



CMA Study on Physician Burnout

45.7% of Canadian physicians were found to be in advanced stages of burnout...

...this is higher than previous studies of burnout within other occupational groups in Canada (38% to 42%).¹

Slightly more female physicians (47.6%) than male (44.6%) are in advanced stages of burnout. Physicians under 35 or 55 years or older are less likely to suffer from advanced burnout than their colleagues in the 35–54 age group. There is no measurable difference in the proportion of general practitioners/family physicians and specialists who are in advanced stages of burnout.

Burnout levels with average hours worked per week excluding on-call

Burnout levels	Average hours worked per week excluding call					Total
	Less than 40	40 to 59	60 to 79	80 or more	Not stated	
Managing stress levels	151	359	151	33	9	703
	44.4%	39.7%	32.5%	25.6%	28.1%	37.6%
Early stages of burnout	56	146	77	28	6	313
	16.5%	16.1%	16.6%	21.7%	18.8%	16.7%
Advanced stages of burnout	133	400	236	68	17	854
	39.1%	44.2%	50.9%	52.7%	53.1%	45.7%
Total	340	905	464	129	32	1870
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Recognizing that physicians are vulnerable to the full range of health problems that affect others, including stress in the workplace and the challenges of life-work balance CMA launched the Centre for Physician Health and Well-being in 2003. The centre provides a trusted information resource to physicians, physicians in training and their families, to help them maintain health and prevent illness, and to provide national leadership and advocacy on issues affecting their health and morale.

¹ As part of its commitment to foster physician health and well-being, the CMA gathered data on occupational stress and burnout in its 2003 *Physician Resource Questionnaire* (PRQ). The PRQ incorporated *Boudreau's Burnout Questionnaire*, a 30-item scale developed by Dr. Robert Boudreau, Professor of Organizational Behaviour in the Faculty of Management at the University of Lethbridge. *Boudreau's Burnout Questionnaire* examines three dimensions of burnout: depersonalization, lack of personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion.

The 2003 PRQ was sent to a scientific random sample of 8172 active Canadian physicians (including both CMA members and nonmembers, excluding residents). The survey was in the field from February 2003 to June 2003; CMA received 2251 responses.

