

## Section 4: continued

Y N

- I seem to be running just to stay still – doing more but achieving less
- I seem to be helping everyone else, but no one seems to see my suffering
- I get sick a lot
- I seem to get a lot of aches and pains
- The thought of going to work makes me feel sick
- The thought of going home makes me feel sick
- Doing ordinary things such as shopping takes a monumental effort
- I seem to forget things more than usual
- Normal conversation seems to take more effort than usual
- I feel ashamed that I am not coping
- I feel no one really understands what life is like for me
- People trying to help just makes things worse
- The future seems hopeless
- I have lost confidence in myself
- I feel like I am on my own
- Whatever is wrong, it is all my fault
- Whatever is wrong, it is because others are getting at me
- Things I once believed in do not seem true any more
- The world seems a place of horror and despair
- I have sometimes thought that death would be better than life
- I am taking more time off work than I used to
- At work, I feel like I am under attack a lot of the time
- I burst into tears for no apparent reason
- I have inexplicable feelings of deep sadness
- I can explode with anger at things I would once have seen as trivial
- I have lost interest in my pastimes or hobbies
- When I am talking with people, it is sometimes like we are using different languages

## Interpreting the Results

Count your responses to each questionnaire and total the 'yes' responses.

### Sections 1, 2 & 3

- These 3 sections explore whether some of the conditions for burnout are present in your life.
- The higher your 'yes' response, the less is the likelihood of burnout occurring.
- If you score 100 % in any of these first three sections, you are probably kidding yourself or you are in denial.
- Most people who are okay in their lives and work will get around 75 %. The lower your score in any of Sections 1, 2 & 3, the more a problem is indicated.
- In general, a score of 50 % or less in any one of these should be a warning sign of a real problem that will provide the indicators for burnout. The risks would be incrementally greater if the score was below 50 % in more than one of these.

### Section 4

- This section looks at how close you are to burnout at the moment.
- The higher your 'yes' count, the closer you are to burnout.
- In general, a score of 50 % or more would indicate a state of serious challenge in your life.
- More than 75 % and you are probably in burnout right now.

Remember that it is the overall picture with these scores that counts, rather than responses to individual questions. The intention of the whole is to raise awareness of the situation so that things can change if necessary.

### References

- Wright, S. (2005). *Nursing Standard Essential Guide*. Harrow, Middlesex, UK: RCN Publishing.
- Keller, K.L. (1999). The management of stress and prevention of burnout in emergency nurses. *Journal Of Emergency Nursing*. 26(2), 90-95.

## A Self-Assessment Tool

# Are you Burning out?



**By Arthur Lee, Gurmeet Shergill, Jenny Auxier, Kara Hatt, Minh Le & Nicolette Rivera**

# Burnout - A Nursing Crisis Waiting to Happen

Consider each of the following statements. How do they fit with your experience of your workplace?

Answer 'yes' (Y) or 'no' (N) to each as honestly as you can; a maybe is a 'no'. It is probably best to put down the first answer that comes to you.

These are simple indicators of your work experience; there is no need to get too analytical about them.

## Section 1: The organisation as a whole – your employer

Y N

- I know what is expected of me
- I have sufficient resources to do the job
- I have the opportunity to do what I do best
- I have received praise from my boss in the past seven days
- I am aware of what is going on in the organisation
- I can participate in decisions that affect my work
- My boss has talked with me about my progress within the past six months
- I would recognise all the executives of the organisation (for example, the chief executive) if I saw them
- What I have to say counts
- I have the support and opportunity to keep learning
- The mission and purpose of our organisation is clear to me
- I feel the organisation cares about me

## Section 2: Your immediate team – the group of people you work with on a regular basis

Y N

- Although our work is serious and hard, my team laughs easily and plays hard
- I feel able to ask my team for help when I need it
- In my team, people offer help without needing to be asked

Y N

- Work is a pleasure with this team
- We talk about our practice and reflect on it to make care better, in formal sessions, at least monthly
- We have pre-shift and post-shift debriefings to check that everyone arrives at and leaves work feeling okay
- We have at least one day a year as a team out of the work situation, where as many as possible of us gather to review how we work together and see how we might improve our relationships
- I feel confident that my team does not gossip about me when my back is turned
- I do not gossip about my team members in their absence
- I feel respected in my team
- I have the opportunity to 'take five' and gather myself without being made to feel guilty or shamed

## Section 3: Taking care of yourself at work

Y N

- I get a good night's sleep
- I eat a healthy, well-balanced diet
- I take plenty of exercise
- I can talk through work problems with my partner/a close friend
- Work does not interfere with my personal time
- Other people's problems at work do not get to me
- I practise some form of meditation or relaxation regularly
- I can withdraw appropriately if a situation at work gets too stressful.
- I have day a month when I do exactly as I please
- I allow myself a good read, or something similar, every day, for at least half an hour, that takes all of my attention and is nothing to do with work
- I make sure I get my proper breaks for meals and refreshments at work.
- I know my limits and boundaries and keep to them

## Section 4: How close are you to burnout? These statements apply to your life in general, including work and home

Y N

- I find myself feeling stressed or irritated when others make even simple demands of me
- Work always seems to exhaust me
- I seem to get angry more easily than I used to
- I have this feeling of being in the 'wrong' place a lot of the time
- I worry about things a lot more than I used to
- When I go to sleep, I wake up feeling tired
- I often cannot sleep because of thoughts or worries racing through my mind.
- I do not feel a sense of peace
- I feel disconnected from normal life
- Everyone seems to be okay but me
- I seem to move from one job to another, and nothing really satisfies
- I seem to move from one relationship to another, and nothing really satisfies
- I feel stuck and going nowhere in my current main relationship(s)
- I feel stuck and going nowhere in my work
- I am more suspicious of people than I used to be
- I feel unhappy a lot at home
- Work no longer satisfies me
- I feel weighed down by responsibility
- Changes or demands at work feel like a threat
- I feel I am in the wrong job
- I feel I am in the wrong marriage/partnership
- People seem to be avoiding me
- I avoid other people
- I feel helpless at work