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Letter to the editor

Instilling resilience to facilitate wellness in dentists



Dear Editor,

Dentist is recognized as one of the most stressful professions. Higher working stress, occupational burnout, and depression have been reported from dental students to qualified dentists.^{1–4} COVID-19 pandemic is also a psychological stress that the occupational exposures of bio-aerosol transmission may have adverse impacts on mental and general health. Therefore, how to maintain or recover for wellness from significant stressors is worth to be valued.

The concept of resilience refers to the process of adapting well in face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress by American Psychological Association.⁵ Resilience means “bouncing back” from difficult experiences especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands.⁵ The instilling resilience to facilitate wellness in dentists seems a good tool to overcome highly stressful career.

Hospital accreditation, job performance evaluation system, somatic preoccupation, lack of satisfaction, and fatigability are occurring during the dental professional life.^{1,2,4} In Taiwan, institutions should provide the administrative resources such as mental health and counseling office, occupational safety and health office, or management and labor council. These supporting facilities could promote psychosocial well-being, reduce the risk of burnout, ensure safe practices, and adjust working environment. In addition, the ceiling of residents' working hour was legislative by Ministry of Health and Welfare to avoid burnout. This may also enhance patient safety and improve resident perceived wellness.

Taken together, the instilling resilience to facilitate wellness in dentists is quite important. This would be the key component of a successful and fulfilling career from dental students to qualified dentists. However, it still remains many challenges such as culture and how to measure. Further descriptive and analytical studies are warranted.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest relevant to this article.

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Received 4 June 2022

Final revision received 4 June 2022

Available online 18 June 2022

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jds.2022.06.001>

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