

# Examining Burnout Symptoms on the Internal Medicine Core Clerkship

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## BACKGROUND

- Medical students have significantly higher rates of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and burnout compared with the general population
- A wellness initiative was recently implemented on the 8-week internal medicine (IM) clerkship to promote student well-being
- Surveys were administered biweekly during the IM rotation to more effectively quantify student well-being by gathering data on student burnout
- The previous poster demonstrated that even though the vast majority of students felt that the wellness initiative was worthwhile, over 90% of students reported at least one burnout symptom on the IM clerkship during 2022

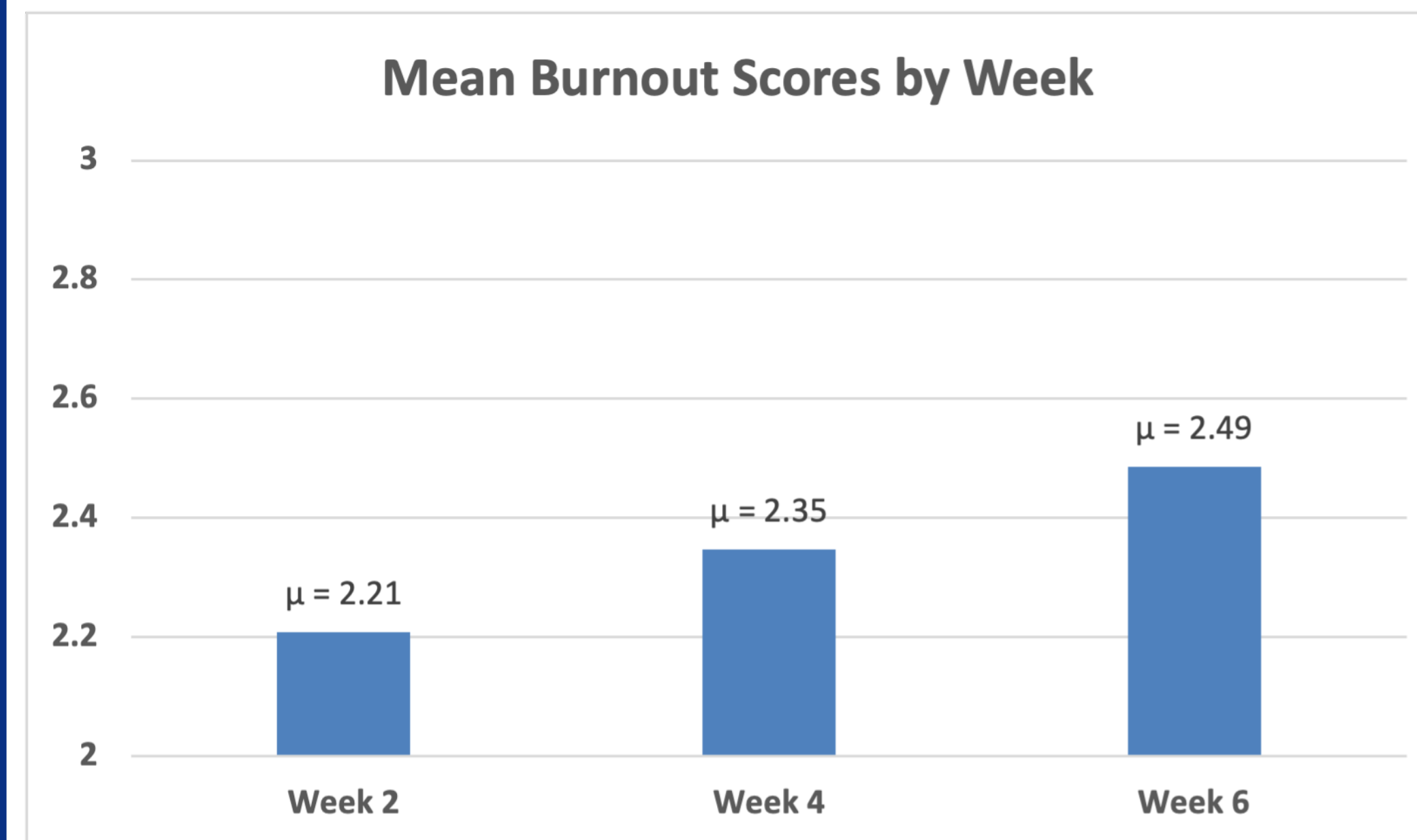
## OBJECTIVES

1. Examine whether burnout symptoms increase over the course of the 8-week IM rotation
2. Compare burnout symptoms earlier in the clinical year (January-February) versus later in the clinical year (November-December) to further characterize student burnout trends

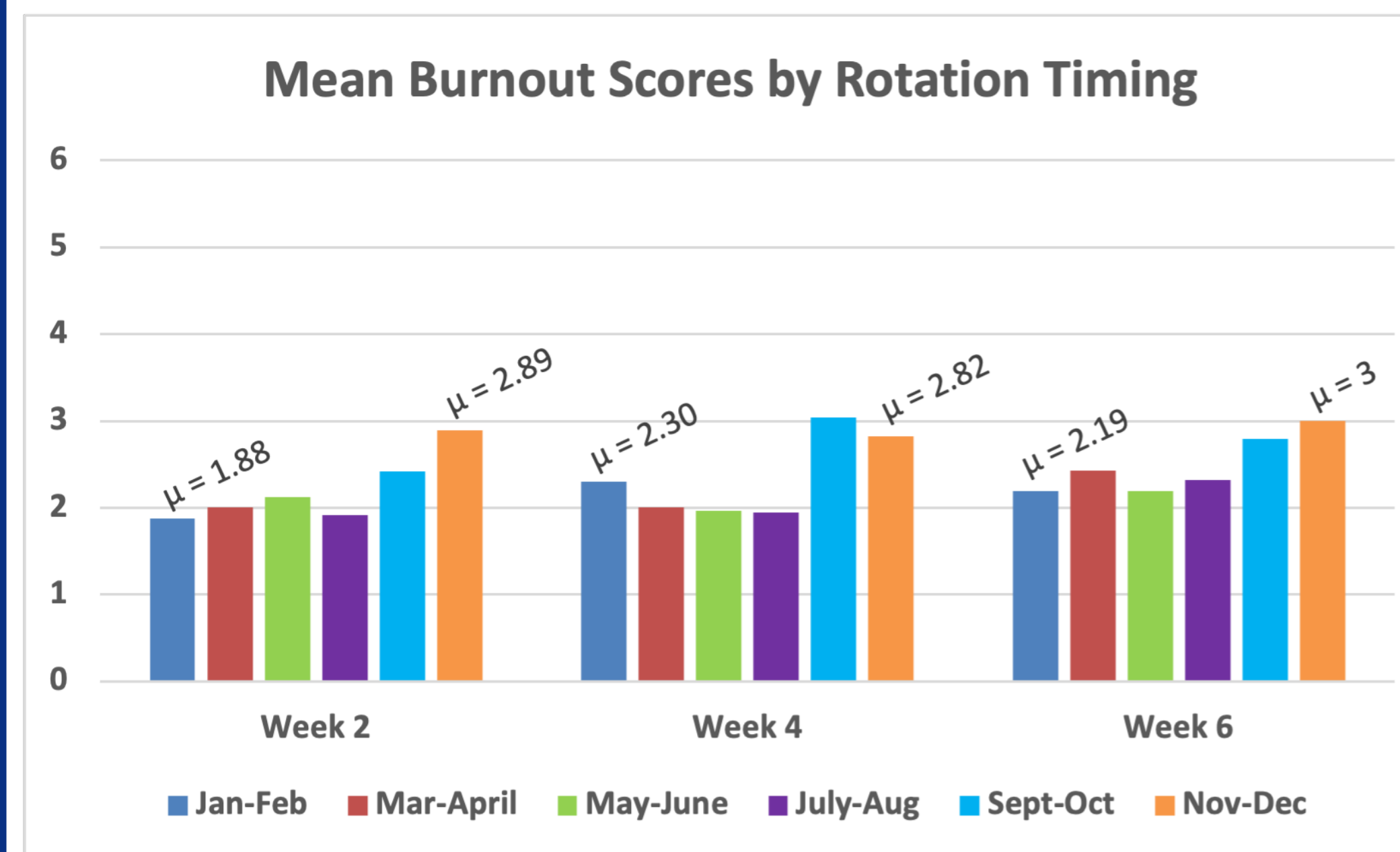
## METHODS

- The wellness initiative during the IM core clerkship dedicates a free half-day every other week during which students complete an assigned wellness activity and have a free half day to use as they wish
- Anonymous surveys were administered to students at three separate time intervals (Week 2, Week 4, and Week 6) assessing burnout symptoms and their chosen wellness activities
- The survey was a modified wellness inventory composed of six questions related to a student's work, patients, and personal emotions
- Individual survey responses were converted to a burnout score that ranged from 0 (no burnout symptoms reported) to 6 (burnout symptoms reported on all six survey questions)
- The questionnaire yielded a 100% response rate from the 168 core clinical students during the 2022 clinical year

## RESULTS



**Figure 1**  
Mean burnout scores reported by students on Weeks 2, 4, and 6 of the IM clinical rotation



**Figure 2**  
Mean burnout scores by week stratified by when the rotation was completed in the 2022 core clinical year beginning in January and ending in December

## ANALYSIS

- The mean burnout scores marginally increased from Week 2 to Week 6 of the IM rotation (Figure 1)
- Regardless of when students completed the rotation during the clinical year, burnout scores increased from Week 2 to Week 6 (Figure 2)
- The mean burnout scores were higher for students who took the rotation later in the clinical year compared with those who took the rotation earlier in the year (Figure 2)

## CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- The findings suggest that burnout symptoms are common among medical students and increased when the IM rotation was completed later in the clinical year
- Future analyses could examine why students are burned out and use the results to fine-tune the wellness initiative
- It would be useful to survey students on similar rotations in order to compare our intervention with a control group
- Consider discussions about implementing a standardized wellness initiative on all core rotations to further improve student well-being

## REFERENCES

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