

Tips for Advancing Your Practice in the New Year

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Now that 2020 is off to a running start, it is time to set yourself up for success. While the winter months can be grueling, taking the time now to improve your practice and develop good habits will pay off for the rest of the year, and years to come. Better than joining a

new gym that you'll stop going to by the time summer rolls around, here are three ways to optimize your practice that will translate into a successful career and strong personal health.

The goal is to gain alternate views, expose yourself to different opportunities, and help you develop skills and knowledge to advance your career.

Mentorship

Mentorship is an important part of career development and is significant in all stages of your career. Both the mentor and mentee gain from the relationship in different ways.¹ Take the time now to find a mentor, and if you do have one, set goals and expectations for the year to come.

Don't know where to start? A mentor may be a more senior physician in your department, but can also be from a different specialty or from an entirely different field. The goal is to gain alternate views, expose yourself to different opportunities, and help you develop skills and knowledge to advance your career. You can seek career guidance from your mentor, ask for help with professional development or personal and professional problem-solving, as well as utilize your mentor for support and advice. This isn't just a placebo either; research shows that those that are part of a mentor/mentee relationship have more career satisfaction and productivity than those without one. Beneficial mentorship is an active process for both participants and it will be an investment of time and effort, but ultimately everyone involved will reap the benefits.

Education

The medical field is constantly evolving. With our wide scope of practice, it is vital that we continue to learn and stay up-to-date as the literature changes and our knowledge of disease processes expands. After

residency, without dedicated conference time or education time in your schedule, it can be difficult to find opportunities to read between shifts, family time, and other activities. One solution is to utilize the free open access movement (FOAM), which has expanded the resources at our fingertips with high quality blogs and podcasts free to all. There are many resources available, so it is important to choose one that meets your educational needs and works with your study habits.² Here are some high-quality options to make sure you are accessing the best content.

For those with especially hectic schedules, there are tons of great podcasts each featuring a variety of topics that can be listened to on the go or to enjoy during some down time. An easy trick is to keep your podcasts together with a podcast app that automatically downloads new episodes and keeps them organized in one central location. Also, stay current on the latest journal articles with apps such as QxMD that can give you access to journal articles that are specialty specific or subscribe to blogs that curate content for you and often they will send it straight to your inbox. Develop a system for lifelong learning and with the help of FOAM, you can find the resources that work for your learning style and educational needs.

Wellness

Nearly half of all physicians report burnout, with emergency physicians reporting higher levels of burnout compared to other specialties.³ As emergency physicians, we often have high workloads, stressful work environments, and irregular sleep schedules – all while juggling personal responsibilities. Burnout

affects everyone differently and at different times, but personal wellness should be on every physician's mind. Burnout is defined as a syndrome characterized by high emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a low sense of personal accomplishments.⁴ Burnout not only has personal consequences for the physician, but it can adversely affect quality of care with studies showing increased risk for patient safety incidents, reduced patient satisfaction, and poorer communication between patients and physicians.

While many different aspects of the health environment (health culture, health organizations, etc.) need to work together to develop integrated ways to prevent and reduce burnout, there are ways YOU can implement wellness measures in your life. Studies have found that resiliency, coping strategies, as well as, strong social support can be protective against burnout. Start 2020 by developing a work-life balance by scheduling regular physical activity and leisure hobbies into your daily routine.



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Additionally, adequate nutrition keeps you sharp on the job; bring meals and nutritious snacks to work to keep you energized throughout your shift. Learn to recognize burnout in yourself and colleagues, do not hesitate to reach out to others for help, and begin to develop your own wellness practices.

For more tips to enhance your career, follow us on Twitter @AAEMYPS. ●

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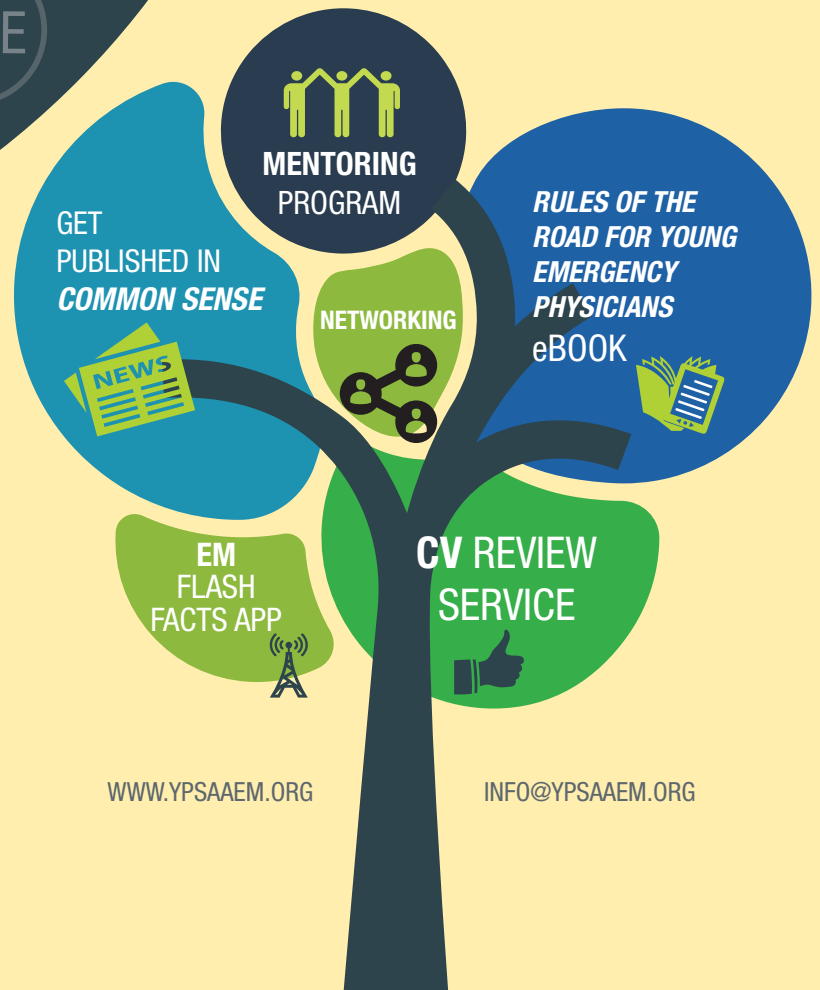
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