

Work Life Balance and Healthy Living for Women Healthcare Professionals

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Abstract

Healthcare employees always prioritise their professional commitment over their personal needs, which make them difficult to maintain a healthy Work-Life Balance (WLB), especially for women. WLB is balancing between the professional responsibilities and personal life. Women healthcare workers encounter numerous challenges, including night shifts, long hours, limited breaks, and high work pressure. However, when there is a positive organizational culture and a supportive environment both at work and at home, female medical professionals can provide high-quality medical care, work more efficiently, and improve patient outcomes. Therefore, it is essential to identify the various factors influencing the personal and professional lives of female medical professionals and explore strategies to enhance their work-life balance (WLB).

Keywords: Women, Healthcare, Work life balance, Work pressure

Introduction

Women health care workers are facing severe symptoms of depression and anxiety and psychological distress due to the high demands and expectations of medical profession this leads to imbalance in achieving WLB. An increasing number of women doctors are opting to change careers or reduce their professional hours, resulting in a higher proportion of female doctors cutting back on their work compared to their male counterparts. This trend has become a significant aspect of modern medicine. In the face of intense overwork, the option for doctors to shorten their hours or limit leadership roles can be viewed as a valuable path toward a better work-life balance.

Here are some strategies suggested to women in the healthcare industry to balance work and life at the individual as well as the organization level.

Prioritizing Self-Care and setting clear boundaries

Prioritizing self-care and setting clear boundaries is crucial for maintaining a healthy work-life balance (WLB), especially for women in healthcare. A healthy WLB involves setting clear boundaries between personal and professional lives and clearly communicating boundaries to the colleagues so that they respect your personal space, take time to recharge ,indulge in self-care activities and have a hobby like reading spending time with loved ones and exercise which brings happiness and reduces stress ,Be mindful of burnouts and irritability and without hiding it and talking about it ,Asking for help and support from co-workers and family and friends when needed ,judge what is working and what needs adjustment and always learn to say NO, If the boundary is

not set this will result on WLB of women health care workers

Time Management

Maintaining a balance between professional and personal life is essential for a productive day. To achieve this, it's important to plan your day effectively by prioritizing tasks based on their importance and urgency. Establish a proper schedule for both personal and professional commitments and follow a to-do list to keep track of each activity. Designating specific times for work and personal tasks can help prevent burnout, while sharing responsibilities at home and work can lighten the workload. Recognize potential distractions that hinder focus and take steps to avoid them. Regular breaks are also crucial for recharging and enhancing productivity. At the end of each week, evaluate your approach and make necessary adjustments for the following week. By implementing these strategies, you can create a balanced and productive daily routine.

Utilize Technology

Using technology effectively for balancing work and personal life will make a great difference, choosing the correct applications like Google calendar, Microsoft outlook, doodle or Calendly, using different colours for work ,personal and self-care activities will help in differentiating them, using applications like Todoist, Trello or notion for keeping reminders, utilising smart phones for reminders and reviewing reminders weekly as needed, Installing health related application in phones for tracking steps and wellness and journaling applications to journal their feelings.

By utilizing these tools into one's routine, women can effectively manage both personal and professional responsibilities

Stress management

While maintaining WLB stress will be there while sometimes stress leads to more productivity excessive stress may lead to anxiety and depression so if there is a lot of stress it's better to openly communicate with the family members and work subordinates ,friends or even can take medical help, sharing ones thoughts will help in understanding and supporting each other, setting boundaries clearly defining work hours and personal time, focusing on task based on priority, practicing meditation deep breathing exercises will help to reduce stress, staying active doing regular exercise can boost mood and energy, seeking mental health counselling and making time for hobby is very important. Handling stress is crucial for maintaining a healthy work-life balance (WLB). Finding the right balance and addressing stress proactively can lead to improved overall well-being and productivity.

Physical Health

Physical health plays a crucial role in achieving a good work-life balance (WLB). Engaging in regular exercise, such as yoga or walking, along with eating a healthy diet and avoiding junk food, is essential for maintaining energy levels and enhancing productivity. These habits not only improve mental health but also contribute to overall well-being.

Mental Well-being

Mental well-being plays a vital role in WLB of women health care workers can practice meditation which will help clear the mind reduce anxiety and enhance focus on work ,deep breathing exercises to reduce stress and relax, they can even take counselling sessions and professional help whenever they are facing stress, being mindful will help in staying present and reduce stress, taking short

breaks to recharge energy and increase productivity, building strong support system at work and home will provide emotional support. Applying these practices can enhance the mental well-being of women healthcare workers, ultimately benefiting their overall health and professional performance.

Professional Development

Working professionals have to be updated in their field they have to attend trainings, workshops to enhance their skills and this will bring more confidence in them and they have to have a good network of professional and supportive colleagues who help each other and share their experiences this keeps professionals informed about the latest trends and best practices. Building a strong network of supportive colleagues is equally vital. These connections offer valuable insights, share experiences, and provide encouragement for personal growth. Engaging in mentorship, participating in professional organizations, and attending industry events can help cultivate these relationships. By investing in both skills and connections, you can significantly enhance career satisfaction and progression.

Family and Relationships

Spending quality time with family and friends is very important for stronger bond and communicating with them problems and challenges that women health care workers are facing is important to get more support and encouragement from family and friends they may need family and friends help for child care and elderly care when women are working, It is important for loved ones to be aware of the challenges and offer support.

Flexibility

It's very important to be flexible and adopt to new challenges women can explore remote working options so that they can give more

time to family and they can take leaves go on vacation this will help them reduce stress and recharge and improve their productivity and job satisfaction That's the reason even in medical field non clinical health workers are opting for Work from home or remote working opportunities.

Community Engagement

Women health care workers can engage in community services which may provide them a sense of fulfilment and attend workshops on maintaining work life balance will help them prioritise self-care, setting boundaries by prioritizing these strategies, women healthcare professionals can work towards a healthier, more balanced lifestyle, ultimately benefiting both their personal lives and their careers.

Encouraging mentorship programs and peer support groups can further strengthen this network, creating a supportive environment that values both personal and professional growth.

Poor work life balance affects the overall wellbeing of Women health care workers they may be constantly worried about their work, they may have a strained relationships always irritated with co-workers, family and friends, low energy difficult in focusing on work, lack of interest in work leading to isolation, facing difficulty in taking breaks, lack of career satisfaction, restlessness.

Efficient leaders can help women health care workers to have an efficient WLB, they can actually set example by encouraging healthy WLB, they should think about the wellbeing of their women employees this leads to job satisfaction and improved mental health which results in overall increased productivity, Organisation will have good reputation for promoting healthy WLB which will result in retention and recruitment. Leaders should provide flexible work

arrangements should provide remote working opportunities whenever necessary, there should be supportive organisational policies and clear guidelines for overtime, night shifts, Leaders should encourage open communication this will help women employees to communicate comfortably about their problems.

Conclusion

Achieving a healthy work-life balance is crucial for women healthcare professionals to maintain their physical and mental well-being. Prioritizing self-care, setting boundaries, and fostering supportive work environments can significantly enhance job satisfaction and reduce burnout. Implementing flexible work schedules, encouraging regular breaks, and promoting mental health resources are essential steps for both individuals and organizations. By valuing their own health and well-being, women in healthcare can continue to provide high-quality care while enjoying fulfilling personal lives. Ultimately, a commitment to balance not only benefits the professionals themselves but also enhances patient care and workplace culture.

Organisations promoting policies that support flexible scheduling adequate breaks and supportive environment and encouraging them to share experiences will lead to better patient care and improved job satisfaction, Prioritizing work-life balance not only benefits individual healthcare professionals but also enhances team dynamics, reduces turnover, and cultivates a healthier workplace, making it essential for long-term success in the healthcare sector.

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