Seeking Mental Health Care as Physicians and Future Physicians

By AMA-MSS Committee on Bioethics and Humanities

Anonymous Polling Link:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7G26K8Z
Physicians and Mental Health

- Nearly 40% of physicians stated they would be reluctant to seek formal medical care for treatment of a mental health condition due to concerns about repercussions to their medical licensure.
- An estimated 300 physicians die by suicide in the U.S. per year. Compared to the general population, physicians are almost twice as likely to commit suicide.
- 78% of physicians said they experience some symptoms of professional burnout.
- 45.2% of second-year residents surveyed expressed experiencing burnout.
Reporting Requirements

- Federation of State Medical Boards Stance
  - “Impairment” vs. “potentially impairing illness”\(^1\)
  - Supports licensure questions that “minimize the impact of policies and procedures that impact negatively on the wellness of licensees”\(^2\)

- Questions differ per state board (initial & renewals)\(^3,4\)
  - Current impairment
  - Vague previous or any lifelong impairment/illness
    - Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin
  - Detailed disclosures:
    - Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Florida, Mississippi, Rhode Island, Washington
Our Panelists:

Alana Iglewicz, M.D.
- Advisor for Wellness at the UCSD SOM
- Associate Resident Training Director for the UCSD psychiatry

Kenneth M. Certa, M.D.
- Residency program director at Jefferson University
- Has treated students, residents, and physicians
- PAMED Board Member

Katherine M. Tynus, M.D.
- Residency program director and internal medicine site director
- Past Presidents of Illinois State Medical Society