



Health & Well-being Environmental Assessment for Lasting Healthcare Workforce Resiliency (HEALtHy WI)



Author: Jill Lindwall MSN, RN, CPHQ WHA Quality Director, HEALtHy WI Project Director
Principal Investigator: Alicia Pilarski DO | Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine, Associate Chief Medical Officer for Froedtert Hospital

HEALtHy WI Overview

In 2023, a comprehensive environmental assessment was conducted across Wisconsin (WI) hospitals and healthcare systems to address the following key questions:

- What factors are driving healthcare workers to leave their positions?
- What strategies are being implemented in Wisconsin to mitigate this issue?
- What tools, resources, and models of well-being are being successfully employed?
- What promising strategies are in place to prevent, alleviate, and eliminate healthcare worker burnout, and how are they positively impacting employee growth and retention?



Workforce Well-Being in Wisconsin Healthcare: Baseline Survey and Collaborative Solutions

Objective 1: Establish a Baseline on Workforce Well-Being

The HEALtHy WI Project team conducted a survey to assess the workforce well-being across Wisconsin's hospitals and health systems. The survey covered key areas:

- General Well-Being
- Burnout and Employee Engagement
- Positive and Negative Drivers of Well-Being
- Workforce Well-Being Programs and Resources

It was distributed to healthcare leaders, including employee health directors, chief medical and nursing officers, HR and well-being champions, and C-suite leaders from over 150 hospitals. Fifty-six completed surveys were analyzed to establish a baseline understanding of workforce well-being.

Objective 2: Understand Actions to Improve Workforce Well-Being

The team facilitated two Human-Centered Design Thinking (HCDDT) Sprints to explore actionable solutions for improving well-being in Wisconsin's healthcare workforce.

- **HCDDT Sprint 1:** 17 participants brainstormed solutions to key issues such as:
 - Creative care delivery under staffing constraints
 - Restructuring healthcare to make it an attractive field
 - Identifying appropriate productivity expectations
 - Supporting mental health and fostering better work-life integration
- **HCDDT Sprint 2:** 11 participants strategized to identify existing models, tools, and barriers to resource creation. Discussions focused on the effectiveness of current resources and identifying impactful initiatives to support healthcare teams.

The sessions provided innovative insights and solutions for enhancing workforce well-being in healthcare settings across Wisconsin.

Results

- **Survey Tool Utilization:** 54% of respondents reported using a formal survey tool to measure well-being and/or burnout within their organizations.
- **Positive Feedback on Well-Being Assessments:** Respondents found well-being assessments to be actionable, useful for initiating conversations, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and guiding focus areas for improvement.
- **Negative Feedback on Well-Being Assessments:** Challenges included difficulty interpreting results, vague or unclear data, untimely feedback, and concerns about the honesty of responses, all of which impacted the usefulness of the information.
- **Positive External Drivers:** Key external drivers included a stronger organizational culture with increased awareness and prioritization of mental health and well-being, such as flexible scheduling and better access to mental health resources.
- **Positive Internal Drivers:** Internal drivers were identified as competitive compensation models, increased wages, and formal employee recognition programs.
- **Negative External Drivers:** External challenges included workforce/staffing shortages and the impact of the economy/inflation.
- **Negative Internal Drivers:** Internal barriers included workflow inefficiencies, issues with the medical record charting process, unfavorable workload/productivity models, staffing shortages, difficulties in staff recruitment, retention, and turnover, and poor compensation models.
- **Identified Priorities:** Key priorities for improvement included licensing and credentialing reform, increasing practice efficiency, conducting organizational well-being assessments, and developing peer support programs.

Next Steps

The HEALtHy WI initiative has highlighted the importance of collaboration across hospitals and healthcare systems to achieve the shared goal of improving the well-being of Wisconsin's healthcare workforce. This issue remains critical for both healthcare professionals and the individuals they serve. Engagement and commitment from well-being leaders and champions across the state is strong, providing a solid foundation for future progress. Moving forward, the HEALtHy WI team aims to maintain this momentum by continuing to unite and build upon this network, focusing on the identified priorities to drive meaningful, lasting change.