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PROFESSIONAL DOCTORS BURNOUT

Nowadays professional burnout is very important issue and obtains the title «The professional burnout syndrome». In a modern world a great number of careers consist of constant emotional and physical stress, which can cause serious personality changes. Representatives of the professions, whose work is associated with constant communication with people and great responsibility for others, are the most vulnerable to the development of this syndrome. Therefore, the physicians belong to the group with high risk of the burnout syndrome.

The studying of the causes of this syndrome will help to prevent its developing and avoid irreversible consequences for the doctor's career.

Burnout syndrome is a type of psychological stress. Occupational burnout or job burnout is characterized by exhaustion, lack of enthusiasm and motivation, feelings of ineffectiveness, and also may have the dimension of frustration or cynicism, and as a result, reduces efficacy within the workplace.

The work of medical staff is usually emotionally charged. When physicians face with negative emotions, which their patients express according to conditions, they begin to feel an increasing emotional stress.

Unfortunately, medical students are not taught how to diagnose the burnout syndrome, how prevent its developing and how to get rid of it. So, the doctors usually find the ways of dealing with this painful condition or become victims, losing a full and happy life [3].

The term burnout in psychology was coined by American psychologist Herbert Freudenberger [5, c. 159 – 165] in 1974 so as to describe the disappointment and

extreme fatigue, which he found at workers in psychological establishments. The model, being developed by him, happens to be practical for assessment of this state of health care workers and in professions with the greatest risk of burnout syndrome, because their working day consists of constant communications with ill patients, which require the care and attention.

The burnout affects the professional competence of the doctor and threatens to his psychosocial and physical health. Emotional component is particularly important for specialists of helping professions and is a key factor in successful treatment of patients.

The danger of burnout is that it may be contagious. If there is a person with this syndrome in the working team, it might have a negative impact on other people [4, c. 204-220].

Causes of burnout:

- busy work schedule (more than 45 hours per week);
- the low support among colleagues and superiors;
- the impossibility to influence the results of the work (a patient could die, even if a doctor is a very highly-qualified);
- a lot of factors, in which physician cannot influence (broken and obsolete equipment, lack of medicines);
- work under threat of any kind of punishment (fines, sanctions, dismissal);
- a dead-end job;
- low wages;
- lack of personal time and need to address of working problems in spare time;
- permanent negative job evaluation;
- chaotic organization of working time;
- unhealthy competition in the work place [6].

The work with very ill and difficult patient is an additional stressful factor. There are newborn babies, cancer and mentally ill patients.

If a physician has constant contact with the grief, fear, patients' suffering, it can cause the feeling of losing control.

All of these factors threaten development of a chronic fatigue syndrome.

That is why the professional burnout syndrome is often a problem in this category of workers [1, c. 294 – 301].

The symptoms of burnout patients are usually multidimensional with several psychiatric, psychosomatic, somatic and social disorders:

- changes in behavior: doctor puts the meeting off with patients, is often late, does not want to go to work, does not care about his health, loses interest in entertainment, works harder and longer but achievements getting smaller, avoids colleagues, uses nicotine and caffeine much often;

- emotional changes: persistent feelings of guilty, failure, self-incrimination, anger, resentment, powerlessness, losing sense of humor;

- changes in thinking: wish to leave work, inability to focus the attention, suspicion gets stronger, attitude to patients is getting cynical and inhumane;

- changes in health condition: sleep disorder, high vulnerability to infection, fatigue over a whole day;

- the worrying condition and depression;

- negative attitude to yourself.

Many factors have impact on degree of development of burnout syndrome. Work experience and age of staff have the closest link with burnout. Moreover, the nurses of psychiatric hospitals start to have professional burnout syndrome after 1.5 years of working and social workers- after 2-4 years. In addition, women are more vulnerable to emotional exhaustion than men. This is due to the fact that women are more open-minded and responsive, so they do not have a sense of the alienation from their patients.

Professional burnout is a long and dynamic process, which happens in several stages. Therefore, it is particularly important to identify such professional problems as soon as possible. There are three main stages of developing of burnout syndrome.

At the first stage of professional burnout a man is physically and emotionally exhausted and may complain about headaches.

At the second stage medical workers can disregard people and express a negative attitude to the people they work with. They desire to "drop out" of society. They go inside, do a minimum number of works and do not want to fight with anyone to avoid these negative emotions. Even after good night's sleep or weekend health medical workers continue to feel exhausted and fatigued.

The final stage is to complete professional burnout, which is not found often, and in some cases shows the disgusting to everything. The medical workers are resentful of themselves and all humanity. They cannot express emotion and stay focused.

It must be noted that professional burnout applies not only experienced medical staff. The young workers tent to this syndrome as well, because they are not ready to realize the difficulties of the reality, which do not meet their expectations.

There are many things to prevent burnout: learn simple relaxation techniques to relieve stress and help yourself to stabilize an emotional balance; improve communicative skills; stop making excuses; learn to say «No»; learn how to allocate the responsibility between the different areas of treatment process; improve skills of time-management; begin new hobbies outside of work; increase a diet of positive emotions; realize and explore their own strong and weak points; increase self-efficacy; take care of yourself.

Unfortunately, no one is immune from the emergency of professional burnout syndrome. It may occur as with experienced doctor as with recent graduate of medical university. Everybody knows that to fight with above-mentioned syndrome is not easy, so people should do everything possible to avoid burnout. Moreover, medical workers should have all conditions for doing their job and should have been provided by a well-paid salary.

Today, the professional burnout syndrome is not well-known, therefore, further research in this area is needed.

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