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Burnout and coping strategies utilized by practicing Canadian occupational therapists

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Introduction: Burnout is a familiar term for today's health care professionals with emotional, psychological, physical, and social consequences for those who experience it. It leads to job dissatisfaction, low organizational commitment, absenteeism, as well as interpersonal conflict in teams and patient care. **Objectives:** This mixed methods study has three objectives: 1. To determine the levels of burnout experienced by a sample of occupational therapists practicing in three distinct work settings (chronic care, hospital and community). 2. To describe the practice issues faced by participants in their day-to-day work. 3. To describe the coping strategies participants employ to maintain their practice. **Methods:** This study was conducted at a Canadian university as partial fulfillment of a Masters degree. The mixed methods design was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, participants completed a survey, which collected demographic information as well as the Maslach Burnout Inventory, and Areas of Worklife Survey. In the second phase, focus groups were conducted to learn about practice issues, and coping strategies used to address the identified demands. **Results:** Information from the focus groups was analyzed to generate themes. Statistical analysis was conducted to generate descriptive data and examine within group differences and similarities. **Conclusion:** The results will contribute to understanding of practice challenges in the contemporary healthcare arena and provide valuable insights relative to therapist satisfaction, retention and competent practice. **Contribution to the practice:** This study will help inform Canadian and International leaders and policy makers about the challenges faced by practicing occupational therapists in their current practice environment.