

# Physicians with disabilities may experience depersonalization

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Physicians with disabilities (PWDs) are significantly more likely to experience depersonalization but not emotional exhaustion when compared with their peers without disabilities, according to a [research](#)

[letter published](#) online May 9 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Lisa M. Meeks, Ph.D., from the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, and colleagues investigated the burnout experiences among U.S. PWDs. The analysis included data from the Association of American Medical College 2022 National Sample Survey of Physicians (5,917 [physicians](#); 3.1 percent reported having a disability).

The researchers found that the most frequently selected [disabilities](#) were chronic health (32.4 percent) and mobility (24.9 percent). The odds of reporting daily depersonalization among PWDs were higher than for their peers (adjusted odds ratio, 1.45). While not statistically significant, PWDs reported emotional exhaustion more frequently than physicians without disability.

"Compared with [peers](#), PWDs were significantly more likely to experience depersonalization at least once during the previous year, but not [emotional exhaustion](#). This finding suggests PWDs have some protective qualities against exhaustion," the authors write.

"However, it simultaneously amplifies growing concerns about the structural environments in which PWDs work, including lack of protections against mistreatment, harassment, and pay inequity. Future research may include qualitative studies to identify factors in burnout among PWDs."

**More information:** Lisa M. Meeks et al, Burnout Among Physicians With Disabilities, *JAMA Network Open* (2024). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.10701](#)

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