

# Journal Pre-proof

Letter to the Editor regarding 2022 publication by Dr. Melnyk et al titled, "Associations among infection prevention professionals' mental/physical health, lifestyle behaviors, shift length, race, and workplace wellness support during COVID-19."

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Patricia Stone, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Editor in Chief  
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Dear Dr. Stone,

It is time for Infection Preventionists to seek joy in their work and lives to support their mental and physical well-being. We are grateful for the recent study by Dr. Melnyk et al (2022) that is highlighting the challenges Infection Preventionists faced during COVID-19. This survey study reported that 65% of their sample were experiencing burnout, 21% screened positive for depression and 30% for anxiety. Add to this the recent report by the U.S Surgeon General on Addressing Health Care Worker Burnout that indicated 52% of nurses and 20% of physicians are planning to leave their fields. All signs are pointing to a major crisis in healthcare that will impact the health and safety of our workplaces, patients, and communities for decades. This is the time for major changes, but this often happens at a glacial pace. There are simple things Infection Preventionists can do, right now, for their well-being if they have the internal resources.

At the 2022 APIC Annual Conference, we spoke about how Infection Preventionists can seek joy in work and address burnout through paying attention to what matters most to themselves and their team. This can occur while healthcare leaders are working towards better staffing levels, more balanced workloads, and better organizational cultures. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement Joy in Work Framework outlines actions teams can take. These include celebrating the little wins, removing the “Pebbles in Our Shoes” which sap the joy from work, connecting with colleagues and integrating gratitude moments into meetings so staff can express appreciation for moments of kindness. By adopting these simple practices, IPs can take control of their path towards healing and recovery. We acknowledge that big changes are needed in the U.S. healthcare system. One of those big changes is learning to seek out and savor the simple, joyful moments of work and life.

Sincerely,

Removed per Editorial Manager request

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