



Presenteeism

Presenteeism is deeply entrenched in medical culture due to:



Culture of 'showing up'



Lack of logistical support and formalized sick leave



Difficulty getting buy-in from leadership to support time off



Belief that physicians not (yet) in crisis better than no physician

"...I'd rather have the presenteeism and somebody who was partially doing stuff than not..." [Stakeholder 6]



Return to Work

Physicians face challenges upon returning to work.



79% of physicians who took a leave of absence for mental health issues returned to work

Challenges



Feeling skills can be 'rusty' upon return



Managing administrative and clinical workload

Potential Adaptive Responses



Overlap return with locum/ start with fewer shifts or no call



Identify a mentor or support individual at work



Impact of the Pandemic

The pandemic has resulted in a **decline in mental health** amongst physicians, as well as **increased presenteeism, burnout, and distress.**



Promising Practices

To improve physician mental health & RtW



Centralized locum database



Insurance coverage



Leave navigators



Clear accessible policies



Gradual return to work



Wellness breaks and resources



Mental Health, Leaves of Absence (LoA) & Return to Work (RTW) Experiences of Physicians

Sarah Simkin, Lindsay Hedden, Elena Neiterman, Ed Spilg, Nancy Côté, Monica Aggarwal, Mara Mihailescu, Sarah Spencer, Kelly Gregory, Nabeelah Ahmed, Nour Elmestekawy, Julieanna Mawko & Ivy Bourgeault

As a part of the **Healthy Professional Worker Partnership**, the following preliminary findings emerged.



Literature Synthesis

From our reading of over **375** articles:

There is a lack of literature related to **mental health** and **LOA/RTW** (including the impact on the individual, the family, and the workplace), **presenteeism**, **gender**, and **leadership**.



The following are the emerging findings from **304** survey responses, **21** stakeholder and **29** worker interviews.



Mental Health



60% of physicians suffered from a mental health issue during their career or training.



54% of physicians made changes to work as a result of mental health issues.



Leaves of Absence

Many physicians consider taking a leave, but few actually do.

Of the physicians who suffered from **mental health issues** (60%),

51%

of physicians considered **taking a leave**.



The Healthy Professional Worker Partnership (HPW) is a CIHR & SSHRC funded initiative that examines mental health, leaves of absence and return to work from a comparative and intersectional gender lens. Please visit <https://bit.ly/3o1XwUa> for details to cite this document.