

# Leveraging Leadership Education to Mitigate Burnout

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## Abstract

Burnout among healthcare professionals poses a critical threat to workforce stability, patient outcomes, and the financial sustainability of healthcare systems. Affecting up to half of clinicians globally and intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic, burnout is associated with emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced professional fulfillment, increased turnover, and preventable patient harm. Although leadership effectiveness has been identified as a key determinant of clinician well-being, there remains limited empirical evidence identifying which leadership competencies, when taught through continuing medical education (CME), most effectively mitigate burnout. This study proposes and evaluates a structured, multilevel leadership education framework designed to address burnout across individual, interpersonal, team, and organizational domains. The “Me, You, We, All” model integrates self-leadership (emotional intelligence and self-regulation), relational leadership (communication, mentorship, and motivation), team leadership (collaboration and psychological safety), and organizational leadership (vision, culture, and change management). Drawing on competency-based, theory-driven, and emotional intelligence frameworks, this model aligns specific leadership behaviors with known drivers of burnout. Using a longitudinal study design, the research will assess the impact of targeted leadership education on burnout indicators, leadership effectiveness, and team engagement. By linking measurable leadership competencies to burnout outcomes, this study aims to generate actionable evidence for CME program design and organizational strategy. This work addresses a critical gap in healthcare education by advancing leadership development as a scalable, high-impact intervention for burnout mitigation, workforce retention, and improved healthcare delivery.

**Keywords:** Competencies; Continuing Education; Healthcare; Wellbeing; Workforce Development