

The award of CHF 50'000.-- is granted to the following project:

## The Well-being of Junior General Internal Medicine Residents

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### Abstract

#### Background

Physician well-being, defined as the optimal interaction of practice efficiency, culture of well-being, and personal resilience, has become an increasing concern in recent years, reflecting mounting evidence of an epidemic of burnout and stress among medical professionals. Physician well-being is not only correlated with empathy and the quality of work-relationships, doctors with a reduced well-being have also a higher prevalence of suicidal ideation and motor vehicle accidents. Well-being also has a direct impact on patient care, as it influences workplace productivity and efficiency, quality of care, and patient satisfaction and safety. Although general internal medicine (GIM) residents may be particularly at risk for a reduced well-being due to the high administrative workload and increasing complexity of patients, well-being has never been studied in Swiss GIM hospital residents. Thus, the **broad objective** of this project is to evaluate physician well-being and what factors drive well-being among Swiss junior GIM residents.

#### Aim

Our project has the following specific aims:

- 1) To assess self-reported well-being of resident physicians using a validated questionnaire, the Physician Well-Being Index
- 2) To examine the association between resident physician well-being and job satisfaction, recent suicidal ideation, self-reported medical error, and intention to leave clinical practice
- 3) To explore intrinsic (physician-related) and extrinsic (work environment-related) factors that are associated with resident physician well-being

#### Methods

We will conduct an electronic survey in junior GIM residents (Assistenzärzte/médecins assistants) from 13 Swiss university and large non-university teaching hospitals. We will evaluate well-being using the Physician Well-Being Index, a 7-item questionnaire that has been

specifically adapted for residents. It covers six dimensions, including burnout, depression, stress, fatigue, and mental and physical quality of life. We will examine whether well-being is associated with job satisfaction, recent suicidal ideation, self-reported medical error, and intention to leave clinical practice. In addition, we will use linear and logistic mixed-effects regression to explore what physician- and work environment-related factors are associated with resident well-being.

#### **Relevance for General Internal Medicine**

Our multicenter survey conducted at 13 teaching hospitals will not only shed light on the state of junior GIM resident well-being and its relationship with job satisfaction and medical errors in Swiss GIM divisions, it also has the potential to identify modifiable factors that are associated with resident well-being. Thus, our survey may be the basis for future structural/organizational adaptations and individual-focused interventions with proven efficacy in improving resident well-being and thus quality and safety of patient care and job satisfaction. Given the shortage of primary care physicians and hospital internists in Switzerland, job attractiveness is a major selling point in the recruitment of future generalists.

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