

New Physician Self-Assessment Tool Evaluates Four Areas of Whole-Person Well-Being

Research shows that physicians who take care of four key areas of their own health – biological, psychological, sociological and spiritual -- positively impact their patients' health as well. From more complete diagnoses to improved communication with their patients and fewer medical errors, these doctors better cope with the daily demands of their work. And physicians who lead balanced lives are also more likely to counsel their patients to engage in healthy behaviors like proper nutrition and health screenings. In turn, patients tend to enjoy better relationships with and follow the advice of physicians who “practice what they preach.”

Despite all this, physicians often become so busy taking care of others that they neglect their own health and well-being. With the assistance of physicians and medical staff professionals, The Center for Health Futures developed the **Physician Well-Being Self Assessment (PWSAT)** to help doctors examine their own whole-person health.

About 115 physicians who attended an Adventist Health System physician retreat last year participated in a pilot study to refine the PWSAT survey, and Florida Hospital's first-year residents recently became one of the first groups to use the new tool. All physician participants receive individual, confidential reports on their scores that highlight areas of special concern. In addition, group scores can be anonymously aggregated and shared with administrators, medical leaders and medical education institutions to assist them with designing and improving programs that help physicians develop and achieve better well-being.

With a mission of preparing competent and compassionate physicians, the Florida Hospital residency program plans to have residents complete the self-assessment each year to help measure the effectiveness of its personal development curriculum. Any low scoring areas can serve as talking points for discussion and exploration of improvement action plans.

*“PWSAT is the only tool that measures the four dimensions of being human which are aligned with our curriculum in Whole Person Care,” explains Florida Hospital's director of academic affairs for graduate medical education **Roy Lukman, Ph.D.** “Often, we place too much emphasis on our professional and academic development and ignore the personal side where the very energy for success resides. This tool forces attention to the balance of the four areas which is imperative for overall life satisfaction.”*

The PWSAT has already generated interest and inquiries from healthcare organizations across the country. Center for Health Futures Executive Director and Senior Research Fellow **Richard Bogue, Ph.D.** highlighted this new tool when he spoke to physicians and hospital leaders on the topic of physician wellness, satisfaction and engagement at The Catholic Health Association of the United States' System Leader Mission Forum in January. The Center is currently working on packaging the PWSAT for use by other

hospital systems and medical education institutions. To learn more, contact Dr. Bogue at Richard.Bogue@flhosp.org or 407-646-7120.