



Faculty Wellness Program

Positive, collegial communication and support for Feinberg faculty members

Director

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Faculty Wellness Program

The purpose of the Faculty Wellness Program is to offer assistance to faculty who are experiencing problems in their professional or personal lives.

Life as a faculty member at an academic medical center can be stressful. Ten percent of university faculty report “serious” levels of stress. Stress, in turn, can lead to other health and mental health problems.

Conversely, personal problems can interfere with professional success, as well as diminish quality of life. Depression, anxiety and substance abuse can all create problems in accomplishing one’s goals. Personal problems can create obstacles to research, teaching and clinical work. By identifying and addressing such issues, faculty members are better able to achieve their professional and personal aspirations.



Program Goals



The Faculty Wellness Program offers free consultation for Feinberg faculty regarding appropriate resources for assistance with personal, interpersonal and mental health concerns.

One-third of physicians will experience, at some point in their careers, a significant impairment that interferes with their professional functioning.

A crucial element to this approach is early identification of problems so that they can be resolved quickly and to prevent the development of more serious impairment.

Common challenges faculty experience:

- Stress
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Family strains
- Workplace relationship problems
- Alcohol or drug use
- Burnout

Accessing Assistance

There are many stressors present in any workplace, and Northwestern wants to ensure that resources are available for those in need.

Resources may be offered over the phone, or the faculty member may want to meet with the director to discuss the problem and solutions.

Possible referrals include:

- Free, short-term counseling through the Northwestern Faculty and Staff Assistance Program
- Mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Executive coaching
- Consultation with the Northwestern Office of Human Resources
- Assistance through the Northwestern Office of Work/Life Resources

Referrals for services outside the Northwestern Medicine system are available for those who prefer to be seen elsewhere.

Faculty members can find help through the Faculty Wellness Program by emailing gagarwal@nm.org.

Program Administration

The Faculty Wellness Program is a resource offered by the Faculty Affairs Office.

Gaurava Agarwal, MD, director of the Faculty Wellness Program, is a psychiatrist and certified leadership, organizational and well-being coach who specializes in occupational and organizational psychiatry with an emphasis on workplace mental health. Agarwal also serves as associate professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and of Medical Education at Feinberg and director of Physician Well-Being for Northwestern Medicine Medical Groups.



"This program is of the utmost importance because our faculty are critical to every element of our mission. Without their wisdom, we couldn't teach or mentor our students and trainees, effectively treat and care for patients, or expand the corpus of scientific knowledge with discoveries from the research laboratory."

Eric G. Neilson, MD, vice president for medical affairs and
Lewis Landsberg Dean

"Our culture has, unfortunately, been one where many of us have suffered in silence. We hope to change that and emphasize that seeking help is absolutely a sign of strength rather than weakness."

Gaurava Agarwal, MD, director of the Faculty Wellness Program and associate professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and of Medical Education



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feinberg.northwestern.edu/fao/for-faculty/wellness/index.html