



# Work From Home (WFH) Initiative to Decrease Burnout in the Leukemia Center

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## Background

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. had the highest reported burnout among all countries at a rate of 62.8% [3].
- Large numbers of healthcare professionals on the frontlines face high adversity, workloads, and stress, making them vulnerable to burnout [3].
- Data suggests that work-life interference significantly increases burnout which contributes to higher turnover intentions and lower career satisfaction [1].
- Burnout has several physical effects such as musculoskeletal diseases, mental effect such as depression, and job-related effects such as absenteeism [2].
- The March 2023 Employee Engagement Survey for the Leukemia Center showed the burnout level was 9% compared to the March 2021 Big Survey results of 5%.
- Until April 2023, the Leukemia Center had a mix of 8- hour and 10-hour work schedules for nurses.

## Objectives

- Decrease staff burnout to 15% or less by April 2024
- Standardize flexible staff schedules
- Provide protected time to focus on administrative tasks related to job functions
- Promote employee engagement through staff participation in workplace decisions

## Methods

### January 2023

- RN staff were surveyed to determine their interest in working from home
- A meeting with the Lymphoma-Myeloma Center leadership was also held to get an insight of how they utilize a flex staffing schedule.

### February 2023

- WFH guidelines and a WFH calendar were created by the Leukemia Center leadership.

### March 2023

- Staff equipment was requested and a WFH tip-sheet with video demonstrations were uploaded to Teams
- Staff was updated on how to read the WFH calendar, contracts and pre-implementation surveys completed

### April 2023

- WFH initiative began the week of 4/17/2023
- For two weeks, there were direct check-ins with the staff to identify issues early on.



### November 2023

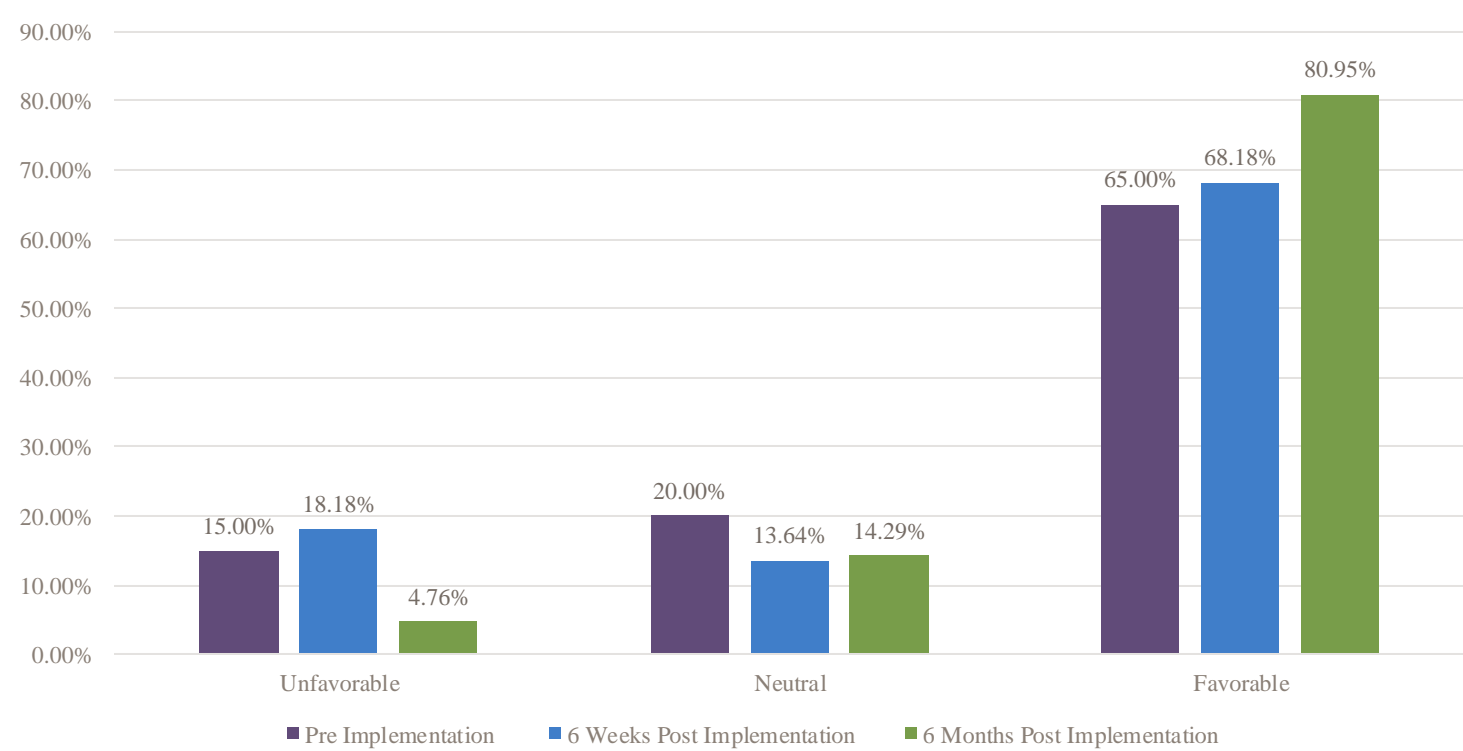
- Bi-annual surveys will be sent to staff for feedback.
- The survey will include questions regarding expectations, resources, and burnout.
- Staff feedback will determine necessary changes for improvements.
- Informal feedback by staff during staff meetings and daily communication will also determine the need for future changes or adjustments.

### June 2023

- 6- week post survey was sent on 6/7/2023.
- ### October 2023
- 6- month post WFH initiative survey sent, and feedback requested
  - The burnout questionnaire utilized mirrored the questions from the Employee Engagement Survey.
  - Burned out staff decreased from 35% to 19.05%. Staff who were not burned out increased from 65% to 80.95%.

## Results

Classify your level of burnout by choosing one of the following responses.



Please provide any additional feedback that will help us to improve and support you during this time.

### Pre-Implementation Comments:

- Communicate and provide feedback
- Need updated employee list and MD teams
- I need a headset but was unable to obtain one. I have never been issued one in the past

### 6 Week Post Implementation

- Phone and fax
- I don't think that the work from home is a positive thing for patients as it is currently. The nurses who are in the building are stretched too thin
- I feel that the work from home is not fairly/ justly set up. The nurses who are onsite for the day will be covering a half/ full day clinic and sometimes also do injections while covering physician's MyChart messages/ faxes. The nurses who are working from home during the day are then only assigned to 2 physicians MyChart/faxes. It seems like a workload discrepancy. I'm hoping the response isn't that it is time to do the new patient charting as this seems to very infrequently occur (at least not when I'm assigned to cover).
- Love to have 1 day off site. I can do a lot: calling new patients, PA...
- IT always available
- I am getting enough support

### 6 Month Post Implementation

- Expecting more days of WFH
- I love this working from home schedule
- Have all the support needed
- I have resources
- Fax machine would be useful too
- Feel very productive
- So far, working from homework well
- Nothing :-). maybe 4info waiting times but you have no control over that :)
- None that I can think of
- IT help can be a bit of a problem sometimes
- I don't agree with pausing the WFH during the holidays. Everyone has equal chance to request time off. No one should be allowed to take the same holiday two years in a row. Not everyone can have time off and it is punitive to change everyone's schedule because some cannot accept scheduling rules agreed upon. If you don't get a holiday off this year, you will likely get it off the following year.

## Summary

- RN staff have one day to complete clerical tasks at home with minimal interruptions
- Staff burnout decreased to 19.05% in the first 6 months of the WFH initiative
- The WFH initiative provides staff with a better work-life balance, directly impacting burnout and job satisfaction

## Conclusions

The following were required to decrease staff burnout and provide a consistent RN schedule

- Sufficient staffing
- Staff engagement
- Scheduling guidelines
- Clear expectations
- Adequate resources
- Leadership support

The WFH initiative to decrease burnout may be transferrable to other centers depending on adequate staffing and integration with their current workflow

## Acknowledgements

- Lymphoma- Myeloma Center Leadership: Crystal Swalwell, Amira Pugh, & Kharington Iyamu

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