


# Chapter 4

## WE–CARE:

### Closing the Gap of Health Disparities Through Community Collaborations

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Burnout in health professionals can impact therapeutic outcomes in patients. Improving health outcomes for marginalized populations and bridging the gap in health disparities requires a concerted effort among all major stakeholders. The Workgroup Enhancing Community Advocacy & Research Engagement (WE-CARE) program at the University of South Florida is a pharmacy-led cross collaboration of multiple stakeholders who serve as an integrated network of academia, researchers, and community to improve health disparities by increasing minority enrollment and participation in research and building trust and mutual respect between the community and researchers. To do this effectively WE-CARE uses a 360-degree community engagement model that maximizes the efforts of all involved. This chapter explains the mission, community-engaging activities, collaborations, and research-supporting efforts that WE-CARE employs to fulfill its mission and describes how it has tried to mitigate burnout in health professionals through its activities.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Burnout Syndrome and job dissatisfaction is common in the healthcare sector. According to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, burnout is common in <70% of nurses, half of physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants. (Bridgeman, 2018) Some of the factors that contribute to burnout syndrome include, but are not limited to management pressure, reactivity to stress, relationship status, administrative work, routine, regretting decisions regarding patients, harassment at work, age of healthcare professional, gender, job category, and site of practice, experience of healthcare professional and sacrifice of personal time. (Taranu, 2022) Health professionals are expected to improve health outcomes in light of changes from fee-for-service to value-based care reimbursement practices. Global events, like the SARS-19-COVID pandemic also caused an exponential increase in burnout in frontline workers because of the health hazards, shortage of personnel, limited resources, and death and dying associated with the pandemic. Exhaustion from

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