



# Caring for the caregiver: predictors and consequences of VA mental health provider burnout

Jennifer Henry, LMSW<sup>1</sup> and Kara Zivin, PhD, MS, MA<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D) Center for Clinical Management Research, Ann Arbor, MI

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychiatry, University of Michigan Medical School, Ann Arbor, MI



## Background

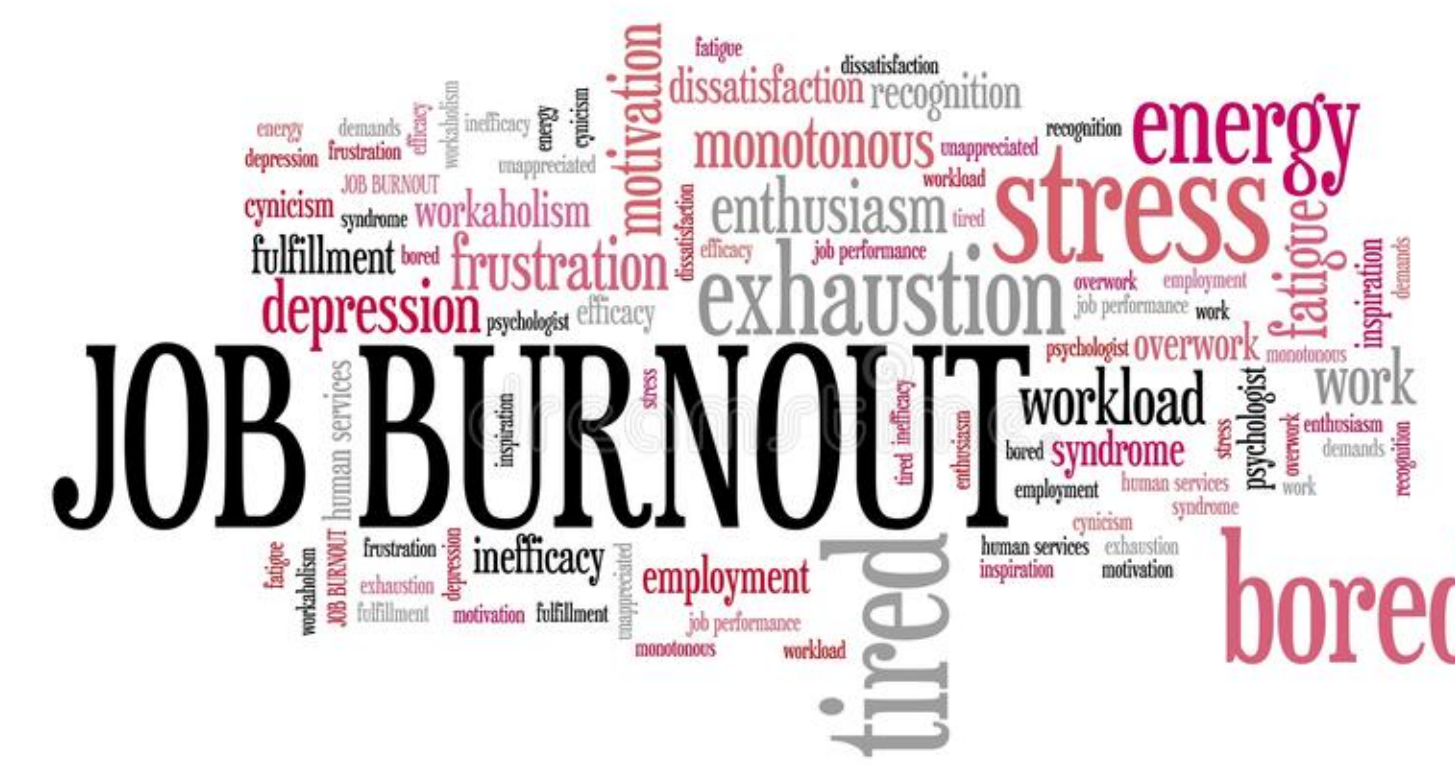
- What is burnout in the workplace?
  - Physical or emotional exhaustion that also involves a sense of reduced accomplishment and/or loss of personal identify



- Mental health providers (psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers) report the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest level of burnout after primary care physicians
- Burnout contributes to missed workdays, decreased job satisfaction and engagement, accelerated turnover, premature retirement, and at its most extreme, increased risk of suicide

## Specific Aims

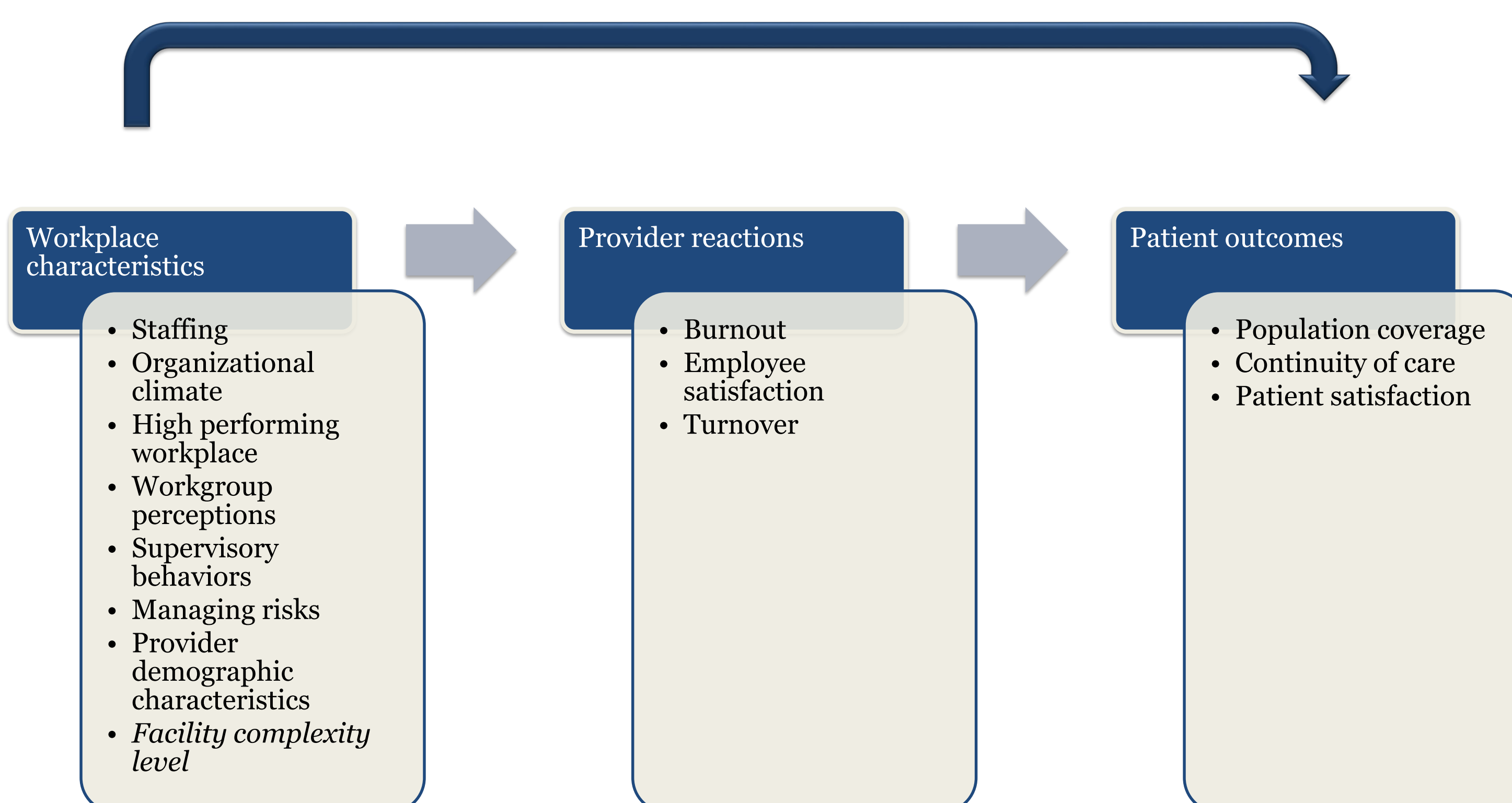
- **Aim 1:** To examine facility-level predictors and consequences of VHA mental health provider burnout
- **Aim 2:** To understand VHA mental health provider leadership and front-line provider perspectives regarding factors that protect against or exacerbate burnout in facilities with differing levels of burnout
- **Aims 3:** To identify context-sensitive strategies for facilities to successfully reduce VHA mental health provider burnout



## Methods

- Link survey data from the All Employee Survey and the Mental Health Provider Survey with administrative data to identify 8 VA sites with high and low levels of mental health provider burnout
- Interview mental health leadership and front-line staff to find out what protects against or increases burnout in their facility
- We will create a list of possible strategies to combat burnout and present to an expert panel. With their input we will identify interventions to be shared with VA sites to reduce mental health provider burnout

## Conceptual Model



## Hypotheses

- Unfavorable workplace characteristics including negative organizational climate and supervisory behaviors will be associated with higher levels of burnout
- Higher levels of burnout will be associated with poorer patient outcomes including access to, continuity of, and experience of care
- Provider reactions, including burnout, satisfaction, and turnover intentions will mediate relationships between unfavorable workplace characteristics and patient outcomes

## Use of Findings

- Results from this study will provide important findings for future planning and interventions to reduce mental health provider burnout and improve employee satisfaction and engagement
- Decreased mental health provider burnout could improve quality of care, wait times, and lost revenue due to staff attrition

### Acknowledgements

The project outlined here was supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, Health Services Research and Development Service. (Project no. IIR 17-262)