



2021

YEAR IN REVIEW

Rising Above With Resilience

As we lived and worked through 2021, healthcare and frontline staff remained critical strongholds for the health of our nation. The stress of a pandemic didn't go away—but rather, grew. While we clung to anything stable and familiar, we continued asking more and more of our physicians, advanced practitioners, residents, nurses and frontline workers. Flexibility, stamina and perseverance were a necessity. Keen focuses on balance, mitigating stress and burnout, and attention to behavioral health proved their importance and place in our daily lives.

- Clinician Coaching cases opened in 2021 nearly doubled those in 2020. The efficacy of coaching is proving it's worth and is a continued source to be highlighted/promoted internally.
- Family members (including children) engaged with VITAL WorkLife resources more than ever. Pay attention to the needs of your clinicians' home lives as this area can greatly affect their professional manner.
- As a growing number of clinicians experienced COVID-fatigue, we saw an increase in those exploring their career choices during Peer Coaching. Areas of concern included: changing specialty, leaving medicine altogether and establishing or moving into non-clinical roles.

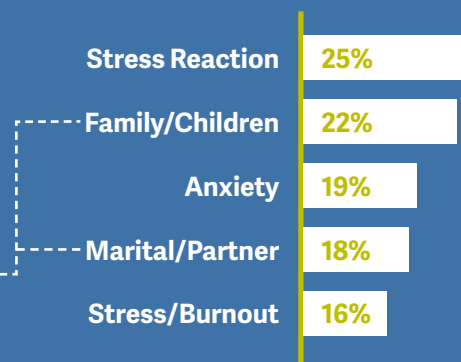
Over the past year, nearly 20% of physicians reported inappropriate feelings of anger, tearfulness or anxiety on a weekly or daily basis because of COVID-19¹.

Across our national healthcare client base, we saw total case engagement increase year over year from 22% in 2019, 37% in 2020 and **40% in 2021**.

2021's top physician coaching and counseling concerns evolved from 2020, representing a desire for a more holistic approach to well being.

Clinicians didn't just ask for help on workplace burnout and stress, but also **Family/Children and Marital/Partner Concerns**.

TOP COUNSELING CONCERNS ADDRESSED IN 2021



Clinicians identified the **top 3 most-valued benefits** of peer coaching as:

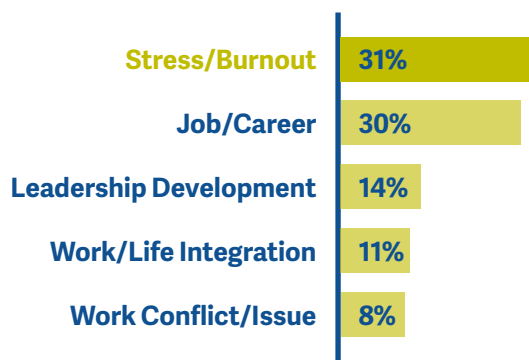
1. Emotional Validation
2. Improved Self-Awareness
3. Developed New Skills

As a result of these trends, VITAL WorkLife is addressing the unique challenges clinicians are facing in healthcare today. In 2022, we are continuing to add diversity to our bench of Peer Coaches, launching an Advisory Council and forming partnerships with industry-changers like BetterHelp. New technologies to make access easier and an enhanced user journey are also in development.

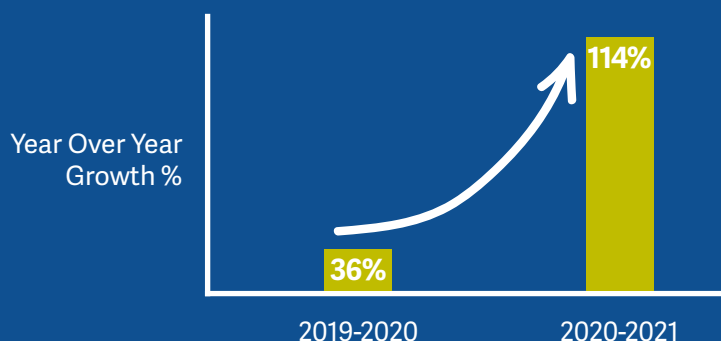
During the pandemic, an influx of clinicians have experienced how a peer coach can genuinely understand their unique challenges and their goals for well being. This is true for the individual *and* teams—resulting in an increase of support for leaders, employees and clinicians². The most common areas of concern addressed were:

- Continual COVID-19 waves leading to **pandemic fatigue**
 - Increased exposure to death and dying
 - Staffing shortages
 - **Patient noncompliance** with CDC guidelines
 - Workplace violence
 - Work/life imbalance
- Increased stress, burnout, grief and loss, depression, compassion fatigue, job dissatisfaction
- Providers struggling with the difficult choice of **leaving medicine altogether**
- Additionally, **Documentation Challenges** significantly increased from 2020 to 2021

TOP COACHING CONCERNS ADDRESSED IN 2021



PEER COACHING ANNUAL GROWTH



[Click here to read The Business Case for Physician Well Being](#)

A recent study by the Physicians Foundation found the following¹:

57% of physicians have felt inappropriate anger, tearfulness or anxiety **because of COVID-19**

34% felt hopeless or without a purpose

only 14% sought medical attention, **despite these symptoms.**

61% of physicians report often experiencing feelings of burnout, **compared to 40 percent in their 2018 survey.**

only 46% would still recommend medicine as a career option to young people.

In 2021, our focus continued to be providing the best well being resources and support in the industry. This includes peer coaching, with a dedicated bench of highly-vetted physician coaches with the perspective and experience to specifically engage and support your clinicians. To benefit from our resources, clinicians need to be aware of VITAL WorkLife's solution offerings and understand how to access their resources. Below are some **best practices** to support their well being needs:

- 1 Engage with the resources yourself, as a leader, and share your experiences with others.** This will allow you to speak to our resources with confidence and clarity and espouse trust in VITAL WorkLife.
- 2 Consistently highlight VITAL WorkLife resources at department and team meetings.** This helps to keep our resources top of mind and tends to normalize the use of our program.
 - Encourage those in attendance to **download the VITAL WorkLife App!** This tactic has consistently produced increased program utilization.
- 3 Make sure your organization has taken advantage of your Well Being Advocate Program,** a specialized training for your hand-picked Advocates who serve as on-site champions for VITAL WorkLife and keep program resources visible—[click here to learn more about this program.](#)
- 4 Send out a home mailer including a personal letter from your Leadership Team** (with wallet card) using collateral from your [Resource Site.](#)

One of the greatest challenges to healthcare organizations in 2022 will be **retention and resignation**³.

As the pandemic pushes on, it continues to cause collateral damage, such as financial constraints and staffing shortages, across the healthcare industry. We at VITAL WorkLife appreciate the dedication you bring to your work and your care team members every day—*we are here to support all dimensions of well being for you and your organization.*

VITAL WorkLife Peer Coaching Participants are saying...

"I was **floored**. Nothing but great things to share about my [peer] coach and coaching experience. It's **easy to start, flexible to schedule** and provides **both short-term and long-term benefits**. I would not hesitate to recommend this to any provider!"
from a PA-C

"I recognized 1-2 topics I decided to discuss with my peer coach, but as we dove into them, she elicited bigger, more important, fundamental topics for us to discuss. **Every meeting** has been a **wealth of resources, wisdom and immediately practical applications.**"
from a Medical Director

1. <https://physiciansfoundation.org/physician-and-patient-surveys/the-physicians-foundation-2021-physician-survey/>

2. Shanafelt TD, West CP, Sinsky C, Trockel M, Tutty M, Satele D, Carlasare LE, Dyrbye LN. Changes in burnout and satisfaction with work-life integration in physicians and the general US working

population between 2011 and 2017. Mayo Clinic Proc. 2019;94(9):1681-94.

3. <https://www.healthleadersmedia.com/clinical-care/6-clinical-care-trends-2022>