



MEMORANDUM

**Concerning JAMA Viewpoint on physician burnout, a "serious problem" -
February 10, 2017**

As if we didn't need another reminder of how challenging it is to be a physician, JAMA just published a Viewpoint, "[Addressing Physician Burnout: The Way Forward](#)." It discloses some disturbing stats on the HCP environment here in the US: (i) the prevalence of burnout among practicing physicians in the US exceeds 50%; (ii) in one recent study, physicians spent approximately 33% of their work hours performing direct clinical work vs. 49% completing clerical tasks and interfacing with the EHR (insanity); and (iii) 44% of US physicians work >60 hours per week vs. 8% of US workers that work >60 hours per week. The authors note, "Unlike many industries in which advances in technology have improved efficiency, EHRs appear to have increased clerical burden for physicians and can distract some physicians from meaningful interactions with patients." This is very true in diabetes - [see Dr. Irl Hirsch's 2017 rant](#) - and we hope to see this change. The authors propose a few ways forward, and we agree that EMRs are a nightmare and lower-level healthcare workers can also help perform these documentation tasks. We also hope voice recognition technology like Amazon Alexa can record what happens in encounters automatically. Moving forward, we also hope more digital care delivery models will leverage passively collected data, and therefore, require less documentation and can enable actual focus on patients. This is an extremely concerning trend for diabetes and one we worry about every day here at 804 Haight... [read the JAMA piece here](#).

-- by Adam Brown and Kelly Close