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About Us

Welcome to *MD Culture Shift*, an Alberta Health Services (AHS) publication created by physicians for physicians through the Physician Diversity, Wellness, and Leadership Development portfolio.

The portfolio is focused on providing physician leaders with the knowledge, skills, and tools to foster a local team culture that models our organizational values and just culture principles, enhances the delivery of safe, quality care, and values wellness and diversity.

This publication shares insightful and valuable information in the areas of wellness, diversity, leadership development and showcases the great work being done throughout the province supporting a shift in the culture of medicine.

To see previous editions, please visit ahs.ca/mdwellness.

Open using your AHS profile to be able to access full content via embedded links.

Message from the CMO

Fourth Wave

We recognize the incredible work, dedication, professionalism and compassion that you have shown and continue to show as we work to treat patients and support the health of Albertans.

It is worth taking time to reflect on how we are feeling and how we are managing under stress. We need to attend to our own health and well-being to ensure that we can continue to function as individuals, in our families, in our communities, and as a team at work. Supporting each other through listening and checking in is important.

We know you continue to come to work every day to do your best for the people that we serve. The work that you do is critical to the health and well-being of Albertans.

As we implemented strategies to increase ICU capacity during the fourth wave of the pandemic, unfortunately this resulted in a reduction in surgical and other important clinical activity. Making these difficult decisions during that time, and as we continue to respond to the pandemic is deeply concerning and is causing moral distress.

Throughout the pandemic, physicians have been facing difficult decisions, every day. The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) has [an article](#) helping physicians identify when they may be experiencing moral distress and offers resources for support. We encourage you to read this and share it with your colleagues.



 Alberta Health Services
Healthy Albertans.
Healthy Communities.
Together.



During this difficult time, connect with friends, colleagues and loved ones. If you are struggling and feel you need more support, there are resources available through the [Physician & Family Support Program \(PFSP\)](#).

I (Francois), thank you for your continued hard work, dedication, resilience and ongoing commitment to provide the highest-quality of care to each and every one of your patients. You are making a difference to Albertans every day, and you continue to do it, to show up for Albertans and for your colleagues. I value and appreciate you.

Please know that I am here for you. I welcome any feedback by email to cmo@ahs.ca and am also willing to chat with you.

Dr. Francois Belanger
Chief Medical Officer and Vice President, Quality

Pandemic wellness

PFSP – New Offerings

PFSP continues to offer services on an **individual basis** by calling the assistance line at 1-877-767-4637. Two additional options are now available to support physicians struggling with moral distress:

1. An **educational session** of approximately 60 min in length, offered through Well Doc Alberta. Requests for an educational session are submitted by the physician leader via email to welldocalberta@ucalgary.ca.
2. **Small group support sessions** with a qualified therapist. A group would consist of six to 12 physicians (for example, from the same team or department) with a qualified therapist. Sessions could be virtual or in-person. Physician leaders interested in this option for their teams should call the PFSP assistance line at 1-877-767-4637 for further discussion.

CMA Pandemic Wellness Toolkit

The pandemic has taken a toll on the emotional and physical well-being of physicians, medical learners and health care workers. Many have had to cope with an increase or exacerbation of anxiety, burnout or other health challenges related to increasingly difficult workplace conditions.

PANDEMIC WELLNESS TOOLKIT



This [Pandemic Wellness Toolkit](#) includes proven wellness services and resources to support you at this stage of the pandemic.

December

AHS celebrates

- [International Volunteer Day - December 5](#)
- [World AIDS Day - December 1](#)
- [Women's Brain Health Day - December 2](#)

- [International Day of Persons with Disabilities - December 3](#)
- [National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women In Canada - December 6](#)
- [Human Rights Day - December 10](#)
- [The Lung Association's Christmas Seal](#)

AHS feature

Prevention of Workplace Violence and Prevention



In fall 2020, the PROactive: Partners in Professionalism partnered with the University of Calgary Office of CME&PD to host a three-part webinar series entitled “*Identifying and Managing Violence in the Workplace: Experiences and Strategies.*”

During the webinars, discussion happened around physician experiences of workplace violence, and context-appropriate strategies and tools for prevention and safe response. Learning materials are now available: [PROactive: Identifying and Managing Violence in the Workplace | Cumming School of Medicine | University of Calgary \(ucalgary.ca\)](#)

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, participants will be equipped to:

- Recognize risk factors that contribute to violence in the workplace
- Discuss strategies for responding to and de-escalating violence
- Access local resources and support for physician safety and wellness
- Prepare for joining the development of local violence prevention plan

Additional AHS resources

Patient-to-worker violence:

- [Workplace Violence Patient Poster \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#)
- [Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training | Insite \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](#)
- [Prevention of Harassment and Violence - Cycle of Prevention, Response and Learning \(AHS\)](#)

Artist's Corner

Wait For Me: A Music Video



“Wait for Me, the song we used on this project, was written at the lowest point of the pandemic, personally. I surrendered myself to the fact I was struggling with my mental health.

~ Dr. Grant Kennedy



[Wait For Me: A Music Video - Calgary Health Foundation](#)

Note: this video can evoke strong emotions, particularly for healthcare providers.

Two Calgary ER physicians, **Dr. Grant Kennedy**, musician and song writer, and **Dr. Heather Patterson**, photographer, through their artistry, combined 18 months of the story on the frontlines of health care. Dr. Kennedy and Dr. Heather Patterson made the video as a way to process their pandemic experiences and open up dialogue around mental health.

Wait for Me features real people and their real emotions facing their pandemic experience. “It’s important we remember we all have a story. We’re all humans behind this. Taking the time to photograph and share stories of people is a reminder of our humanity and the shared experience of COVID,” says Dr. Patterson, the photographer.

This project was funded by the Calgary Health Foundation who saw this as an opportunity to profile the extraordinary, selfless efforts of our health care providers during this public health crisis.

Upcoming Events

University of Calgary COVID Corner

Keeping COVID Out: Optimizing Outpatient Care to Reduce Hospitalizations

- Dec. 8, 7 - 9 p.m. More information [here](#).

CMA Wellness Connection

- [Mindful Parenting: Gaming & Internet Addiction](#): Dec. 2, 12 p.m.
- [Podcast Series: The personal cost of leading Canada's public health response to COVID-19](#): Dec. 8, 7 a.m.
- [Preventing and Overcoming Burnout: Addressing System Issues](#): Dec. 9, 12 p.m.
- [Stress Reduction Practices: – Balancing Priorities \(plus Yoga Nidra practice\)](#): Dec. 14, 12 p.m.
- [Compassion Rounds: Priorities and Time Management](#): Dec. 16, 7 a.m.

November in review

Bullying Awareness Week (Nov.15-19)

Bullying awareness week is a national campaign in Canada during the third week in November. It's a time to promote awareness, understanding and prevention of bullying. AHS defines bullying as the activity of repeated, aggressive or disrespectful behavior intended to hurt another person physically or mentally.

Bullying is characterized by an individual or individuals behaving in a certain way to gain power over another person. Bullying is a form of harassment and is covered under the AHS definition of harassment in our [Respectful Workplaces and the Prevention of Harassment and Violence policy suite](#).

AHS has developed and implemented policies, procedures and resources to address harassment and violence in the workplace with the goal of creating a psychologically safe work environment for our workforce. This includes the [Worker-to-Worker Behaviour Continuum](#), which outlines different types of behaviour, ranging from respectful behaviour to disrespect, harassment, bullying and violence. You can learn more by checking out the [Behaviour Continuum Booklet](#) and [Behaviour Continuum Poster](#). Everyone has a role to play in promoting healthy relationships and creating a positive, safe and inclusive workplace. It's all about how we live our values and relate with one another - one conversation, one interaction at a time. AHS offers a variety of supports to help you manage conflict respectfully and professionally. [Watch the video](#) to learn more.

Additional resources can be found on the Insite pages below:

- [Respectful Workplaces](#)
- [Change the Conversation](#)
- [Prevention of Workplace Harassment & Violence](#)

Harassment (including bullying) and violence need to be reported. When an incident occurs, AHS workers should report it to their manager (or next level leader) and in [MySafetyNet](#). Learn more about how to [seek help and report issues](#).

Additionally, please see the [Canadian Medical Association \(CMA\) guide: bullying in the workplace](#) which covers what bullying in health care looks like, why it persists and how to eliminate it from the culture of medicine.

Resources

Well Doc AB Education Sessions

Well Doc Alberta offers a [variety of education sessions](#) aimed at enhancing literacy and awareness about the science of physician wellness, promoting self-reflection, and helping to coach groups toward change. Session topics include moral dilemmas during COVID-19, imposter phenomenon, affirmation of professional calling, physician peer support team development and training, and more.

University of Calgary COVID Corner

Recordings from past COVID Corner sessions are available [online](#), including:

Moving into the Grey: The 4th Wave & Beyond (Sept.8, 2021)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Examine how polarizing positions on public health measures for COVID-19 may be harmful and how a multifaceted approach is preferred
- Debate the ethical and legal considerations of vaccine mandates and passports
- Discuss vaccinations and long COVID in children and how these factor into a safe return to school this fall

The Long Shadow of COVID: Reflecting on Moral Challenges (Oct.13, 2021)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- List moral dilemmas faced by physicians
- Explain the construct of moral distress
- Describe approaches for dealing with moral dilemmas and their consequences
- AHS resource: [Unpacking Moral Distress: An Introduction & Debriefing Tool](#)



Equity in Medicine

[Effective Allyship: Advancing Women in Healthcare Leadership](#)

With expertise and experience, panelists shared practical tips on how to be a good ally to advance women in healthcare leadership in this webinar hosted by Equity in Medicine and Sanokundu. Panelists: Dr. Javeed Sukhera, Dr. Marcia Anderson, Dr. Matthew Chow, Dr. Pauline Alakija, Dr. Dennis Kendel, Dr. Kim Kelly

Doctor of the Week Call for Nominations

Do you know a physician who has gone above and beyond during the pandemic to shape and drive improvements for patients? Perhaps a physician colleague has gone out of their way to help support others during a difficult day? If you know someone who you feel should be recognized, please email CMO@ahs.ca with your suggestion, and a brief description of why.



[Well Doc AB](#)

Well Doc Alberta offers resources and education to support Physician Wellness, including Physician Peer Support Training for physician groups, and a Community Bulletin Board to promote physician wellness events and research.



[Physician & Family Support Program](#)

1-877-SOS-4MDS (767-4637)
International: 403-930-0529 (you may call collect)
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