Congress “Hot Topic” Panel to Highlight Strategies for Reducing Burnout in the ICU

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, February 2018 -- Findings from the December 2017 Critical Care Societies Collaborative National Summit on Prevention and Management of Burnout in the ICU will highlight a joint session on Sunday, February 25, 2018, at the Society of Critical Care Medicine’s (SCCM) 47th Critical Care Congress in San Antonio, Texas, USA.

The harmful consequences of burnout in the intensive care unit (ICU), commonly referred to as burnout syndrome (BOS), have been well documented in recent years. It includes increased rates of job turnover, reduced patient satisfaction, and decreased quality of care. Sunday’s joint session will highlight future directions for reducing burnout that were identified during the summit held in December.

“A wealth of information related to BOS was collated at the summit,” said Jerry Zimmerman, MD, PhD, FCCM, president-elect of SCCM and faculty in pediatric critical care medicine at Seattle Children’s Hospital. “The next step is using this information to create programs and build momentum for implementing solutions to improve the health of our critical care workforce. It’s essential for SCCM and members of the Collaborative to exercise our institutional influence toward solutions that not only manage and minimize burnout but also take steps toward preventing it.”

One major takeaway from the December summit, which convened subject matter experts on BOS from a wide variety of disciplines, is the need to engage institutional leadership and administrators in creating healthier work environments that support critical care professionals.

“There is greater awareness that burnout is not only causing significant, chronic stress for individual critical care providers, but institutions as well,” Dr. Zimmerman said. “First, burnout adversely affects quality of care. In addition, high turnover rates associated with BOS are having a huge financial impact on institutions. Burnout is something administrators must take seriously and address proactively.”

Strategies identified during the December summit that will be explored during Sunday’s session include developing and implementing healthy work environment standards, implementing meaningful recognition and peer support, adjusting work schedules, and providing resources that promote individual health and wellness such as respite rooms and exercise, mindfulness, and yoga classes.

“Multiple different strategies are being examined to mitigate burnout, and some are showing signs of success,” Dr. Zimmerman said. “The panel will highlight some of these but also identify gaps in the current knowledge about BOS and research areas where we need to dig a little deeper to better understand other potential strategies for recognizing, treating, and preventing BOS.”
Featured presentations and speakers during Sunday’s program include:

- **Implementing Healthy Work Environment Initiatives to Prevent Burnout**, Vicki S. Good, RN, MSN, former president of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
- **New Insights on Burnout in ICU Clinicians from Leaders in the Field**, Ruth M. Kleinpell, RN-CS, PhD, Rush University Medical Center and president of SCCM
- **Preventative Strategies for Mitigating Burnout in ICU Clinicians**, Curtis N. Sessler, MD, Virginia Commonwealth University and former president of the American College of Chest Physicians
- **Salient Findings from Research on Burnout Prevention**, Marc Moss, MD, vice-chair of clinical research for the Department of Medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and president of the American Thoracic Society

There are currently more than 10,000 critical care physicians and 500,000 critical care nurses practicing in the United States. Critical care healthcare professionals have one of the highest rates of BOS, with nearly half of the workforce exhibiting symptoms. Up to 45% of critical care physicians reported symptoms of severe BOS, while 71% of those specializing in pediatric critical care reported symptoms.

“The term ‘a matter of life or death’ is often a cliche,” Dr. Zimmerman said. “But in the ICU it’s a reality. The constant stress associated with making life-or-death decisions on a daily basis is enormously taxing, and it takes a toll. While we can’t eliminate the reality of a stressful work environment, we can create ICUs that are more nurturing and supportive. It’s critical that we do so, because most of us are at risk for transition to BOS, and the vitality and sustainability of our critical care workforce is at stake.”

Follow the discussion at #StopICUBurnout.

### Press Information:
The Critical Care Congress offers late-breaking and hot-topic sessions that highlight cutting-edge topics in critical care. Members of the press may contact Curt Powell at cpowell@sccm.org or +1 312 285-6551 (text preferred) to learn more about arranging interviews related to high-interest topics and for all other inquiries.

### Press Interview Room
SCCM provides a press interview room in Room 211 during the Critical Care Congress. The press room will also have press releases and limited copies of select literature releases available. For more information, contact Melissa Nielsen at mnielsen@sccm.org or +1 847 890-3919.

**SCCM President Jerry Zimmerman, MD, PhD, FCCM**, will be available for interviews related to this session in Room 211 after the session. See www.sccm.org/pressmaterial for more details.