

# Physician Burnout & Utilization Management

NATIONAL PHYSICIAN POLL RESULTS

NOVEMBER 2024

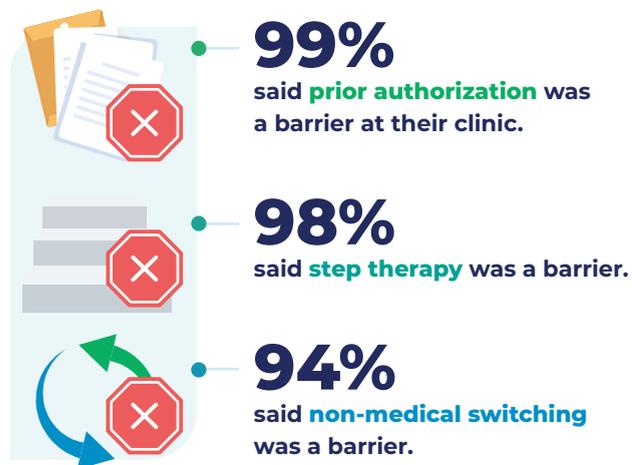


## The Burden of Utilization Management

According to a national online poll of 501 physicians across medical specialties, utilization management presents a serious burden.

Prior authorization, step therapy and non-medical switching all impact providers' ability to effectively do their job. Nearly all providers polled reported that utilization management presents barriers that make it harder to care for patients.

Of the physicians polled:



## Providers are Drained & Patient Care Suffers

The excessive burden of utilization management takes a toll on physicians in the workplace and at home.



**52%** of physicians spent more than 6 hours on utilization management paperwork each week.



**55%** reported working on utilization management paperwork outside of normal working hours several times a week.

By using up critical resources, the burden of utilization management takes focus away from patients. 95% reported that utilization management took up time that they would rather spend working one-on-one with patients.

As utilization management takes up more of physicians' resources, it also negatively influences how they feel about their work. 90% enjoyed their job less because of utilization management.





## Physician Burnout on the Rise

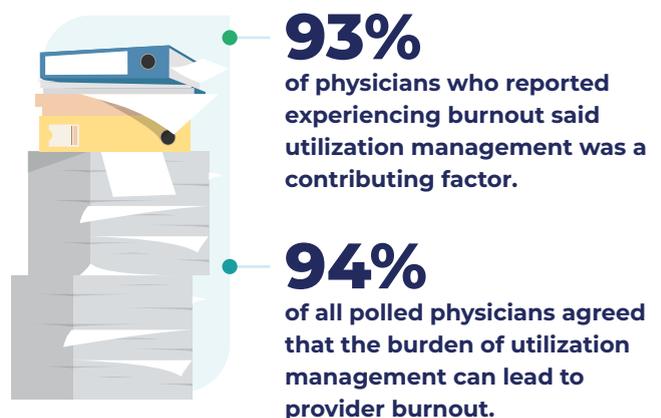
Of the polled physicians, two in every three reported experiencing burnout at some point, with about half saying they were currently burned out.

Physicians reported:



## Utilization Management Leads to Burnout

Many factors contribute to physician burnout. The burden of utilization management is one of the most common. Of the polled physicians:



## The Consequences of Burnout

Poll responses made it clear that burnout takes a toll on physicians' physical and mental wellbeing. The overwhelming majority of physicians who reported experiencing burnout described feeling:



**82%**

Emotional exhaustion



**74%**

Lack of enthusiasm



**67%**

Decreased satisfaction



**60%**

Physical exhaustion

Burnout's harmful symptoms impact more than just the individual physician. They can have drastic consequences for the entire health care system. At a time when physician shortages plague nearly every medical specialty, 64% of physicians who experienced burnout said that they considered leaving their profession early.

## Physician Shortages Worsen

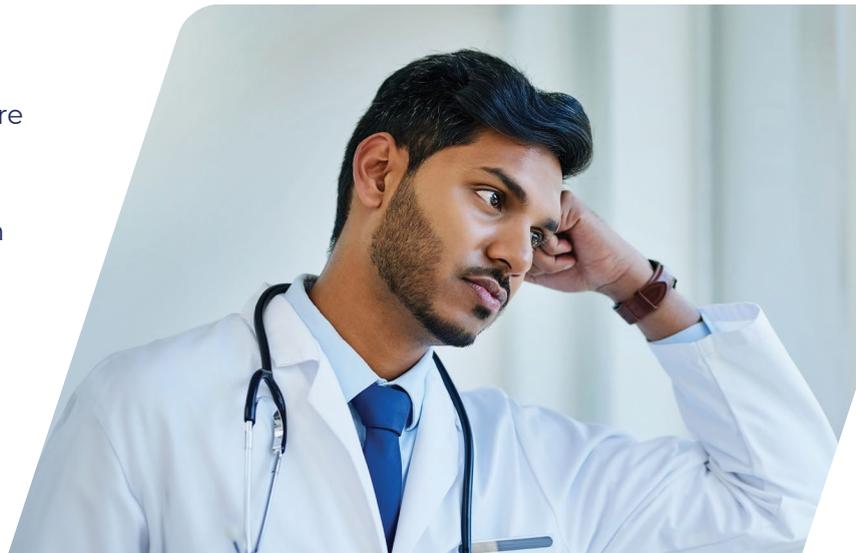
One of the consequences of physician burnout is that physicians are more likely to leave the profession. Across most disciplines of medicine, there are already ongoing shortages. Patients need care, but there simply aren't enough physicians to support them.



**97%**

of physicians agreed burnout can worsen physicians shortages.

Physician burnout is pushing providers away from the profession, even while there is a dire need for more physicians.



## How Policymakers Can Help

The utilization management tactics that are feeding record levels of physician burnout can be curbed by policy change, poll responses made clear.

Of polled physicians, 97% agreed that policies should restore treatment decisions fully to physicians and their patients.



**77%**  
Agreed

Streamline the prior authorization process.



**73%**  
Agreed

Require step therapy be based in science.



**67%**  
Agreed

Ensure peer-to-peer review is done by a qualified medical expert.

## Policy Recommendation in Physicians' Words

“

“Eliminate prior authorization.”

“

“Completely get rid of it all — all decisions should be **between provider and patient.**”

“

“Standard[s] amongst insurers. Exempt patients who have **already used a medication.**”

Read the full findings in the **American Journal of Managed Care** to learn more about how policymakers can protect patients and providers.

## About the Survey

In total, 501 physicians participated in the online poll between June 14 and June 24, 2022.

### GENERAL PRACTITIONER VS NON-HOSPITAL SPECIALIST



**40%** General Practitioners (200 participants)

**60%** Non-Hospital Specialists (301 participants)

### TYPE OF MEDICINE PRACTICED



**40%** Family / General Medicine

**14%** Ophthalmology

**10%** Gastroenterology

**12%** Dermatology

**6%** Urology

**5%** Otolaryngology

**5%** Rheumatology

**9%** Endocrinology

### GENDER

**77%** Male (386)

**22%** Female (110)

**0.5%** Nonbinary (2)

**0.5%** Other (3)

### RACE

**70%** White

**2%** Black

**2%** Hispanic

**21%** Asian

**2%** Middle Eastern

**2%** 2 or more races

**1%** Other



Alliance for  
Patient Access

The survey results were published in **American Journal of Managed Care** in the Volume 30 Issue 11 in November 2024.

To learn more about physician burnout and utilization management, visit [allianceforpatientaccess.org/burnout](https://allianceforpatientaccess.org/burnout).

The Alliance for Patient Access is a national network of policy-minded health care providers advocating for patient-centered care.

