



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Positive Leadership WalkRounds improve health care worker well-being and safety culture**

*Study in July 2021 issue of The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*

(OAKBROOK TERRACE, Illinois, June 24, 2021) – Interventions to decrease burnout in health care are urgently needed. A new study in the July 2021 issue of *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety* (JQPS) evaluates the association between Positive Leadership WalkRounds (PosWR), and health care worker (HCW) well-being and organizational safety culture.

The study, "[Safety Culture and Workforce Well-Being Associations with Positive Leadership WalkRounds](#)," was completed at Duke University Health System, Durham, North Carolina, and involved senior leaders who were encouraged to conduct PosWR, an organizational practice in which leaders conduct rounds and ask staff about what is going well.

A cross-sectional survey of clinical and nonclinical HCWs included a question about recall of exposure to PosWR – “Do senior leaders ask for information about what is going well in this work setting (e.g. people who deserve special recognition for going above and beyond, celebration of successes, etc.)?” – along with measures of well-being and safety culture.

Electronic surveys were returned by 10,627 out of 13,040 possible respondents (81.5% response rate) from 396 work settings. Exposure to PosWR was reported by 63.1% of respondents overall. Exposure to PosWR was most commonly reported by HCWs in leadership roles (83.8%).

The researchers compared the responses about well-being and safety culture across quartiles of exposure to PosWR. Compared to work settings in the lowest quartiles, HCWs in work settings in the top quartiles reported a higher percentage of favorable responses, including strong:

- Readiness to engage in quality improvement activities

- Leadership accessibility and feedback behavior
- Teamwork norms
- Work-life balance norms

Additionally, compared to the fourth quartile, the first quartile had a lower percentage of respondents reporting emotional exhaustion (burnout) in themselves and in their colleagues.

The findings in the study are “promising and serve as an important reminder about the role of leaders at all levels of the organization in preventing and mitigating health professional burnout,” notes an [accompanying editorial](#) by Kanekal Suresh Gautham, MD, DM, MS, FAAP, and Colin P. West, MD, PhD. “It reminds us that every leader is a CEO – a Chief Emotional Officer.”

Also featured in the July issue:

- [A Practice Redesign Collaborative for Reducing Hospital Readmission for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in an Affiliated Network of Health Care Organizations](#) (Mayo Clinic Care Network, Rochester, Minnesota)
- [Electronic Health Record Transition and Impact on Screening Test Follow-Up](#) (Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Boston)
- [Effect of Default Order Standardization on Opioid Prescribing Patterns](#) (University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System, Chicago)
- [Advanced Medication Reconciliation: A Systematic Review of the Impact on Medication Errors and Adverse Drug Events Associated with Transitions of Care](#) (Western University, London, Ontario, Canada)
- [Detecting and Assessing Suicide Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute, Seattle)
- [Collateral Damage? Consequences of Radically Transparent Reviews in Health Care](#) (commentary)
- [Improving the Quality and Safety of Telehealth: A Call for Papers on Telehealth](#) (editorial)

For more information, visit [The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety website](#).

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**Note for editors**

The article is “[Safety Culture and Workforce Well-Being Associations with Positive Leadership WalkRounds](#)” by J. Bryan Sexton, PhD; Kathryn C. Adair, PhD; Jochen Profit, MD; Jonathan Bae, MD; Kyle J. Rehder, MD; Tracy Gosselin, PhD, RN; Judy Milne, RN; Michael Leonard, MD; and Allan Frankel, MD. The article appears in *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*, volume 47, number 7 (July 2021), published by Elsevier.

***The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety***

[The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety](#) (JQPS) is a peer-reviewed journal providing health care professionals with innovative thinking, strategies and practices in improving quality and safety in health care. JQPS is the official journal of [The Joint Commission](#) and [Joint Commission Resources, Inc.](#) Original case studies, program or project reports, reports of new methodologies or the new application of methodologies, research studies, and commentaries on issues and practices are all considered.