

Announcing the Launch of the Canadian Rheumatology Workforce and Wellness Survey 2020

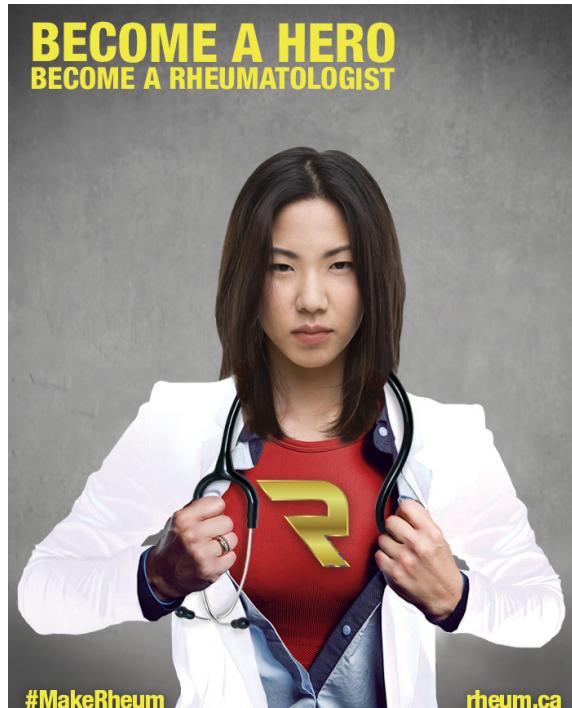
News from the Human Resources Committee

By Stephanie Kulhawy-Wibe, MD, MSc; Jessica Widdifield, PhD; and Claire Barber, MD, FRCPC, PhD

In 2015, the Canadian Rheumatology Association (CRA) conducted a national survey of Canadian rheumatologists to better understand the rheumatology workforce in Canada.¹ The survey helped to estimate the number and characteristics of Canadian rheumatologists, the full-time equivalent (FTE) clinical status of rheumatologists, and projected retirements over the next 5-10 years.¹ Beyond evaluating the FTE, projected retirements and demographics of the physician workforce, understanding the health and wellness of physicians has been gaining increasing attention over the last decade.²

Indeed, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) suggests that the poor state of physicians' health is a threat to the workforce, as it can lead to negative physician and patient outcomes, and should be assessed and monitored at regular intervals.³ An especially important aspect of physician health is burnout. This is a work-related syndrome that is characterized by three main elements: exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of efficiency or personal accomplishment.⁴ Burnout is prevalent among Canadian physicians as 30% of participants reported high levels of burnout in the National Physician Health Survey,⁵ and it has been linked to suboptimal patient care and increased medical errors. Unfortunately, relatively little is known about the health and wellness of Canadian rheumatologists. This topic is relevant to the future of the rheumatology workforce because burnout is associated with reduced working hours and early retirement.

To that end, the CRA Human Resources Committee will be launching an electronic survey of Canadian rheumatologists in the Spring of 2020 to update our understanding of the current workforce characteristics and distribution, including an assessment of the health and wellness of



rheumatologists. From a human resource planning perspective, it is crucial that all Canadian rheumatologists complete the survey, so that the CRA has up-to-date information on the numbers of rheumatologists in Canada, as well as changes to the characteristics of the workforce over time.

Look out for the launch of the Canadian Rheumatology Workforce and Wellness Survey in the spring of 2020!

*Stephanie Kulhawy-Wibe, MD, MSc
Rheumatology Resident
Cumming School of Medicine,
University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta*

*Jessica Widdifield, PhD
Scientist,
Sunnybrook Research Institute, ICES
Assistant Professor,
University of Toronto,
Institute of Health Policy, Management & Evaluation
Toronto, Ontario*

*Claire Barber, MD, PhD, FRCPC
Assistant Professor, Rheumatologist,
Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary,
Calgary, Alberta*

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