

Small Practice, Big Impact: How CVFP Medical Group Enhanced Provider Retention Through Well-Being Resources



Executive Summary

An independent primary care practice in Central Virginia, CVFP Medical Group has long been committed to providing high-quality care while ensuring the well-being of its clinicians.

The physician-led organization has seven regional offices, 50 primary care providers, four immediate care facilities, a main lab, a diagnostic center, and a student health center. And like many independent medical practices across the nation, CVFP finds itself competing with large hospitals and health systems to both attract and retain clinicians.

Recognizing the growing concern of burnout among physicians and advanced practice professionals (APPs), the organization is leveraging its commitment to well-being as a strategic differentiator in the market. Since partnering with VITAL WorkLife in 2021, CVFP has built a structured and effective solution to support mental health and work/life balance for its clinicians and their families.



With VITAL WorkLife, CVFP Medical Group has:

- Increased utilization of SafeHaven Clinician Well-Being Resources by 4x in one year
- Achieved 83% clinician engagement with WorkLife Concierge, a virtual personal assistant
- Solidified its approach with, and maximized the value of, its Well-Being Index assessment

Challenge

While physician burnout rates have dropped from a record high of 62.8% in 2021, issues surrounding clinician mental health and well-being remain top for healthcare organizations of all sizes. Nationwide, nearly half (45.2%) of all physicians still report experiencing at least one symptom of burnout, like emotional exhaustion and lack of empathy. In evaluating the reality of these issues in its organization, CVFP identified several specific challenges:

- Providers feel time-taxed and disconnected from patients amidst changing regulations, increasing reimbursement requirements, and growing administrative burdens.
- A highly competitive job market necessitated a strong focus on clinician retention.
- Formalized well-being resources were needed to support physicians effectively, while also addressing stigma and confidentiality concerns associated with accessing mental health support resources.

“Burnout is at the top of our list,” stated Trudy Shahady, MD, Chief Wellness Officer at CVFP Medical Group. “Retention is the new recruitment. We have to do everything we can to mitigate burnout factors, help providers find work/life balance and allow them to practice at the top of their licensure.”

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Solution: SafeHaven Clinician Well-Being Resources

According to Dr. Shahady, CVFP was immediately interested in adopting a solution to address clinician burnout in 2020, when the Medical Society of Virginia (MSV) introduced SafeHaven legislation in the State of Virginia.

SafeHaven was founded after recognizing a greater need to provide physicians and APPs the support they need to stay well and prevent burnout. Physicians and other healthcare providers are often concerned that the disclosure or discovery of mental health treatment could adversely affect their ability to practice — impacting their livelihood and the security of their families. As a result, some clinicians don't get the help they need for burnout and other challenges they face in today's healthcare environment.

Through SafeHaven, healthcare practitioners have a confidential resource when seeking help to address career fatigue and other mental health

issues. The law protects information originating in SafeHaven as privileged. “When SafeHaven legislation was introduced, we knew we had to act,” said Dr. Shahady.

And act, they did. The SafeHaven legislation was passed in 2020, and by March 2021 CVFP began implementing SafeHaven Clinician Well-Being Resources from VITAL WorkLife.

“We became the first independent practice in Virginia to adopt it, during the onset of COVID-19,” said Dr. Shahady. “With it, we embraced VITAL WorkLife’s benefits immediately. It was exactly what we needed.”

VITAL WorkLife’s SafeHaven Clinician Well-Being Resources program offered a comprehensive external support system for CVFP clinicians, including:

- **Peer Coaching:** Physicians and APPs receive confidential, specialized coaching from external peers who understand the unique challenges of the medical profession.
- **Mental Health Support:** Access to licensed behavioral health professionals for confidential counseling and support.
- **WorkLife Concierge Services:** Assistance with personal and professional needs, such as childcare, home services, travel and even handling unexpected situations like legal matters urgent travel.
- **Well-Being Index Assessments:** Structured measurement of provider well-being, helping to track trends and identify areas for improvement.

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Implementation and Growth

Dr. Shahady shared that the practice initially had some concerns about the level of work needed to implement and manage the SafeHaven Clinician Well-Being Resources. However, “the process was seamless and took very little time for our teams,” she said.

VITAL WorkLife walked alongside CVFP leaders at every step to ensure a smooth onboarding. This included:

- **Company-wide communications:** CVFP’s CEO sent an initial announcement email, followed by regular updates from leadership. A highly competitive job market necessitated a strong focus on clinician retention.

“Bringing this program into our practice was incredibly easy. VITAL WorkLife focuses squarely on ensuring providers are aware of the services available to them and knows how to access them.”

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- **Quick access to services:** QR codes were distributed to all physicians and APPs to ensure easy mobile app access; providers were guided through the app’s features.

- **Ongoing reminders to engage:** At quarterly shareholder meetings, the leadership team reinforces the program’s benefits, shares success stories, and addresses questions; monthly communications include timely hooks (such as tips to cope with holiday stress.)
- **Regular data reviews:** CVFP meets quarterly with VITAL WorkLife representatives to review engagement reports and glean insights into program utilization and impact.

Results

Since adopting VITAL WorkLife’s Physician Well-Being Resources, CVFP Medical Group has seen notable improvements:

- **Significant utilization increase:** Program usage rose from 42% to 167% within one year — a 4x increase in engagement.
- **WorkLife Concierge popularity:** 83% of provider engagement begins with concierge services, which often serves as a low-barrier entry point for physicians who later access peer coaching and counseling. This “foot in the door” approach helps normalize using support resources in other areas.
- **Enhanced retention and recruitment:** Having structured well-being support has become a key differentiator in attracting and retaining top talent.
- **Data-driven decision making:** The Well-Being Index, a VITAL WorkLife integrated assessment, provides valuable insights into provider stress and overall well-being.

Several clinicians have shared how thankful they are for the services used by themselves and their family members, Dr. Shahady explained.

“In meetings and even social settings, some share stories of what worked well for them. On the concierge side, I’ve heard everything from getting help with vacation planning to finding a service to remove a bird from a home,” she said. “Regardless of what we provide, the real impact is in knowing that our team feels supported both personally and professionally.”

On a personal note, Dr. Shahady said that in addition to serving as chief wellness officer, she practices medicine full-time. She recalled that initially she had concerns about “opening a Pandora’s box of challenges we didn’t even know existed,” and being overwhelmed.

“I’ve received so much support across so many aspects of this role from the team at VITAL WorkLife,” she stated. “From helping draft my job description to launching and refining our Well-Being Index measurements and more, they’re always here for me. It’s like having my own personal consultant, bringing solid experience and expertise to the table. I’m learning as I go. Honestly, I wouldn’t be here without them. I have nothing but high praise.”

A critical takeaway for CVFP Medical Group has been the value of proactive engagement and leadership buy-in.

“One of the biggest challenges in healthcare is getting providers to actually use the resources available to them,”



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explained Dr. Shahady. “By embedding this into our culture and making it part of our everyday conversations, we’re seeing more people take advantage of the support.”

Looking ahead, the organization aims to:

- Expand well-being initiatives to non-provider staff.
- Build upon the positive momentum in peer coaching and counseling service utilization.
- Continue refining data collection to better track long-term trends in provider well-being — and to explore correlations with patient satisfaction and quality metrics.

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“Clinicians who are struggling are likely to also struggle with patient engagement and even decision-making,” Dr. Shahady said. “Our focus must be not only on our providers, but also the patients we serve. By helping our team members stay focused on their well-being, we help them deliver better patient care.”

Conclusion

Through its partnership with VITAL WorkLife, CVFP Medical Group has significantly improved physician well-being while also positioning the organization as a leader in delivering provider support resources. By fostering a culture where seeking help is encouraged, CVFP is ensuring that its providers can continue delivering high-quality care while maintaining a healthier work/life balance.

“As a smaller independent practice, we don’t have the vast resources of large health systems,” Dr. Shahady said. “VITAL WorkLife gives us access to top-tier support that makes a real difference. It’s been a game-changer for us, especially with recruitment and retention.”

Strengthen your workplace culture and drive organizational change. Discover how the Physician Well-Being Resources program from VITAL WorkLife can help transform your people and your organization. Visit **VITALWorkLife.com** to learn more.

About VITAL WorkLife

VITAL WorkLife delivers positive outcomes and financial results for healthcare employers by integrating mental health and well-being into the employee experience. Our solutions — including customized programs, peer support, counseling, and digital tools across the Six Dimensions of Well-Being — empower employees and clinicians at work and home.

Advocacy: Protected Mental Health Support for Physicians and Providers

Discover how VITAL WorkLife partners with state medical societies and other organizations to protect and support our healthcare heroes. We can help you bring confidential mental health and well-being support to your members.

