Paving the Way to a Thriving Workforce
Ohio Association of Community Health Centers

In the ever-evolving landscape of community health centers, workforce challenges have emerged as a complex issue that demands innovative solutions. And complex issues rarely have a single solution. However, at the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers (OACHC), they have been able to figure out that by targeting burnout—a prevailing issue among primary care providers and staff—health centers can empower their workforce to embrace new initiatives and overcome the obstacles they face. This roadmap offers a comprehensive guide for community health centers, introducing an evidence-based innovation that has already made a significant impact on provider wellness and engagement.

Upon initial research, OACHC recognized that provider engagement and burnout levels were major contributors to the workforce challenges their health centers faced. The solution was the implementation of the MindBodyStrong training, developed by the Ohio State University College of Nursing. The impact on provider engagement was remarkable, as the number of providers reporting increased engagement rose while the number feeling overextended or ineffective significantly decreased. The positive results from this evidence-based resiliency training program demonstrated its potential to enhance provider wellness and mitigate burnout, setting the stage for scaling the intervention to additional health centers and extending its benefits to all staff and providers.

MindBodyStrong is an evidence-based resiliency training program. It aims to equip providers and staff in community health centers with the necessary skills to build resilience, reduce stress, and promote overall wellness. The program, implemented over a seven-week period, offers participants a structured approach to enhance job satisfaction, engagement, and mitigate burnout.

But why target burnout first instead of implementing other innovative solutions to mitigate the sources of burnout to staff?

Nay new initiative will require the current staff commitment and work, in addition to their existing work. Investing in addressing burnout before implementing any other workforce improvement processes is then crucial. While it's understandable to desire multiple solutions to tackle workforce challenges, it's important to recognize that introducing new initiatives without addressing burnout can inadvertently create an additional burden on already stressed and overwhelmed staff. By assessing and mitigating burnout levels, community health centers can gain valuable insights into the readiness and capacity of their workforce to embrace and successfully implement innovative solutions. This proactive approach ensures that the implementation of new processes occurs in an environment conducive to positive change, where staff members are supported, resilient, and better equipped to handle the demands of the evolving healthcare landscape.

The following roadmap is a starting point if your health center would like to implement a program that targets burnout for staff.

Paving the Way to a Thriving Workforce
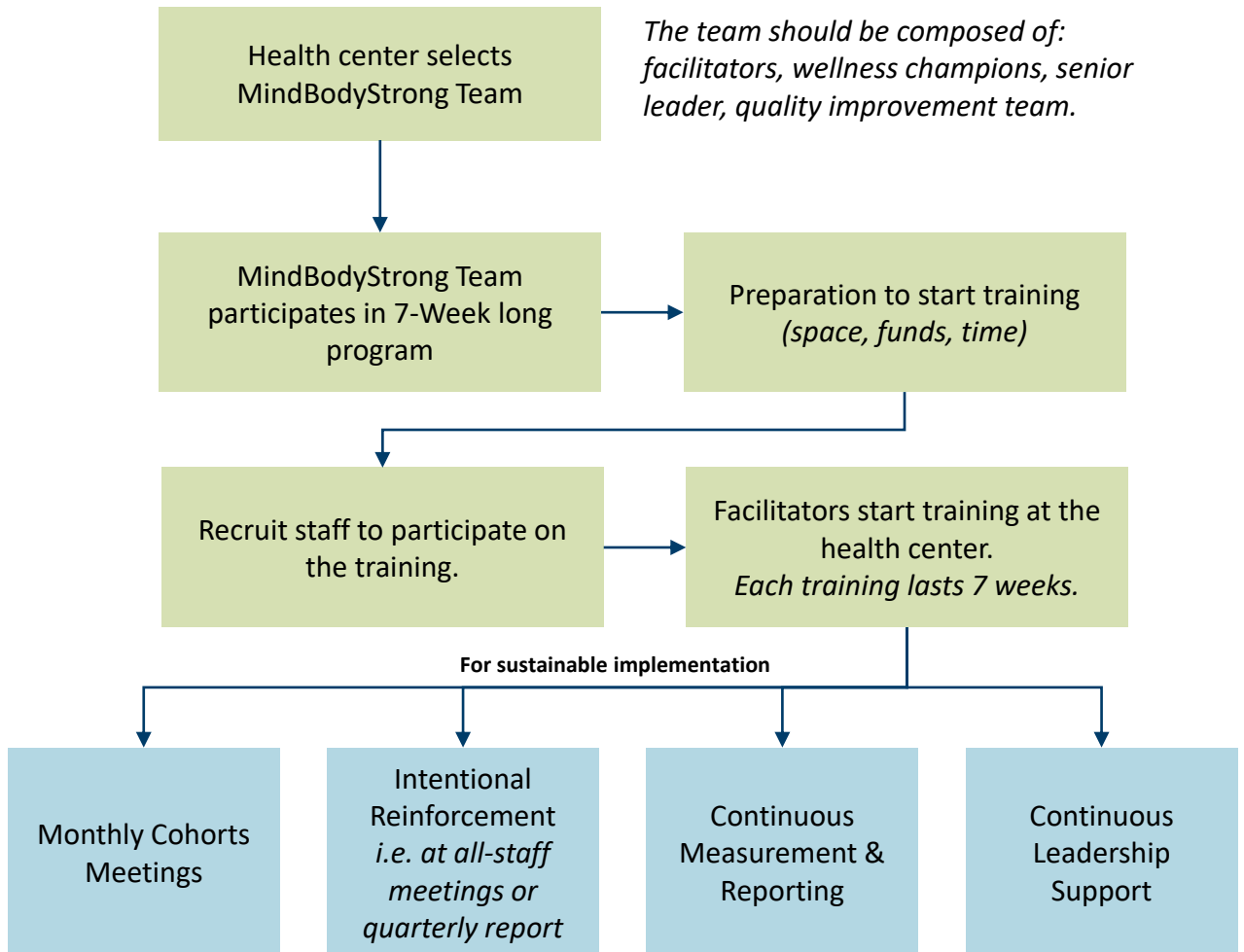## *The Solution*
Audience

Staff

The implementation of MindBodyStrong, or any other program that targets burnout, focuses on all staff. This means that when implementing a solution to address burnout, your health center should take into consideration what is the best fit for your staff. While MindBodyStrong has been a create resource for OACHC, you may find that a different resource will be better suited for your organization.

The Process

Health center selects MindBodyStrong Team

The team should be composed of: facilitators, wellness champions, senior leader, quality improvement team.

MindBodyStrong Team participates in 7-Week long program

Preparation to start training *(space, funds, time)*

Recruit staff to participate on the training.

Facilitators start training at the health center. *Each training lasts 7 weeks.*

For sustainable implementation

Monthly Cohorts Meetings

Intentional Reinforcement *i.e. at all-staff meetings or quarterly report*

Continuous Measurement & Reporting

Continuous Leadership Support

Paving the Way to a Thriving Workforce
The Roadmap

Implementing innovative solutions can be a daunting task, the following roadmap is a guideline that your health center can use to implement any program that tries to target burn out for staff. Please note that every situation is different, your health center might have different considerations, use this as a starting point for the conversations around implementation.

Step 1: Assess Burnout and Establish Awareness

The first step of this journey is to assess where your staff currently is at. Assessing burnout and establishing awareness is a critical first step in order to implement a program like MindBodyStrong. To initiate the process of assessing burnout, community health centers can begin by implementing standardized surveys or questionnaires designed to measure burnout levels and related factors. The results from this initial survey will help inform leadership about how impact it is the problem of burnout and can help communicate why a solution is needed.

Several resources and tools are available to assist organizations in assessing burnout and establishing awareness. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is a widely recognized assessment tool used to measure burnout levels among healthcare professionals. It provides a standardized approach to evaluating emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Another valuable resource is the Mini-Z Burnout Survey, a shortened version of the MBI that can be used as a quick screening tool.

The important thing will be to select a resource that can give you enough insight and can be reutilized after the implementation of the program.

Resources:

> IDEO's Design Kit – Interview
> In addition to survey, interviews might be a helpful tool to use to collect qualitative data that will help you present a story of how burnout is affecting your health center for leadership.

> Evaluation of Work Satisfaction, Stress, and Burnout Among US Internal Medicine Physicians and Trainees Paper
> Study utilizing the Mini Z 2.0 survey.

Paving the Way to a Thriving Workforce
The Roadmap

Step 2: Educate Leadership on Prioritizing Burnout

The implementation of a program like MindBodyStrong relies heavily on the buy-in and support from leadership. Educating leadership about the importance of burnout and its consequences is a critical step in addressing workforce challenges and promoting a culture of staff well-being. By understanding the impact of burnout, leaders can recognize that addressing it goes beyond staff satisfaction is can led to patient improvement as well.

This step empowers leaders to prioritize burnout as a crucial issue that demands attention and proactive measures. At this step focus on key and actionable information. Here are some steps to consider:

1. Gather quantitative and qualitative information.
2. Use the data to tell a story, focus on what is happening and how a program can help address some of those data points.
3. Collaborate and engage with others, whether you collaborate with other teams within the health center or point the leaders to this roadmap, engaging with others builds credibility.
4. Follow-up and offer on-going support.

When presenting to leadership, it will be important to have one to two programs and tools that can be utilized to address burnout. You may choose to only present MindBodyStrong, but presenting the solution will be a key portion to the presentation to leadership.

Resources:

Harvard - Data Storytelling: How to Effectively Tell a Story With Data
Learn more about data storytelling, it can be a powerful tool to get leadership buy-in.

Storytelling with Data
A great website and book that can help you with tips and examples.

Paving the Way to a Thriving Workforce
The Roadmap

Step 3: Develop Sustainability Plan Prior to Implementation

Now that you have leadership buy-in, it is time to look into the future and create a sustainability plan. A sustainability plan serves as a roadmap for maintaining and extending the benefits of the intervention beyond the initial implementation phase. By considering sustainability from the start, you can proactively address potential challenges and ensure that the solution will be available in the long-run.

A sustainability plan will help identify resources, funding, and operational requirement needed to keep the program going in the long run. By having this plan before you begin, you can improve the likelihood of continued success. A few questions to answer as you build your sustainability plan:

- What are the ongoing resources needed to run the program?
- Which partnerships and collaborations exist that can contribute to the sustainability of the intervention?
- How will the program be integrated into the existing processes?
- How will the program and burnout be monitored and evaluated?

As you prepare your sustainability plan, be sure to include the following key components in it:
- Financial considerations;
- Staffing and training;
- Stakeholder engagement;
- Collaterals development and purchase;
- Quality improvement.

Resource:
> [Project Management Institute – Fundamentals of Project Sustainability](#)
> In-depth overview of what can make a project sustainable.

Step 4: Identify MindBodyStrong Team

Before starting to implement the program, your health center will need to identify the team that will take on this program and be responsible for the implementation of it locally. Here are the key actors that should be a member of the team:
- **Facilitators.** These would be the staff members that will be conducting the training at the health center. They have to undergo the training in the program content and delivery methods to equip them with the tools to facilitate the training at their health center.
- **Wellness Champion.** Wellness champions are individuals within the health center who play a proactive role in promoting staff well-being.

Paving the Way to a Thriving Workforce
The Roadmap

- **Senior Leader.** The senior leader should be someone that is in upper management, and is responsible for providing overall guidance, support, and buy-in for the implementation of the MindBodyStrong program. Having someone in this role will help ensuring that you have a senior champion to the program.
- **Quality Improvement Team.** This will be important to ensure that the process keeps improving as it gets implemented. The Quality Improvement team can set benchmarks in place from the start to ensure that there is a mindful consideration to how the program implementation will keep improving on the future.

Resource:

IDEO's Design Kit – Staff Your Project
Quick step-by-step guide on how to best staff your project from the start.

Step 5: Preparation to Start Program

Before getting started it will be important to set the stage for the implementation of the program. his phase ensures that all necessary elements and resources are in place to facilitate a smooth and effective rollout of the program. Here are some key items that you should have prior to starting:

1. Program Materials and Resources
    - Acquire all the necessary materials and resources needed, for both the facilitators and for the participants.
    - Ensuring that the training will have the appropriate space, if doing any in-person training.
    - Organize and distribute the materials in advance, allowing facilitators and participants to familiarize themselves with the content and objectives.
2. Facilitator Training
    - All facilitators should participate on the training.
3. Dedicated Time for Participation
    - Set up dedicated time for staff members to participate in the MindBodyStrong program, ensuring that they have protected time to engage fully without interruptions or conflicting responsibilities.
    - Communicate the importance of the program and encourage all eligible staff members to prioritize their participation and attendance.

Paving the Way to a Thriving Workforce
The Roadmap

Step 6: Integrate Program into Existing Processes

Integrating any program into existing processes is a vital step towards maximizing its impact and ensuring long-term sustainability. Integration involves aligning the program with the organization's workflow, culture, and strategic goals. By embedding the program into existing processes, this can foster a seamless and holistic approach to addressing burnout, promoting staff well-being, and enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.

Doing the integration of the program into the existing processes can help create:
- A seamless adoption;
- Cultural alignment;
- Collaborative and coordinated environment;
- Sustainable implementation.

Resources:

> Harvard Business School – Change Management Process
> Need to know the 5 critical steps in change management? Get started here.

> Project Management Institute – Change Management Process for Project
> Deep look into the change management process from a project lens.

Step 7: Staff Buy-In and Engagement

Staff buy-in and engagement are crucial for the successful implementation of any program to address burnout. Without it, you may have a great program but that will have no traction and no impact. When staff members are actively involved, motivated, and supportive of the program, its impact can be maximized, leading to improved well-being, reduced burnout, and enhanced overall staff satisfaction.

Here are some strategies you can consider when obtaining staff buy-in and engagement:
1. **Transparent Communication.** Maintaining an open and transparent communication channels to ensures staff members are well-informed about the program, its objectives, and the expected benefits. Regularly share updates, success stories, and feedback to keep staff engaged and motivated.
2. **Tailored Approach.** Each health center is different, recognizing and addressing the unique needs and concerns of staff members can help create a very meaningful program.
3. **Champions.** Champions can be staff members, but also it is recommended that there are leader champions. This will ensure that the message is being shared both from peer-to-peer, as well as setting the example.

Paving the Way to a Thriving Workforce
The Roadmap

1. **Celebrate Successes.** Acknowledge and celebrate the achievements and progress made by staff members who actively engage in the program. Highlight success stories, recognize milestones, and provide positive reinforcement to maintain motivation and momentum.

Resources:

Harvard Business Review – Getting Employee Buy-In for Organizational Change
Change is not easy, but addressing staff buy-in the change process becomes easier in the long-run.

Step 8: Measure Burnout and Program Impact

Now that the program has been implemented for a while, you will need to measure the impact of the program and the level of burn out for the staff. By systematically assessing burnout levels and evaluating the program's effectiveness, organizations can gain valuable insights to inform ongoing improvements and ensure the program's impact aligns with desired outcomes. Measurement allows for data-driven decision-making, identifies areas for intervention, and provides evidence of the program's value and success.

Here are some key measurements that you can consider when implementing a measurement of the program:

1. Pre- and post-assessments, noting any changes that happen throughout time.
2. Staff well-being, this can be measured using a new code for mental health days.
3. Staff turn-over, this might be a measure that will take longer, but it is still a valuable measure in the long-run.
4. Quality of care, evaluating the quality of care provided by staff members, assessing factors such as patient outcomes can help paint a picture of how the program has impacts beyond just the staff burnout.
5. Program satisfaction, and important thing to measure is how the staff view the program.

Resource:

IDEO's Design Kit – Monitor and Evaluate
Here you can find some more tips on how to monitor and evaluate your program.