



October 27, 2014

Dear Doctor:

The Colorado Medical Society – in partnership with the Behavioral Health and Wellness Program at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus – has launched a wellness toolkit for physicians. The toolkit addresses eight dimensions of wellness with a focus on reducing stress and burnout. We encourage your organization to distribute this free resource widely to your members in an effort to promote the health of all Colorado physicians.

In April 2011, CMS conducted an all-member morale survey that revealed only half of physician members felt that they were able to live a healthy lifestyle with regard to exercise and diet. Even fewer were satisfied with their ability to find time to relax through activities like yoga or reading. Numerous studies correlate physician wellness with increased patient safety, making declining wellness in our physician population a critical concern for our patients.

While physicians generally possess knowledge about healthy living, this knowledge does not always translate into practicing self-care. Approximately 50 percent of physicians report some symptoms of burnout. While physicians routinely recognize symptoms of burnout and stress in patients, family members and friends, they often fail to recognize such symptoms in themselves. Perhaps this is a professional hazard stemming from years of training to put others first. Now is the time for physicians to make their own health a priority. In doing so, they are more equipped to meet the needs of their patients and more likely to experience greater career satisfaction.

“DIMENSIONS: Work and Well-Being Toolkit for Physicians” contains a number of useful educational resources:

- A low-burden tool for measuring readiness to change to achieve wellness
- Step-by-step instructions for developing skills to assess one’s wellness
- Evidence-based strategies for improving wellness
- Suggestions for maintaining wellness

Recognizing that one size does not fit all, the toolkit contains a variety of protective practices physicians can integrate into a daily routine to not only prevent burnout but also create more fulfilling professional and personal lives. Whether time permits five minutes or an hour, the

toolkit offers strategies to improve wellness that can easily be integrated into the busiest physician's day.

Please accept this toolkit as a pre-holiday season gift from your friends and colleagues at Colorado Medical Society and COPIC. Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have about this effort. We appreciate your help.

Sincerely,



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President, Colorado Medical Society



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