



August 2016

I know that you would want to help your colleagues experience not just professional satisfaction, but professional joy. The joy that's felt when you are at your best and able to care for your patients in the manner you wish.

I'm sure you'd want to help them escape a "harrowing trend" if you could. What can you do?

Offer your compassionate support by giving just \$100 to build the North Carolina Medical Society's capacity to help you and other physicians address the burnout epidemic. Your gift will set in motion an initiative to decelerate that trend.

It's been widely reported that almost half of physicians experience burnout and that we lose as many as 400 physicians each year to suicide.

**STOP. THINK ABOUT THAT NUMBER.** Yes, 400 physicians.

As you know, that's about the size of, not one, but three average medical school classes. Based on percentage of NC physicians to US physicians that would be about 12 NC doctors. Tragic doesn't seem a sufficient description.

The effect on families, friends and patients is devastating. I know this devastation personally because my physician committed suicide late last year. Thankfully this devastation is still unimaginable to many.

What is imaginable is dreading getting up and going to work every day. Realizing that you're not having any fun at work. Finding that it's hard to find the joy you once felt in the relationships with your patients. Realizing that your family life, social life and health is suffering.

What can you do? First, commit to putting your needs at the forefront. If you are experiencing signs of burnout, visit [www.ncmedsoc.org/wellbeing](http://www.ncmedsoc.org/wellbeing) to learn about resources that may be helpful to you or a colleague. Here you can also stay abreast of new developments in this nascent initiative and provide feedback to be part of the solution. Second, give \$100 to the

Statistical estimates state that as many as 400 physicians commit suicide every year. Three young men and women leapt to their deaths in one city, in 16 months. We are not experiencing a tragic event; we are experiencing a harrowing trend. *What can we do?*

From *What is Resilience?* by Jamie Riches, DO, a chief intern blogger for the New England Journal of Medicine's *Journal Watch*. Published July 15, 2016

North Carolina Medical Society Foundation to provide startup funding to launch an initiative focusing on your personal well-being.

Your gift will pull together a group that we're calling the NC Consortium for Physician Resilience and Retention whose aim is to understand the magnitude of the problem right here in NC. You will support the formation of a work plan to seriously address the culture that often prevents physicians and health care teams from truly putting their own well-being first and seeking help.

As we learn and continue to build financial resources, we envision adding educational opportunities and retreats that help physicians all across the state re-connect with the joy of practicing medicine. You are putting this in motion.

Through the Consortium, composed of your colleagues, we will learn the best practices health systems, hospitals and medical practices are implementing to not only address personal resilience, but also address health system improvement that truly views your professional satisfaction as the fourth element of the Quadruple Aim. As our financial resources grow, we hope to offer grants back to local communities to implement promising programs. Again, you are putting all this in motion.

You chose medicine because you wanted to care for the sick and save lives. Your tax-deductible gift of \$100 to the NCMS Foundation will begin to fulfill the amazing promise the profession has to offer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bob Seligson', written in a cursive style.

Robert W. Seligson  
Executive Vice President, CEO, NCMS  
CEO, NCMS Foundation

P.S. Your gift of \$100 will help restore professional fulfillment for you and your colleagues, and reignite all the joy the profession of medicine has to offer.