

Caring for Our Community: Identifying Factors that Influence Well-Being in Pharmacy Staff

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BACKGROUND

- Literature identifies that levels of burnout among university staff are comparable with “high-risk” groups, such as healthcare professionals.¹
- The 2019 APhA Consensus recommends that clinical and educational settings integrate well-being and resilience into work environments and education standards through ongoing education, self-evaluation, reflection, and subsequent training for all community members, including staff.²
- While prior studies quantified the degree of burnout in higher education staff, there are limited studies evaluating factors influencing burnout and well-being in pharmacy staff.

The purpose of this study was to identify factors influencing staff burnout and well-being and solicit solutions for improving pharmacy staff well-being.

METHODS

- 60-minute focus groups were held in Fall 2022 using a semi-structured interview format focused on burnout, well-being, and recommendations for well-being.
- Twenty-seven staff members participated in five focus groups, organized by staff role (i.e., Administrative Staff, Support Staff, and Research Staff).

Data Analysis

- Inductive coding was used to identify and report themes within the data set to create the study codebook.
- Two researchers independently applied the codebook to each transcript. Coding discrepancies were reviewed and discussed until consensus was reached.

RESULTS

WELL- BEING



Top Overall Themes:

1. Workplace Relationships
2. Trust and Autonomy
3. Development Opportunities
4. Resources

Administrative Staff: Recognition & Appreciation

“Appreciation- it may just be simple tasks and things like that but having a simple acknowledgment and thank you really help you feel appreciated and go a long way”

Support Staff: Recognition & Appreciation

“Knowing that you are appreciated for the work that you do. Perfect example, last week I got a handwritten card from [a faculty member] and it almost brought tears to my eyes.”

Research Staff: Relationships

“I've been very fortunate that I haven't been caught in a dynamic and work that is unhealthy or consistently negative. There is usually an easy and good professional relationship with my coworkers.”

BURNOUT



Top Overall Themes:

1. Higher Education Culture
2. Unrealistic Expectations
3. Insufficient Space

Administrative Staff: Bureaucracy

“Dealing with some of that government bureaucracy, red tape, and all those hurdles you have to go through- that'll definitely bring you down too.”

Support Staff: Turnaround Time

“The expectation in the school is that things be done in what they think of as a timely manner. The expectation of, ‘I want to hire a person to start next Monday’ and we haven't gotten approval from leadership or finance. They don't respect the timeline.”

Research Staff: Parking

“Parking is far and away, my biggest irritation every single day.”

RECOMMENDATIONS



No Consistent Overall Themes Identified Across All Staff Roles

Administrative Staff: Respect

“Staff doesn't feel, like if they do give a recommendation that [it] is really going to be followed through on. If there is a way to make that happen- really value the opinion of the people that are doing the work. I think that could go a long way.”

Support Staff: Wellness Days

“I really like the idea of like a wellness day for staff. That way a tech could step out of their little cave and be involved in the wellness days, and we could all come to campus and enjoy each other.”

Research Staff: Employee Accountability

“Be more proactive against claims of sexism, racism, you know get rid of the bad eggs.”

CONCLUSIONS

This study explores and provides insight into workplace factors that influence staff burnout and fulfillment in pharmacy education, as well as recommendations to support staff well-being.

- Staff groups were found to have unique factors that contributed to their well-being and burnout and distinct recommendations.
 - Notably, Support Staff and Administrative Staff identified similar factors contributing towards well-being.
- Despite differences in job responsibilities of Administrative and Support Staff members, overlap in well-being factors seen could be attributed to similar advantages and challenges of their people-facing roles, which may not be as prominent in Research staff positions.

Findings contribute to broader conversations of prioritizing staff well-being in higher education and can inform employers of areas to focus strategies to improve staff well-being.

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