

Background

- Burnout continues to occur at a **6.3% higher rate** than before the pandemic began^{1,2}
- **Burnout is not just an individual problem** in coping strategies; rather, the prevalence of burnout indicates organizational issues^{3,4,5}
- Potential theoretical bases
 - Burnout as an extreme form of exhaustion⁶ (final stage of general adaptation syndrome)
 - Burnout as the result of not fulfilling the conditions for intrinsic motivation⁷ (as defined by self-determination theory)

Rationale

- Decreased work engagement due to burnout is associated with **increased workload** for colleagues⁸
- Lower quality of care due to compassion fatigue and **increased clinical mistakes** among providers experiencing burnout^{9,10}
- **Longer wait times**, especially in acute care settings¹¹
- It is crucial that we analyze contributing factors and prepare our healthcare system for future public health crises
- Gap in the literature is an analysis of burnout in physicians with a structural lens, rather than micro-level processes

Thesis

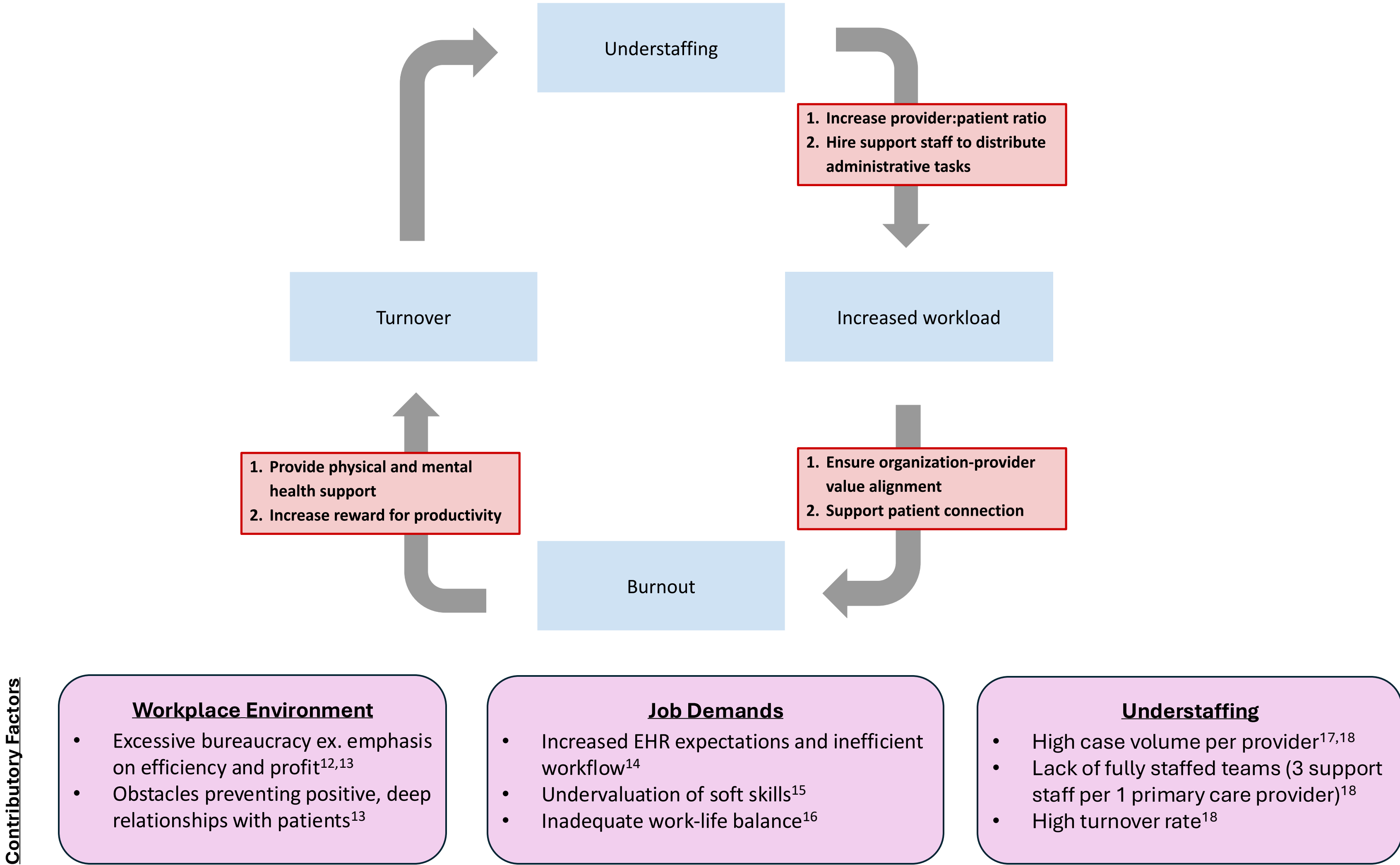
This narrative review demonstrates that physician burnout in the aftermath of COVID-19 is still highly prevalent because it is mediated by *structural* factors such as (1) workplace environment, (2) job demands, and (3) understaffing.

Methods

- Databases: PsycINFO, PubMed, Web of Science, Google Scholar
- Keywords: physician burnout, organizational support, post-pandemic, understaffing, work-life balance, role conflict, role strain, workplace environment
- Exclusion Criteria
 - Focus on burnout during the pandemic
 - Focus on micro-level processes
 - No distinct analyses for physicians
- Foreign studies were included due to lack of American literature

Results

Figure 1. Predictive Model of Burnout and Proposed Structural Interventions for Burnout Mitigation



Discussion

- Physician burnout is associated with **persistent structural factors** that continue to exist beyond the pandemic
- Workplace environment & general adaptation theory: prevention of chronic stress in the workplace
- Job demands & self-determination theory: support of autonomy in work-life boundary formation and equitable reward for competence
- Understaffing & role strain: need for manageable workload via adequate staffing

Future Directives

- Limitations of this review
 - Lack of American literature available
 - Lack of post-pandemic data due to recency of the pandemic
- Longitudinal investigation of how burnout rates recover from the pandemic must be conducted to find stronger conclusions
- The cycle of burnout should be addressed at a structural level to ensure sustainable change

References:

