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Organizational Approaches to Staff Care and Retention

In Resettlement

switchboard
connecting resettlement experts





Today's Speaker



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MA, LPC**

Training Officer, Mental
Health and Wellness,
Switchboard

Learning Objectives



By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1

Describe

causes of staff turnover in resettlement and their impact on agencies

2

Define

professional burnout and its root causes

3

Identify

organizational strategies to prevent staff burnout and improve retention in resettlement

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Which of the following best describes your role?



1

Causes and Impact of Turnover

Types of Turnover



Voluntary Turnover

Leaves of their own volition



Involuntary Turnover

Poor performance
or violation of policy



Organizational Turnover

End of assignment and
Reduction in force



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In your opinion, why do you think there has been an increase in turnover in resettlement in recent years?

High Turnover

- Unprecedented stressors in resettlement
 - COVID-19 pandemic
 - Acute response to emerging world events
 - Jump from very low to very high client arrivals
 - Unanticipated arrivals
 - Staffing constraints
 - Low funding levels





Impacts of Turnover

- Very **expensive**
- Bad for team **morale**
- Decreases in **productivity**
- **Client care** declines
- Loss of **institutional knowledge**
- Damaging to agency **reputation**

Common Reasons for Turnover in Resettlement





2

Burnout

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Self-care alone can prevent burnout.

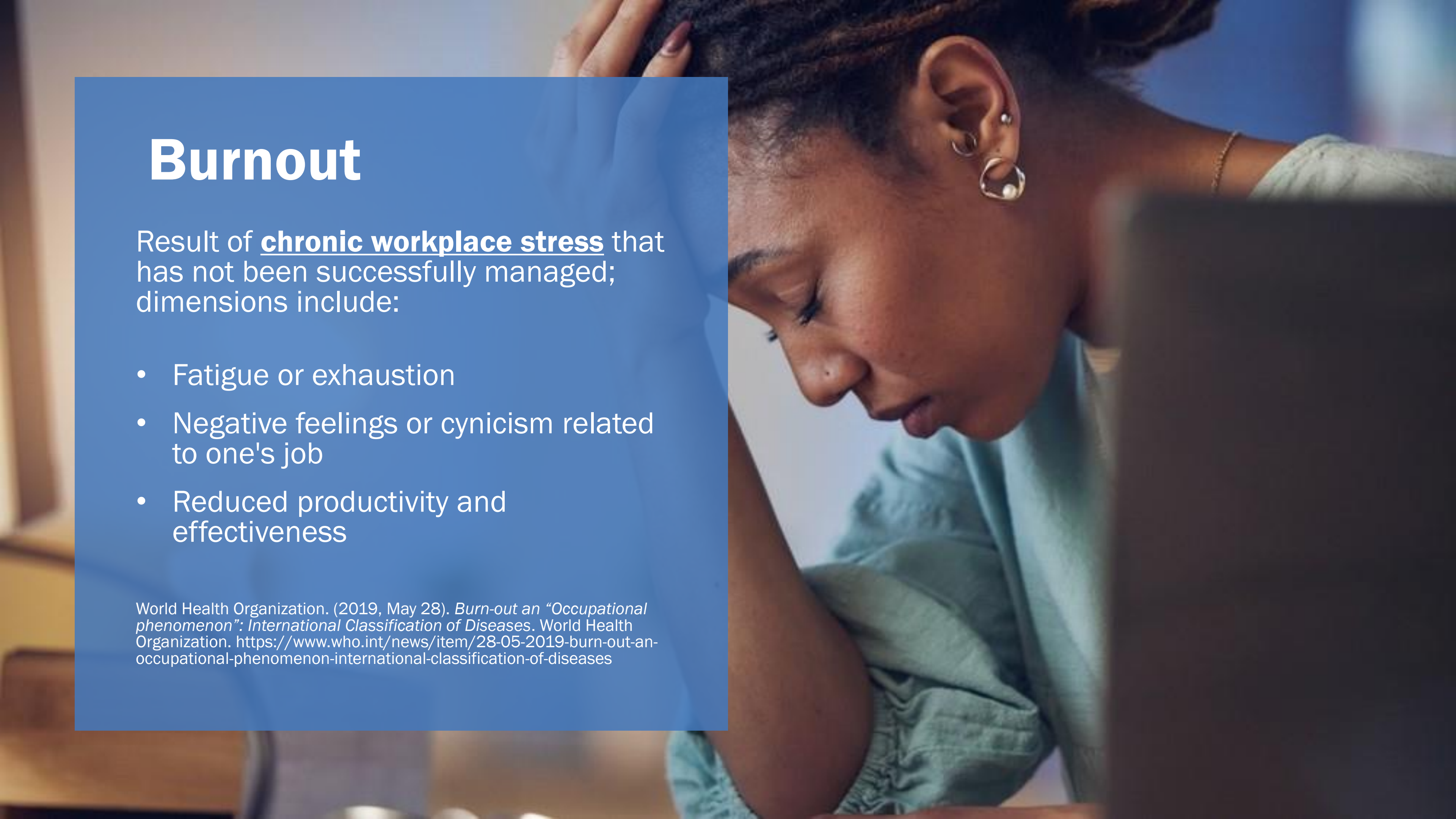
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Burnout

Result of **chronic workplace stress** that has not been successfully managed; dimensions include:

- Fatigue or exhaustion
- Negative feelings or cynicism related to one's job
- Reduced productivity and effectiveness

World Health Organization. (2019, May 28). *Burn-out an “Occupational phenomenon”*: International Classification of Diseases. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019-burn-out-an-occupational-phenomenon-international-classification-of-diseases>



Factors that Contribute to Burnout



Factors that Contribute to Burnout

Result: Reduced Effectiveness



Work Overload



- High demands & low resources
- Working beyond traditional “9-to-5”
- Mismatch in competencies
- Emotional labor

Lack of Control



- Micromanagement & lack of autonomy
- Fear of making mistakes
- Lack of control over caseload size, schedule, etc.

Factors that Contribute to Burnout

Result: Toxic Work Environments



Insufficient Rewards



- Low pay and/or benefits
- Few promotions
- Lack of recognition
- Lack of appreciation
- Ambivalent or negative feelings about the work

Breakdown in Community



- Disrupted relationships with coworkers
- Competitive environment
- Bias (racism, sexism, ageism, etc.)
- Unsupportive supervisors

Factors that Contribute to Burnout

Result: Disconnect from Work



Absence of Fairness



- Unfair or unjust decision making
- Lack of respect
- Exploitation
- Favoritism
- Unequal treatment

Values Conflicts



- Clashes with personal moral principles
- Discrepancy between what's said and done
- Maximizing productivity at expense of client care
- Lack of meaning

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Which of these 6 factors do you think is the biggest concern for your employees?

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3

Organizational Strategies for Prevention

A chef in a kitchen is shown from the side, wearing a white shirt with a red stripe on the sleeve and a dark apron. They are holding a large metal spoon and stirring a pot on a gas stove. A large, bright yellow and orange flame is visible on the left side of the stove. Steam is rising from the pot. The background is slightly blurred, showing other kitchen equipment.

How can we cool the kitchen?



How to Move Forward

- **Collaborate** with staff
- **Customize** to fit your agency's unique needs
- **Commit** to sustained effort



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As an employee, what would help you be more effective at work?

Result: Increased Effectiveness



Sustainable Workload



- Focus on recovery
- Achieve better balance
- Set clear boundaries

Increased Control



- Assume best intentions
- Increase autonomy with effective onboarding
- Advocate for changes that improve the work
- Create flexible policies

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In one word, how would you describe a "healthy" work culture?

Result: Healthy Work Culture



Satisfactory Rewards



- Create effort/reward balance
- Provide positive feedback
- Create opportunities for fulfilling work

Supportive Community



- Work to establish psychological safety
- Create ongoing training opportunities
- Create opportunities for mentoring

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What is your “why” for doing this work?

Result: Connection to Meaningful Work



Fairness, Respect, & Social Justice



- Prioritize transparency
- Create a culture of respect
- Rotate unpopular tasks
- Promote equality and equity

Aligned Values & Meaningful Work



- Create opportunities for meaningful work
- Help staff see their impact
- Remind staff why the paperwork is important
- Hire the right people

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What innovative approaches can resettlement offices take to support staff care and retention?

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Guest Speakers



Marwah Alobaidi

Director of Resettlement
Services

InterFaith Works of CNY



Genevieve Marshall

Director of Health &
Integration Services

InterFaith Works of CNY

Successful Initiatives: InterFaith Works of CNY

- Wellness Sessions
- Recharge Room
- Onboarding
- Professional Development
- The 4 Out of 40 Program
- Staff Newsletter





Questions?

Type your question in the **Q&A**

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Help us help you!

Scan the QR code or click the link in the chat to access our feedback survey!

- Five questions
- 60 seconds to complete
- Helps us improve future training and technical assistance



Recommended Resources

- **Switchboard:**
 - Webinar: [Creating Balance in Case Management](#) (2023)
 - Guide: [Preventing Occupational Hazards by Promoting Organizational Resilience](#) (2020)
 - Webinar: [I Was Already Burned Out and Now This...](#) (2020)
 - Blog: [Does Self-Care Really Matter to My Health or Identity?](#) (2021)
- **Center for Victims of Torture (CVT):**
 - Tip Sheets: [Self-Care Tools](#) (2021)
 - Tool: [Professional Quality of Life](#) (2021)
- **World Health Organization (WHO):**
 - Guide: [WHO Guidelines on Mental Health at Work](#) (2022)



Preventing Occupational Hazards by Promoting Organizational Resilience

Burnout, secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue are all considered occupational hazards. These effects can result directly from working in certain professions, such as refugee service provision. The internal culture and environment of an organization can increase a staff person's vulnerability to these occupational hazards, or these can enhance organizational resilience. This guide provides recommendations for supervisors and leaders to promote resilience and reduce occupational hazards among their team members.

What is Organizational Resilience?

An organization's culture and environment can make a big difference in the levels of distress that staff are feeling. **Organizational resilience** is the ability of an organization to survive negative events (such as COVID-19, financial hardship, or layoffs) while being as supportive or *more* supportive of staff and clients as before the negative events. This relates to individual resilience: a person's ability to adapt and survive adverse experiences without them negatively affecting key components of their character.

Organizations struggling with high rates of **occupational hazards**—burnout, vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion fatigue—

also suffer high turnover and low staff cohesion. Without staff cohesion, team members have reduced ability to work together effectively, anticipate each other's needs, and support each other. Even when staff choose to stay at an organization after feeling the impacts of occupational hazards, their effectiveness within their job is likely to suffer. Organizational resilience can combat these effects.

Organizational resilience is essential not just for staff, but for clients. Refugee-serving organizations want to ensure that people who have experienced forced migration receive the highest quality services they can offer. Service providers are among the first people that newly arrived families encounter as they begin to build new communities in the U.S. If service providers are



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