

Why do providers burn out? What can we do?



Using emotional competence to
prevent or handle burnout



By
Ane Haaland
Gladys Etemesi
Phelomena Munga
Hiza Dayo
Mwanamvua Boga

Referencing and acknowledging the iCARE-Haaland model

- *Please feel free to use and adapt the material in this presentation, and the model it is built on, by referring to the model, and the authors:*
- This presentation is adapted from «***Why do providers burn out? What can we do?***», which is part of the learning materials in the iCARE-Haaland model.
- **To reference this content please use the following:** Haaland A, with Boga M, 2020. Communicating with awareness and emotional competence: introducing the iCARE-Haaland model for health professionals across cultures. With contributions from training teams, Vicki Marsh and Sassy Molyneux
- <https://connect.tghn.org/training/icare-haaland-model/>
- The authors' names should remain on the presentation, with a by line recognizing the person who (has adapted and) is presenting the presentation

Share experiences of burnout with colleagues in the group

- How did you **recognize** you are suffering from burnout?
- How did you **feel**?
- How do you **communicate**?
- What do you need to **learn**?



Objectives

To strengthen awareness and knowledge about

- Burnout as a problem for providers
- Causes, signs and symptoms of burnout
- The relationship between burnout and emotions
- Effects of burnout on communication, relationship with patients and colleagues, and on patient centred care
- Helpful strategies to prevent and handle burnout

To strengthen skills to

- Recognize early signs and symptoms of burnout
- Using emotional competence to control and prevent burnout

Symptoms and consequences of burnout

- **Emotional exhaustion** - where one closes down emotionally to others and is not able to take in any more
- **Depersonalization** - distancing oneself from the situation. Branding patients as objects; categorizing
- **Dissatisfaction at work** – low morale, not feeling like working the following day, feeling less productive



- Burnout can lead to Poor/lack of patient centred care** - treating patients with disrespect and disinterest
- Lawsuits - being taken to court for negligence of duty
 - Medical errors - e.g. injecting an empty syringe

The nurse was rude

“In the unit apart from nurses, there are students, doctors, clinicians, and mothers in a very small room, very busy and stuffy. People/ staff react and are emotional.

*A mother lost a baby and was not handled well, she was rushed to sign papers and no explanation how the baby died, the relatives reacted badly and **the nurse was rude with a “don’t care” attitude towards them, which made her to be reported to higher office.”***

Facts on burnout in health services



Burnout: affecting people in the helping professions:

- 18-82% of carers burn out
- China - 66.5% – 87.8%
- 60% of US physicians show signs of burnout
- <50% of 3rd year medical students suffer burnout

Studies on burnout in Africa

Study: Kenyatta National Hospital: 95.4%

- **Main causes:** Work environment/resources
 - Dealing with relatives, Personal factors

Sub-Saharan Africa: 40-80%, increasing:

- Many HPs leave the country:
 - looking for better working conditions
 - leaving an acute shortage

Malawi: Maternity staff burnout

- 72% emotional exhaustion
- 43% depersonalization
- 74% reduced personal accomplishment



Studies are looking at external causes for burnout, mainly

Why do providers burn out, emotionally?

Discuss in groups:

What are reasons providers burn out?

Can stress lead to burnout?



Some other causes of burn out

- **Prolonged stressful situations at work**
- **Lack of emotional competence** skills to identify and handle stress constructively
- **Not able to say no** and negotiate
- **Fear, often not acknowledged**
- **Inability of providers to invest energy in themselves** as they serve patients
- **Lack of awareness** about emotional needs
- **Lack of skills** to take care of emotions
- **Note: Most of these are *internal factors***
- ***Consequences for abilities to take action?***



“It made me sad to the core!”

- *“I was on night duty with my colleagues and the night was extremely busy. At the break of day, we were at our worst burn out!*
- *When time came to hand over our shift, my “senior” as I will call her for now tried in every aspect to look for any minor anomalies she could lay her mind on. This almost brought how I handled my emotions to the death bed after coming this far! (Remember I’m only human) she never appreciated anything we did through the night shift and it made me sad to the core!”*

What can happen over time?

If you let

- STRESS rule your day –
- Insecurity turn to Anger –
- Overwork to being overwhelmed..

**Build up
Bomb blast
BURN OUT!**



Situations that can lead to **BOMB BLAST**

- *“I controlled my emotions but my biggest challenges still remains, the pain that remains inside, the anger and bitterness of letting someone intimidate you and not being able to confront him/her back. Each time I see that nurse, I feel very angry at her”*
- *“ Wherever I grow angry, I accumulate energy for revenge! I am surprised to realize how much evil I can think; it means given time I can do a lot of damage”.*



Which strategies can you use to **prevent** stress and burnout?

- **Share experiences** of how you prevent stress and burnout:
 - what you do already?
 - what can you learn from others?
- Reflect on **effects** on you – if you have less stress and burnout?
- **Effect** on handling colleagues, and patients?



The serenity prayer

- **(Higher power), grant me**
 - the serenity to accept things I cannot change;
 - the courage to change the things I can, and
 - wisdom to know the difference.

Strategies to prevent burnout: Evidence from literature



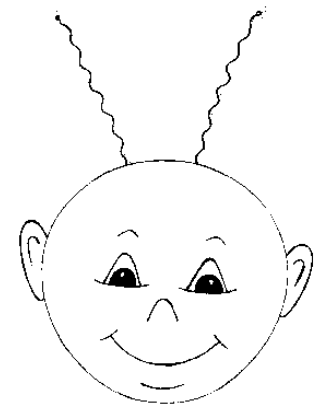
➤ **Work place: support from management**

- Team building experiences
- Wellness support programmes
- Social support from colleagues
- Emotional management and emotion control
- Use of emotion-focused coping strategies or trainings

➤ **Work - life balance**

In addition – a number of self-care activities you find enjoyable, will help:

- Listen to music, sing; read a book
- Engage in and support community activities
- Do something physical – swim, dance, walk, run
- Spend time with family/friends
- Go on vacation
- **Seek personal therapy**



Example: How you handle stress and burnout now

- *“I used to feel stressed, get angry very fast when a person comes at a time when I’m so tired and almost time to come out of work for either lunch or evening. I’m now able to step back – listen first then give answer. By stepping back when am angry has really helped me”*



“The good feeling lasts forever”

- *“My first month in NICU wasn't easy for me, I wasn't confident in nursing babies in NICU. But I happened to have worked on night shifts with a senior nurse who really supported me. She taught me many things and was always ready to teach, correct and guide me .*
- *This indeed built my confidence in the unit, I therefore reacted positively by wanting to learn more and ask questions.*
- ***The good feeling lasts forever”***

Strategies to prevent burn out:

Use emotional competence skills

- **Recognize** warning signs early: **Step back – analyze - ACT!**
- **Acknowledge and deal with the causes of negative emotions and exhaustion - “refuel /re-energize” by e.g:**
 - Asking for and accepting help
 - Talk with someone about your feelings; learn about emotions
 - Sharing good stories, jokes with friends: Laugh!
 - Have good talks with friends; share meals
 - Have good interactions with patients, colleagues, friends
 - Appreciate and give compliments
 - Give (and receive) hugs
- **Makes you re-connect, feel balanced and**
- **move on with work**



Preventing stress from building up to a burnout:

Using emotional competence skills

Step 1: Recognize:

- Recognize your own emotions: Are you overworked? Sad? Frustrated? Feeling stressed?

Step 2: Acknowledge, be aware

- Get antenna out. Think!

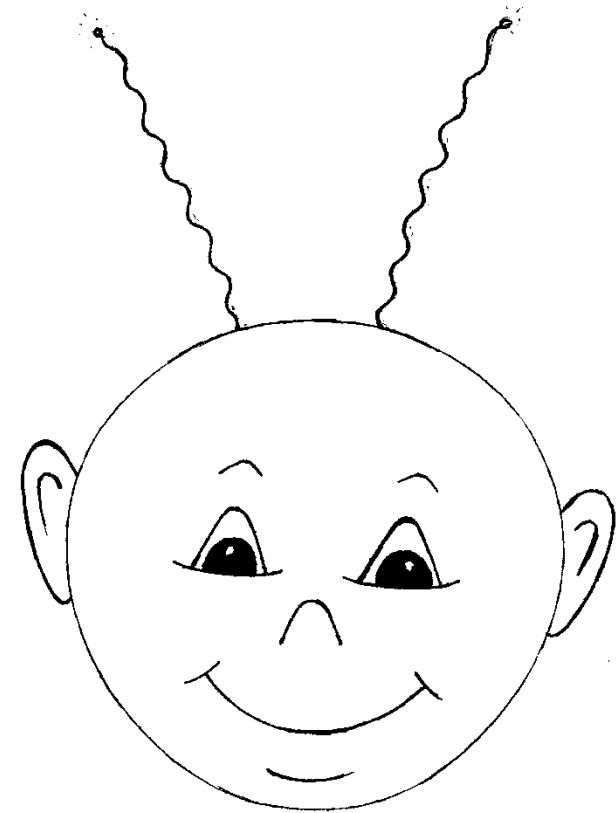
Step 3: Step back - analyze

- Stop automatic reactions. Analyse reasons for emotions. Reflect on consequences.

Step 4: Act – with understanding

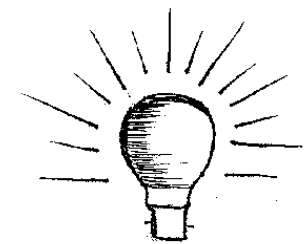
- Based on analysis – act, with awareness of your needs, and with kindness to yourself
- Do something that restores your energy, and makes you want to go to work tomorrow

If relevant – also recognize and analyse emotions and needs of patients, and/or colleagues



YOU have
to change
the way
YOU handle
the causes of stress and burnout
yourself!

*If you expect the people from the outside to
change
you get nowhere!*



Look at internal factors for burnout – and ACT!

**To smile does not mean absence of
sorrow, or stress, or conflicts, or burnout**



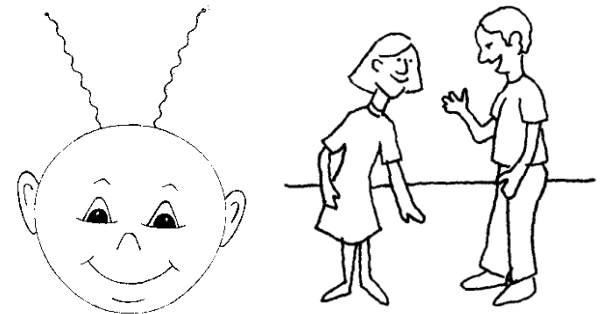
**It means
the ability
to deal with it
constructively**

Summary:

Recognize and prevent burnout

- **Recognize burnout danger signs: Take action**
- ***Say NO with awareness and respect***
 - Acknowledge if/how present workload wears you down: Analyse and discuss emotional and practical consequences
- **Focus on common goal:** Treat patients well; do a good job
- **Value your own contribution** (humbly), then supervisor will (likely) also value you
- **Appreciate** your supervisor, and colleagues, to prevent emotional exhaustion!

- ***Main methods: Emotional competence***



Awareness, + active listening

In summary – preventing burnout

- Recognize, acknowledge and **take a step back** from emotions
- Reflect – get **clarity**
- Use emotional competence to take **a step forward** – to solve the problem – with awareness



Role-play:
The mother is stressed



Main points: stress listening

1. Manage your own emotions: Stay present and calm

- Use emotional competence, and -
- Do not get «infected» by her stress
- Step back from anger and other emotions: Stay friendly and present, use personal communication style

2. Manage patient's emotions: Respond constructively

- Show respect, communicate with an open mind
- Listen. Focus on understanding her problem
- Ask questions (short, simple) to find the causes of the anger/stress. Do not correct misinterpretations
- Avoid haste. Haste is the worst enemy of stress listening
- Encourage the person to find solutions. Suggested solutions should be expressed, if possible using her own reasoning
- Help the person to get a solution. Ask «What would you do? What idea do you have? Do not cut short

Main points: stress listening (2)

3. **Avoid** the following when the person is stressed:

- Smiling and small talk
- Patronising, e.g. «Take a deep breath»
- Interruptions
- Hiding behind the desk

4. **Helpful** things to do:

- Maintain continuous eye contact
- Seek informal seating to encourage communication
- Invite the person to sit, and maintain a sincere manner

5. **The Goal:**

- When communicating openly, with respect, **the person's self-esteem is not challenged**, and the angry outburst is used to **stimulate constructive responses** – using emotional competence

Resource slides from Stress module

- These can be repeated – to emphasize the link between stress and burnout

Useful strategies to prevent stress

- **Develop awareness:**
 - Recognize the situation (identify danger signals)
 - Identify and deal with the cause(s) of stress
 - Acknowledge the situation as it is
- **Take a step back/ Choose the right time**
- Negotiate with your boss
- Apologize?
- Share the issue with a colleague
- Take a rest/break



Buzz:

- ***Which of these strategies take care of your emotions? How?***

Taking care of emotions – preventing or dealing with stress

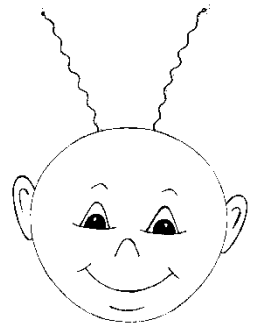
At work

- Share with people you trust: burden of stress reduces
- Take a (tea?)break – breathe!
- Do something physical – walk?
- Share a joke, Smile
- Cry



At home

- Listen to music, sing; read a book
- Look at photos with family – link to good moments
- Do something physical – swim, dance, walk, run
- Prepare a good meal, enjoy good smells - with



Preventing stress from building up: **Identifying and handling emotions**

Step 1: Recognize:

- Recognize your own emotions: Are you overworked? Feeling stressed, in general? If so -

Step 2: Acknowledge

- Get antenna out. Decide to be aware

Step 3: Step back

- When meeting patients or colleagues - stop automatic reactions, try to be fully present

Step 4: Listen with ears, eyes and heart:

- If patient is upset, or scared – deal with emotions first. Set your own stress aside (***for now***)
- When the patient trusts you, the quality in the communication can soothe your stress (***for now***)

Step 5: Take care of your needs: Find cause of stress

