## **Health workforce burnout scale, process and instructions for use**

Documentation of health workforce experiencing burnout can be done through surveys using the 14-item Shirom-Melamed Burnout Measure (SMBM) (see Table 1 below). It is recommended to collect a few provider characteristics along with the SMBM responses, to facilitate disaggregation during analysis (see Table 3 below). Data should be collected through individual, anonymous surveys administered to health workers providing EmONC services (in maternity units, surgical units, SNCUs, ICU/NICUs). The use of secure online survey platforms is recommended (e.g., KoboToolbox, Survey Monkey). To encourage honest responses to the survey questions, it is recommended that the survey be administered (and the data analyzed) by sub-national or national managers rather than facility managers.

Calculating the numerator for Indicator 12 (i.e., the number of facilities with EmONC-related health workforce reporting high burnout) requires three steps:

**Step 1: Calculate each respondent’s average SMBM score.**

After completion of the surveys, each health worker’s average SMBM score is calculated. See Table 2 for responses and their related scores. To generate the average SMBM score, scores for all the items in the scale should be summed and divided by 14 (the total number of items). Average SMBM scores range from 1 to 7. Scores ≥3.75 are categorized as “high burnout.”

**Step 2: For each facility, calculate the average score for all EmONC-related health providers.**

By facility, add individual average scores for all EmONC-related health providers and divide by the total number of health providers who responded to the survey from that facility. This will give you the facility’s average score. If the facility’s average score is ≥3.75, the facility is counted as having a workforce that has high burnout.

**Step 3: Sum the number of facilities that have a workforce with high burnout**.

Count how many facilities have a workforce with high burnout. This number serves as the numerator for Indicator 12.

##### **Table 1.** The 14-item Shirom-Melamed Burnout Measure (SMBM)([[1]](#footnote-1))

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How Do You Feel at Work?**  Below are a number of statements that describe different feelings that you may feel at work. Please indicate how often, in the past 30 workdays, you have felt each of the following feelings: | | | | | | | | | |
| **Sub-scale\*** | **No.** | **Item** | **Never or almost never** | **Very infrequently** | **Quite infrequently** | **Sometimes** | **Quite frequently** | **Very frequently** | **Always or almost always** |
| P | 1 | I feel tired | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| P | 2 | I have no energy for going to work in the morning | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| P | 3 | I feel physically drained | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| P | 4 | I feel fed up | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| P | 5 | I feel like my “batteries” are “dead” | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| P | 6 | I feel burned out | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| C | 7 | My thinking process is slow | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| C | 8 | I have difficulty concentrating | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| C | 9 | I feel I’m not thinking clearly | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| C | 10 | I feel I’m not focused in my thinking | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| C | 11 | I have difficulty thinking about complex things | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| E | 12 | I feel I am unable to be sensitive to the needs of coworkers and customers | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| E | 13 | I feel I am not capable of investing emotionally in coworkers and customers | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| E | 14 | I feel I am not capable of being sympathetic to co-workers and customers | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |

\*The letters before each item represent the three subscales of the Shirom-Melamed Burnout Measure (SMBM). The three subscales are: P = physical fatigue; E = emotional exhaustion; and C = cognitive weariness. It is possible to calculate an average subscale score by summing scores for all the items in the subscale and dividing by the number of items in the subscale.

##### **Table 2.** Responses and related scores

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Response** | **Score** |
| Never or almost never | 1 |
| Very infrequently | 2 |
| Quite infrequently | 3 |
| Sometimes | 4 |
| Quite frequently | 5 |
| Very frequently | 6 |
| Always or almost always | 7 |

##### **Table 3.** Sample provider characteristics to collect with survey

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Item** | **Response** |
| 001 | What is the name of the facility where you currently work? |  |
| 002 | Please select the type/level of facility you currently work at: | ADD facility types/levels in your country |
| 003 | Please select your facility’s sub-national area: | ADD sub-national areas in your country |
| 004 | Please select your profession / cadre: | ADD profession/cadre names that are used in your country |
| 005 | How many years have you been employed in your profession / cadre? |  |
| 006 | How many years have you been working in your current unit? |  |
| 007 | Please select your gender: | ADD gender categories used in your country |

1. # () Melamed S, Kushnir T, Shirom A. Burnout and risk factors for cardiovascular diseases. *Behav Med*. 1992;18(2):53-60. doi:10.1080/08964289.1992.9935172

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)