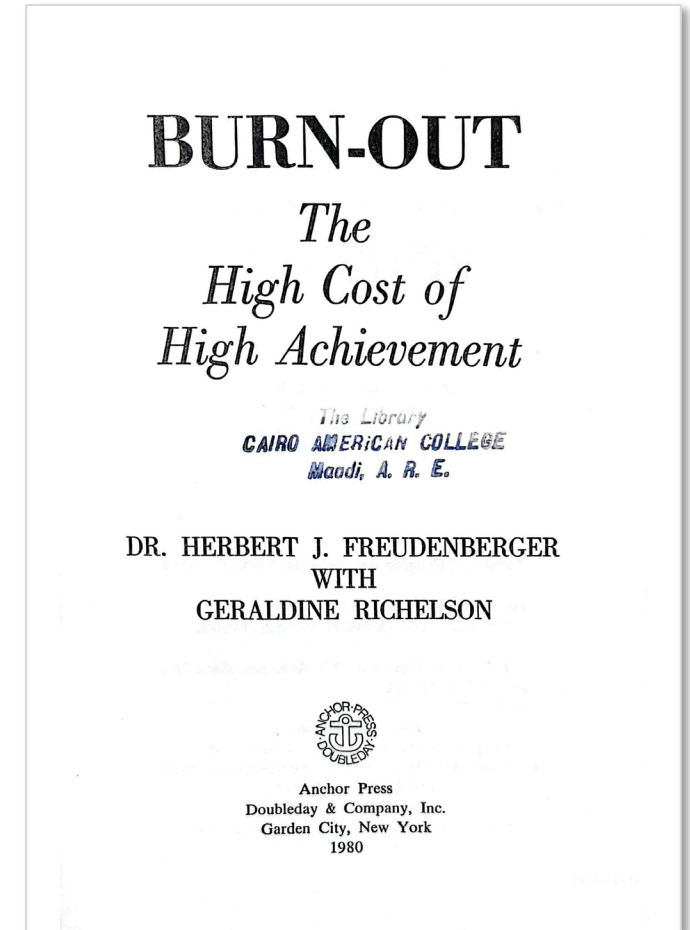
Murali and Banerjee. *Cancer Treat Rev* 2018
Hlubocky et al. *ASCO Educational Book* 2016

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Burnout

- 1973: Identified by Herbert Freudenberger PhD
- **Occupational-related** clinical syndrome that manifests as chronic work and interpersonal pressures persevere over time
- Three core dimensions:
 - **Physical & emotional exhaustion**
 - **Cynicism & depersonalization**
 - **↓ sense of professional accomplishment**



Burnout



WHO expanded definition (May 2019): “occupational syndrome” specifically ties burnout to “chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.”

[Home](#) / [News](#) / Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International Classification of Diseases



Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International Classification of Diseases

28 May 2019 | Departmental update | Reading time: Less than a minute (180 words)

Burn-out is included in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as an occupational phenomenon. It is **not** classified as a medical condition.

Burnout is potentially short-term



Burnout is a stable, insidious, chronic process

versus

- ✗ compassion and empathy fatigue, or moral distress
- ✗ depression

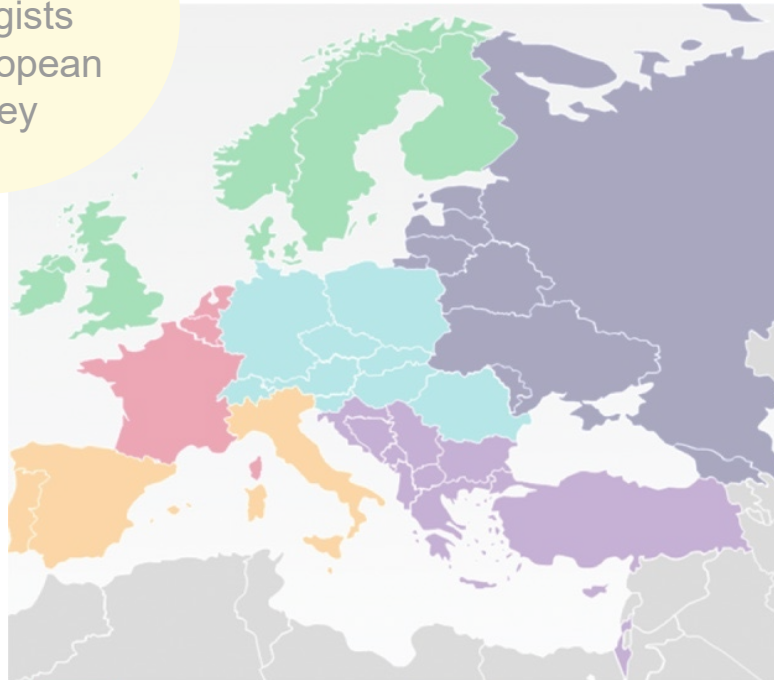


...as symptoms of burnout generally resolve once there is a **change in the work environment**

→ but psychiatric disorders may be precursors or consequence

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Banerjee et al. Ann Oncol 2017

- **Younger age/early career**
- **Social isolation**
- **Increased quantity of work**
- **Reduced quality of work**
 - Admin workload, patient volume
 - Research/education/'meaningful' work
- **Lack of control over work**
 - workload, vacation time/work-life balance, hobbies
- **Stressful professional experience**
 - Emotional burden, fast evolving field, litigations

Murali and Banerjee. *Cancer Treat Rev* 2018
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Burnout...not just doctors!





Potential consequences of burnout

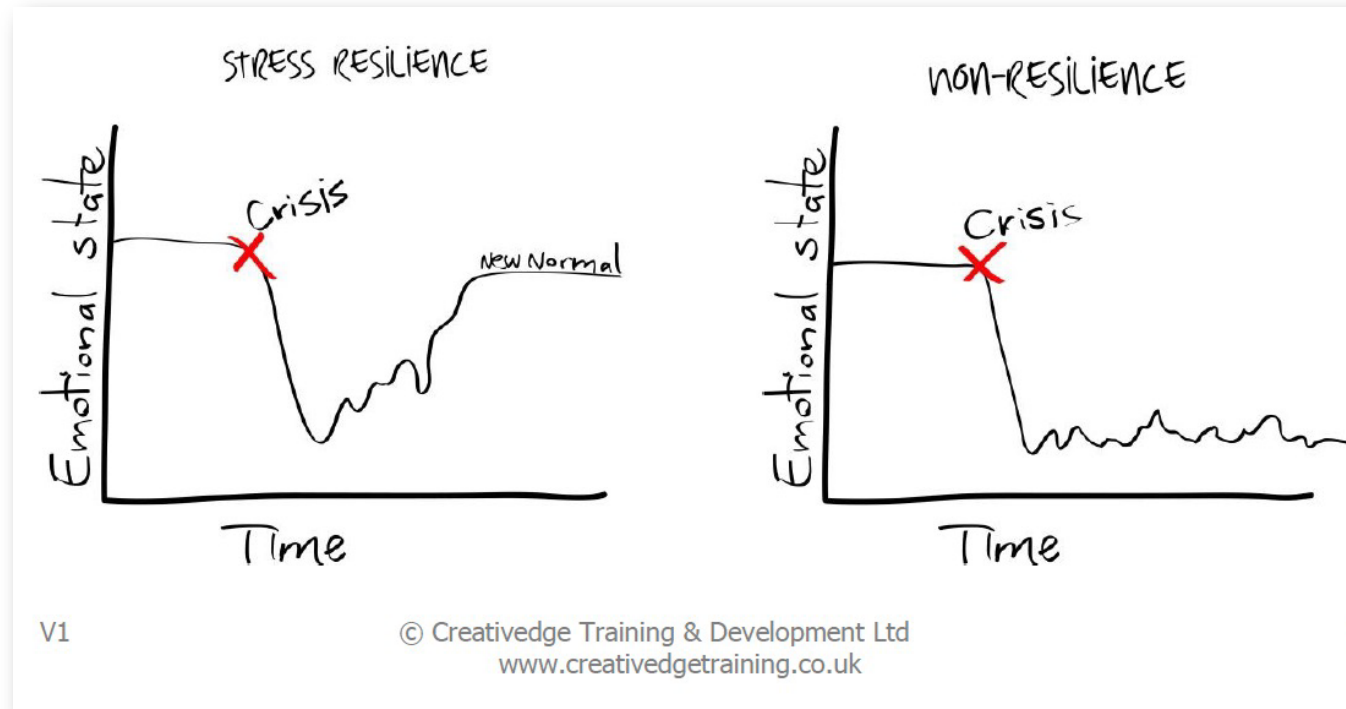
- **Poor patient care**
 - Increase in medical errors, litigations, etc.
- **Poor work-life balance**
- **Poor mental and physical health**
 - Risk of mental health issues including substance abuse and suicide
- **Workforce shortage**
 - Resignation/attrition, early retirement

Burnout is expensive!

US\$4.6 billion
per year

Personal resiliency

Ability to bounce back from setbacks and take on new challenges
“inner strength”



Resilience in oncology

- **Employee resilience is associated with**
 - ↓ stress
 - ↑ work engagement
 - ↑ organisational commitment
- **Low resilience – ↑ experience burnout**
- **Resilient leaders** impacts performance and engagement of teams
 - More likely to engage in leadership behaviours
 - e.g. providing creative ideas, problem-solving, or encouraging others to contribute meaningfully



Well-being

The World Health Organization-Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5)

Please indicate for each of the five statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the last two weeks. Notice that higher numbers mean better well-being.

Example. If you have felt cheerful and in good spirits more than half of the time during the last two weeks, select number three.

		All of the time	Most of the time	More than half of the time	Less than half of the time	Some of the time	At no time
1	I have felt cheerful and in good spirits	5	4	3	2	1	0
2	I have felt calm and relaxed	5	4	3	2	1	0
3	I have felt active and vigorous	5	4	3	2	1	0
4	I woke up feeling fresh and rested	5	4	3	2	1	0
5	My daily life has been filled with things that interest me	5	4	3	2	1	0

Wellbeing vs Wellness at Work



Take home messages



- **Burnout** can happen to **anyone**, at **anytime**
- **Prevention** is better than cure! Let's take action – it is everyone's responsibility.
- *"You cannot pour from an empty cup..."* → caring for the carers.
- **Personal resiliency** can be developed...more with C. Hardy tomorrow!