2025 | Issue 1

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A physicians role in helping patients lose weight

Understanding and Overcoming Physician Burnout

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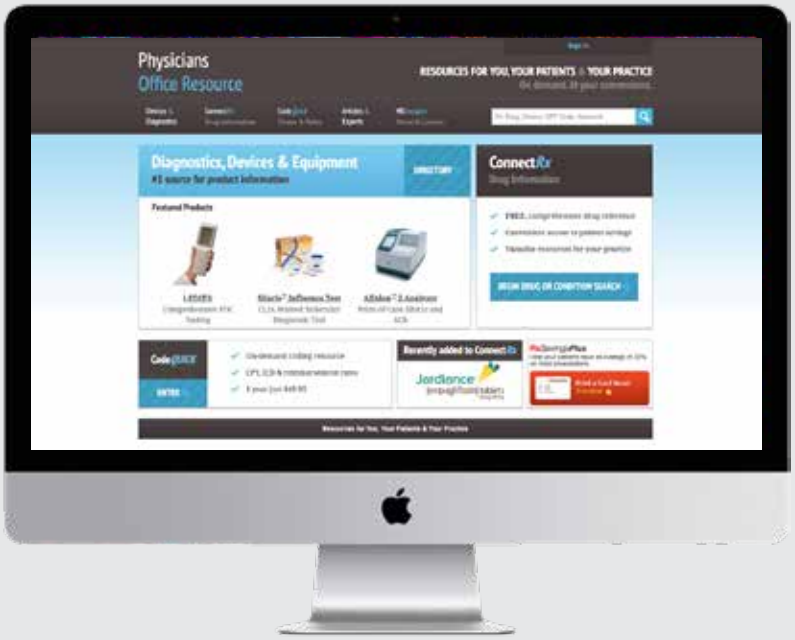
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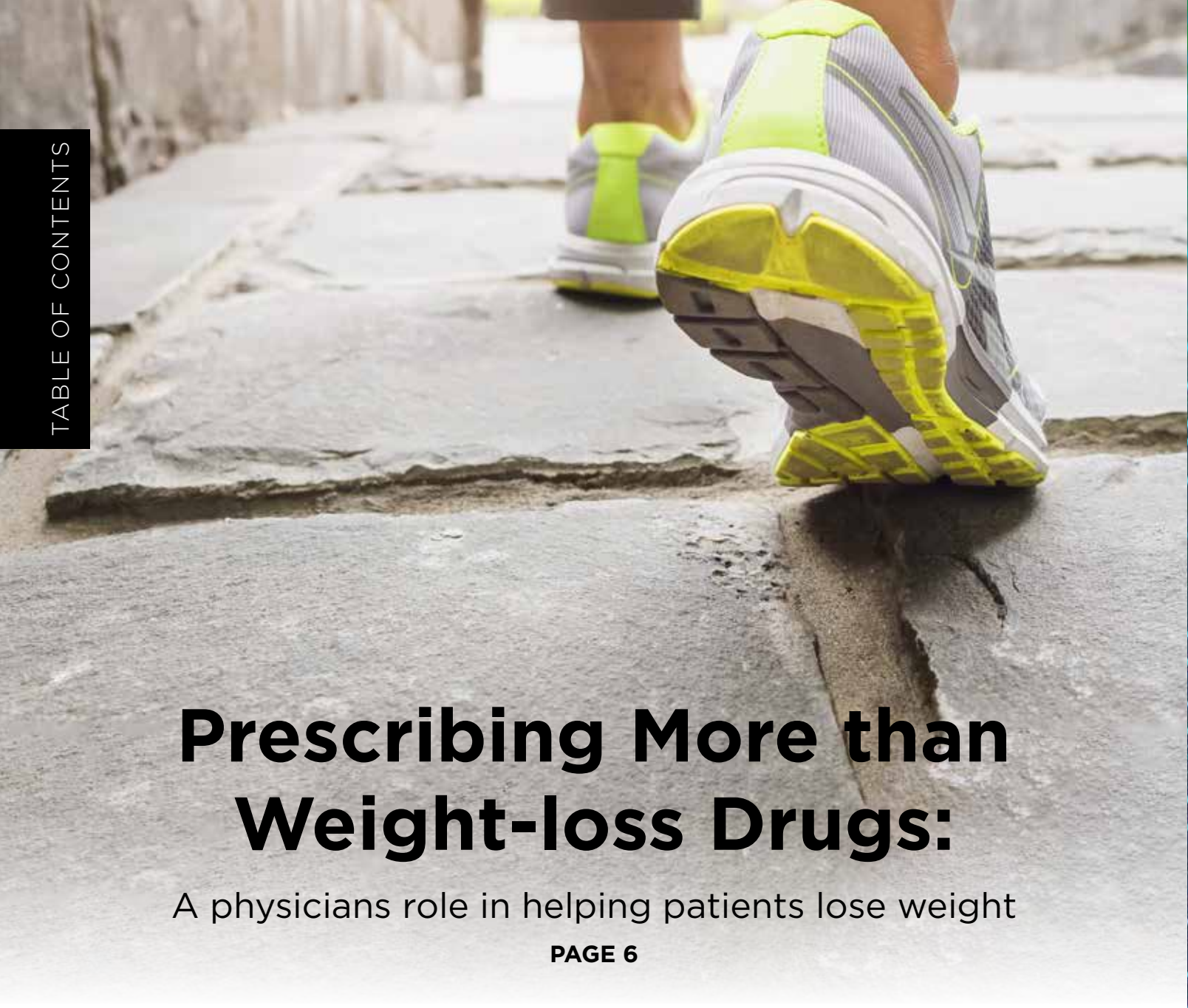
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Prescribing More than Weight-loss Drugs:

A physicians role in helping patients lose weight

BY MICHAEL BAKER, PHYSICIANS OFFICE RESOURCE STAFF WRITER

Let's be honest, with the introduction of weight loss drugs, conversations between physicians and patients, about dropping those unwanted pounds are picking up. The nice thing for HCPs is that this sometimes-sensitive subject is being brought up by patients themselves, which hasn't always been the case. But as you know, there is so much more to the conversation than "weight-loss drugs."

As front-line healthcare providers, physicians play a crucial role in supporting their overweight and obese patients in achieving and maintaining a healthier weight. However, addressing weight loss in a clinical setting can be challenging due to the complexity of obesity and the stigma often associated with it. This article explores evidence-based strategies physicians can use to help their patients lose weight effectively and sustainably.

Step 1: Create a Supportive and Non-Judgmental Environment

Even with patients bringing up the topic of losing weight more than they did in the past, physicians must still approach the topic of weight loss with empathy and sensitivity. Obesity is a multifactorial condition influenced by genetics, environment, behavior, and socioeconomic factors. Avoiding stigmatizing language and focusing on health rather than appearance can help patients feel more comfortable discussing their weight. Terms such as "weight management" or "health improvement" are often more acceptable than "weight loss" or "obesity treatment."

A supportive environment can foster trust and open communication. Physicians should actively listen to patients' concerns,

By creating a supportive environment, conducting thorough assessments, setting realistic goals, and developing personalized weight management plans, physicians can empower their patients to achieve better health.

This comprehensive evaluation provides a foundation for tailoring interventions to the patient's unique needs and circumstances.

Step 3: Set Realistic and Individualized Goals

Setting achievable and personalized goals is critical for long-term success. Unrealistic expectations can lead to frustration and disengagement. Physicians should help patients focus on modest weight loss—typically 5-10% of their initial body weight—as even small reductions can significantly improve health outcomes, such as lowering blood pressure and improving glycemic control.

Goals should also extend beyond the scale. For example, improved energy levels, better sleep, and enhanced mobility can be meaningful milestones that motivate patients to sustain their efforts.

Step 4: Develop a Collaborative Weight Management Plan

Physicians should work with patients to create a comprehensive, individualized plan that includes dietary changes, physical activity, behavioral strategies, and, when appropriate, medical interventions. Each component is discussed below:

Nutrition

Encouraging a balanced, calorie-controlled diet is a cornerstone of weight management. Physicians should:

- Emphasize whole, minimally processed foods such as fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains.
- Encourage portion control and mindful eating to help patients recognize hunger and fullness cues.
- Suggest evidence-based dietary approaches such as the Mediterranean diet, low-carbohydrate diets, or plant-based diets, tailored to the patient's preferences and health needs.
- Refer patients to registered dietitians for specialized nutritional guidance and support.

Physical Activity

Regular physical activity is essential for weight loss and overall health. Physicians should:

- Recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week, as per guidelines from organizations such as the American Heart Association.
- Encourage resistance training to build muscle mass and improve metabolism.
- Help patients identify enjoyable activities that fit their lifestyle, such as walking, swimming, or dancing.
- Address barriers to exercise, such as lack of time, joint pain, or financial constraints, and suggest practical solutions.

Behavioral Strategies

Behavioral interventions can help patients develop healthier habits and sustain weight loss. Physicians can:

- Encourage self-monitoring of food intake, physical activity, and weight.
- Teach stress management techniques, such as mindfulness or relaxation exercises.
- Promote goal setting and problem-solving to address challenges as they arise.
- Recommend cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) for patients struggling with emotional eating or other psychological barriers.

Medical Interventions

For some patients, lifestyle changes alone may not be sufficient. Physicians should consider:

- **Pharmacotherapy:** FDA-approved weight-loss medications can be used as adjuncts to diet and exercise for patients with a BMI ≥30 or ≥27 with comorbidities. Physicians must monitor for potential side effects and efficacy.
- **Bariatric Surgery:** For patients with severe obesity (BMI ≥40 or ≥35 with comorbidities) who have not succeeded with other interventions, bariatric surgery may be an option. Referral to a specialized bariatric center is essential for appropriate evaluation and care.

Step 5: Address Psychological and Emotional Factors

Obesity often has psychological and emotional dimensions that can affect weight management. Physicians should:

- Screen for depression, anxiety, and eating disorders, referring patients to mental health professionals as needed.
- Recognize the impact of stress on weight gain and recommend stress-reduction strategies.
- Foster positive body image and self-esteem to help patients stay motivated.

Step 6: Provide Ongoing Support and Follow-Up

Weight management is a lifelong journey, and ongoing support is crucial for maintaining progress. Physicians should:

- Schedule regular follow-up visits to monitor progress, celebrate successes, and address setbacks.
- Adjust the weight-loss plan as needed based on the patient's response and preferences.
- Provide resources such as educational materials, support groups, or digital health tools (e.g., apps for tracking diet and exercise).
- Encourage patients to view setbacks as temporary and focus on long-term behavior change rather than perfection.

Step 7: Educate and Empower Patients

Education is a powerful tool for empowering patients to take charge of their health. Physicians should:

- Provide clear, evidence-based information about the benefits of weight loss and the risks of obesity.
- Debunk common weight-loss myths and emphasize the importance of sustainable changes over quick fixes.
- Encourage patients to take an active role in their care by asking questions and seeking support when needed.

Conclusion

Helping overweight patients lose weight is a complex but rewarding aspect of medical practice. By creating a supportive environment, conducting thorough assessments, setting realistic goals, and developing personalized weight management plans, physicians can empower their patients to achieve better health. Addressing psychological factors, providing ongoing support, and advocating for systemic change further enhance the likelihood of success. With compassion, patience, and a multidisciplinary approach, physicians can make a meaningful difference in the lives of their patients struggling with obesity.



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From Semler Scientific

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1. Smolderen KG, Ameli O, Chaisson CE, Heath K, Mena-Hurtado C. Peripheral Artery Disease Screening in the Community and 1-Year Mortality, Cardiovascular Events, and Adverse Limb Events, AJPM Focus (2022), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.focus.2022.100016



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1. Sillesen, H., & Falk, E. (2011). Peripheral artery disease (PAD) screening in the asymptomatic population: why, how, and who?. Current atherosclerosis reports, 13(5), 390–395. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11883-011-0196-x
2. Diehm, C., Allenberg, J. R., Pittrow, D., Mahn, M., Tepohl, G., Haberl, R. L., Darius, H., Burghaus, I., Trampisch, H. J., & German Epidemiological Trial on Ankle Brachial Index Study Group (2009). Mortality and vascular morbidity in older adults with asymptomatic versus symptomatic peripheral artery disease. Circulation, 120(21), 2053–2061. https://doi.org/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.109.865600

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FLU AND RESPIRATORY

STATUS FLU A&B

From LifeSign

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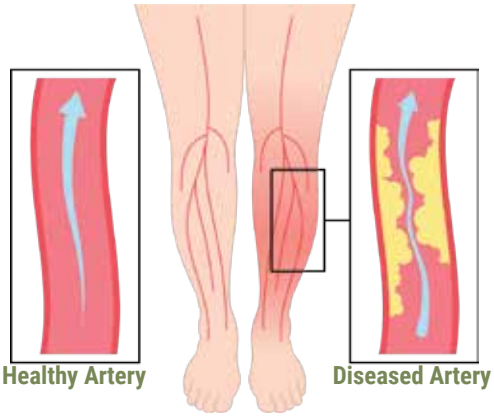
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From Sekisui Diagnostics

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The Metrix® COVID-19 is a novel technology includes clinical claims for symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals, along with dual-sample types for nasal or saliva, allowing for an enhanced point-of-care testing experience. The reader is compact and robust, it's ideal for professional use in diverse locations, including clinics and mobile health units. It's a maintenance free device with no calibration step required.



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From Sekisui Diagnostics

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OSOM® COVID-19 Antigen Rapid Test has not been FDA cleared or approved. It is authorized by FDA under an EUA for prescription use only. It has been authorized only for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 antigen, not for any other viruses or pathogens and is only authorized for the duration of the declaration that circumstances exist justifying the authorization of emergency use of in vitro diagnostics for detection and/or diagnosis of COVID-19 under Section 564(b)(1) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C S360bbb-3(b)(1), unless the authorization is terminated or revoked sooner.



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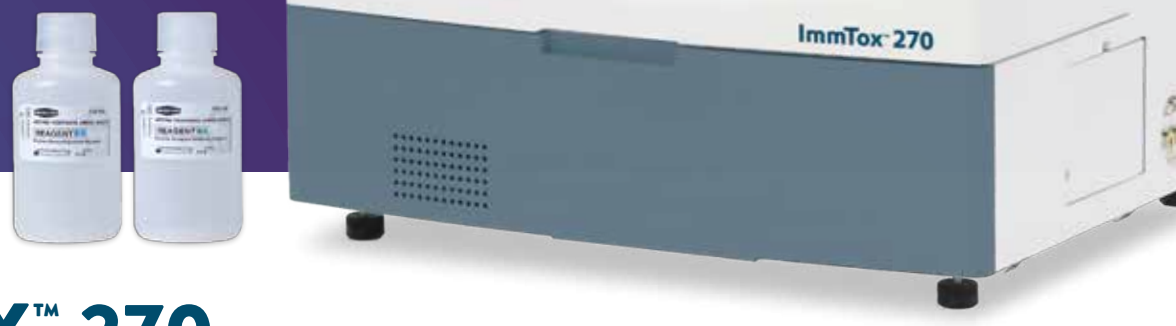
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UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOMING PHYSICIAN BURNOUT

BY: ADAM IRVINE, STAFF WRITER, PHYSICIANS OFFICE RESOURCE

As we begin a new year, our thoughts often turn to hope and improvement. The end of the old and the beginning of a new. A time to re-start and a time to become something more. New year's resolutions often focus on physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual goals with hopes of bettering relationships with others, but also relationships with ourselves. In such a demanding role as a healthcare provider, sometimes the thought of trying to do anything more than you're already doing can be daunting and maybe even paralyzing. It's important to recognize the common signs of what many experience in the industry referred to as "Physician Burnout." Understanding this condition and how to cope and overcome it can provide hope, improvement, and drive for a better you. This article aims to provide actionable strategies to help physicians recognize, address, and overcome burnout.

Understanding Physician Burnout

Physician burnout has emerged as one of the most critical challenges facing the medical community today. It is a multifaceted issue characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment. According to recent studies, burnout affects nearly 40-50% of physicians, with significant consequences for individual well-being, patient care, and the healthcare system as a whole.

Burnout is not merely about stress or fatigue; it is a chronic condition resulting from prolonged exposure to stressors that overwhelm an individual's ability to cope. Among physicians, burnout often stems from several factors, including:

1. **Workload and Administrative Burden:** The increasing demands of electronic health records (EHRs), documentation, and compliance requirements leave less time for patient care, contributing to feelings of inefficacy.

2. **Emotional Labor:** The responsibility of making life-and-death decisions, coupled with the emotional toll of patient outcomes, can lead to emotional exhaustion.

3. **Lack of Autonomy:** Physicians often feel constrained by bureaucratic policies, limiting their ability to practice medicine as they see fit.

4. **Work-Life Imbalance:** Long hours, irregular schedules, and the inability to disconnect from work can erode personal relationships and self-care routines.

5. **Cultural Expectations:** The culture of medicine often glorifies self-sacrifice, discouraging physicians from seeking help or admitting vulnerability.

Recognizing these contributing factors is the first step toward addressing burnout. But how can physicians move beyond recognition to actionable solutions?

Strategies to Address Burnout

1. Prioritize Self-Care

Physicians are often so focused on caring for others that they neglect their own well-being. Prioritizing self-care is essential to prevent and recover from burnout. Consider the following:

Sleep Hygiene: This is a tough one, for your profession, but do your best to aim for 7-8 hours of quality sleep per night. Establish a bedtime routine to promote restful sleep.

Nutrition: Maintain a balanced diet rich in whole foods, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Avoid excessive caffeine and processed foods.

Exercise: Regular physical activity can reduce stress and improve mood. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week.

Mindfulness and Relaxation: Practices such as meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises can help manage stress and improve emotional resilience.

2. Set Boundaries

Establishing clear boundaries between work and personal life is critical to maintaining balance. Some tips include:

- **Learn to Say No:** Avoid overcommitting to additional responsibilities that could exacerbate stress.
- **Scheduled Downtime:** Block out time in your calendar for personal activities and family commitments.

- **Limit After-Hours Work:** Set specific times to disconnect from work-related emails and calls.

3. Foster Supportive Relationships

Isolation is a common contributor to burnout. Building and maintaining strong relationships can provide emotional support and perspective.

- **Peer Support:** Engage with colleagues through regular meetings or informal gatherings to share experiences and challenges.
- **Mentorship:** Seek guidance from a mentor who understands the unique pressures of medical practice.

- **Family and Friends:** Spend quality time with loved ones to reconnect with your personal identity outside of medicine.

4. Seek Professional Help

Sometimes, burnout may require the intervention of a mental health professional. Therapy or counseling can help physicians process their experiences and develop coping strategies. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), for example, is particularly effective in addressing negative thought patterns.

Additionally, many institutions now offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) that provide confidential counseling services tailored to healthcare professionals.

5. Leverage Technology Wisely

While technology is often cited as a stressor, it can also be a tool for reducing burnout when used effectively.

- **Optimize EHR Use:** Invest time in training to improve efficiency with EHR systems. Use shortcuts, templates, and voice recognition software to streamline documentation.

- **Telemedicine:** Incorporate telehealth solutions to enhance work flexibility and reduce time spent on commutes.

Overcoming physician burnout requires a collective effort involving individuals, healthcare organizations and broader systemic changes.

- **Apps for Well-Being:** Explore wellness apps that offer guided meditations, stress tracking, or time management tools.

6. Advocate for Systemic Changes

Burnout is not solely an individual issue; it is deeply rooted in systemic factors. Physicians can play an active role in advocating for organizational and cultural changes to combat burnout collectively.

- **Workplace Policies:** Collaborate with leadership to implement policies that promote work-life balance, such as flexible scheduling or reduced on-call hours.
- **Streamlined Workflows:** Advocate for initiatives that reduce administrative burdens, such as scribing services or improved EHR interfaces.
- **Wellness Committees:** Join or establish committees focused on physician well-being to ensure that burn out prevention remains a priority within the organization.

7. Cultivate Resilience

Resilience is the ability to adapt and thrive despite adversity. While resilience does not eliminate stress, it equips physicians with tools to manage it effectively.

- **Gratitude Practice:** Reflect on positive aspects of your work and life. Keeping a gratitude journal can help shift focus from challenges to achievements.
- **Professional Development:** Engage in activities that rekindle your passion for medicine, such as attending conferences, pursuing research, or mentoring students.
- **Embrace Imperfection:** Recognize that perfection is unattainable and that mistakes are opportunities for growth, not failure.

The Role of Organizations in Combating Burnout

While individual strategies are essential, healthcare organizations must also take responsibility for creating environments that reduce burnout risk. Some key actions include:

- **Leadership Support:** Leaders should prioritize physician well-being and model healthy behaviors, such as taking breaks and seeking help when needed.
- **Workload Management:** Ensure equitable distribution of work and provide adequate staffing to minimize over work.
- **Recognition Programs:** Celebrate the contributions of physicians through awards, public acknowledgment, or simple thank-you notes.
- **Confidential Support Services:** Offer accessible mental health resources without fear of stigma or professional repercussions.

Measuring Success in Burnout Prevention

To ensure that interventions are effective, organizations and individuals should regularly assess their impact. Metrics may include:

- **Surveys:** Use validated tools such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to track burnout levels over time.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Collect input from physicians about workplace policies and their impact on well-being.
- **Retention Rates:** Monitor physician turnover and absenteeism as indirect indicators of burnout.

A Collective Effort

Overcoming physician burnout requires a collective effort involving individuals, healthcare organizations, and broader systemic changes. By prioritizing self-care, fostering supportive relationships, and advocating for workplace improvements, physicians can reclaim their passion for medicine and improve their quality of life. Simultaneously, organizations must recognize their role in creating environments that prioritize well-being and sustainable practice.

Burnout is not an inevitable consequence of a medical career. With the right strategies and support systems in place, physicians can thrive in their roles, delivering high-quality care while maintaining their own health and happiness. Together, we can build a healthcare culture that values the well-being of those who dedicate their lives to caring for others.

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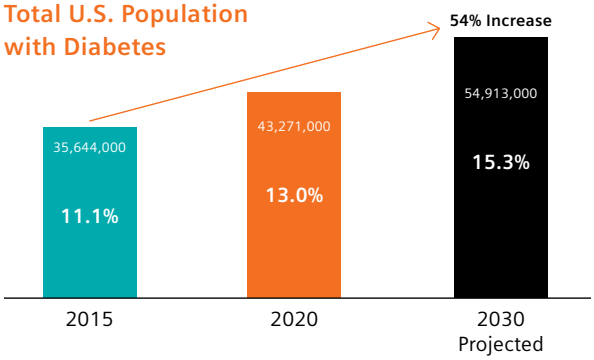
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1. Rowley, William R et al. "Diabetes 2030: Insights from Yesterday, Today, and Future Trends." Population health management vol. 20,1 (2017): 6-12. doi:10.1089/pop.2015.0181.

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1. Smolderen KG, Ameli O, Chaisson CE, Heath K, Mena-Hurtado C. Peripheral Artery Disease Screening in the Community and 1-Year Mortality, Cardiovascular Events, and Adverse Limb Events, AJPM Focus (2022), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.focus.2022.100016



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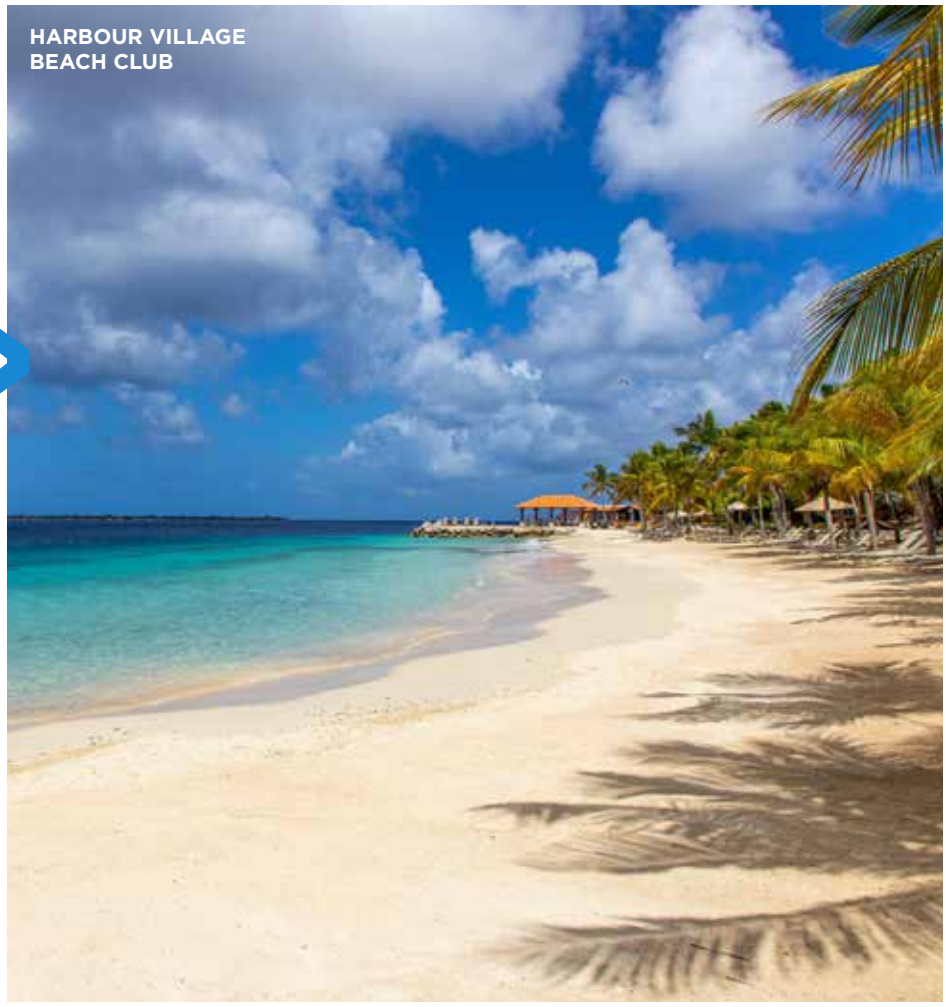
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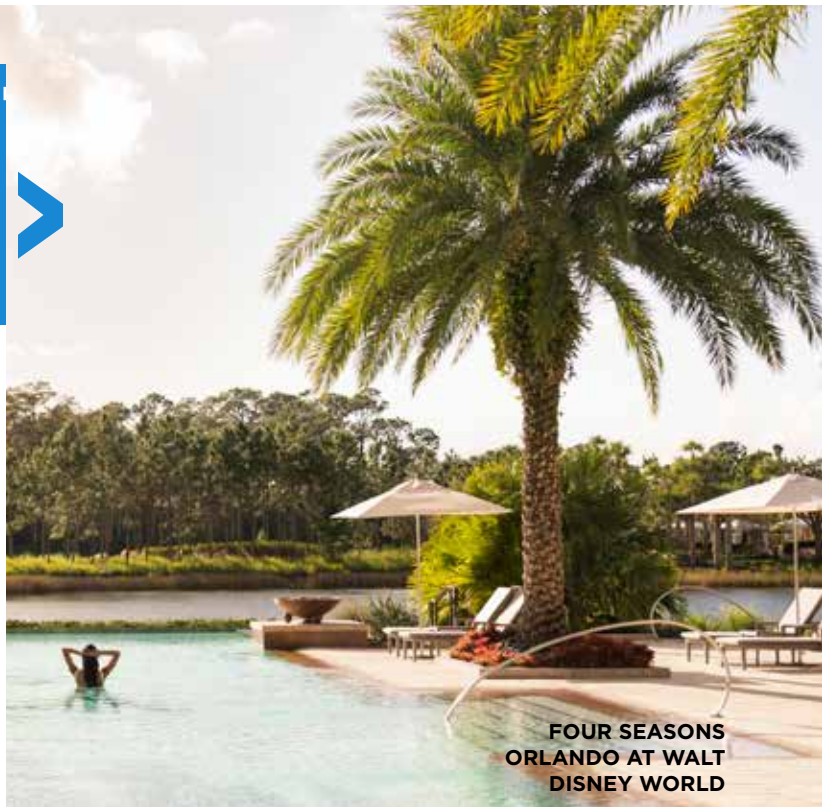
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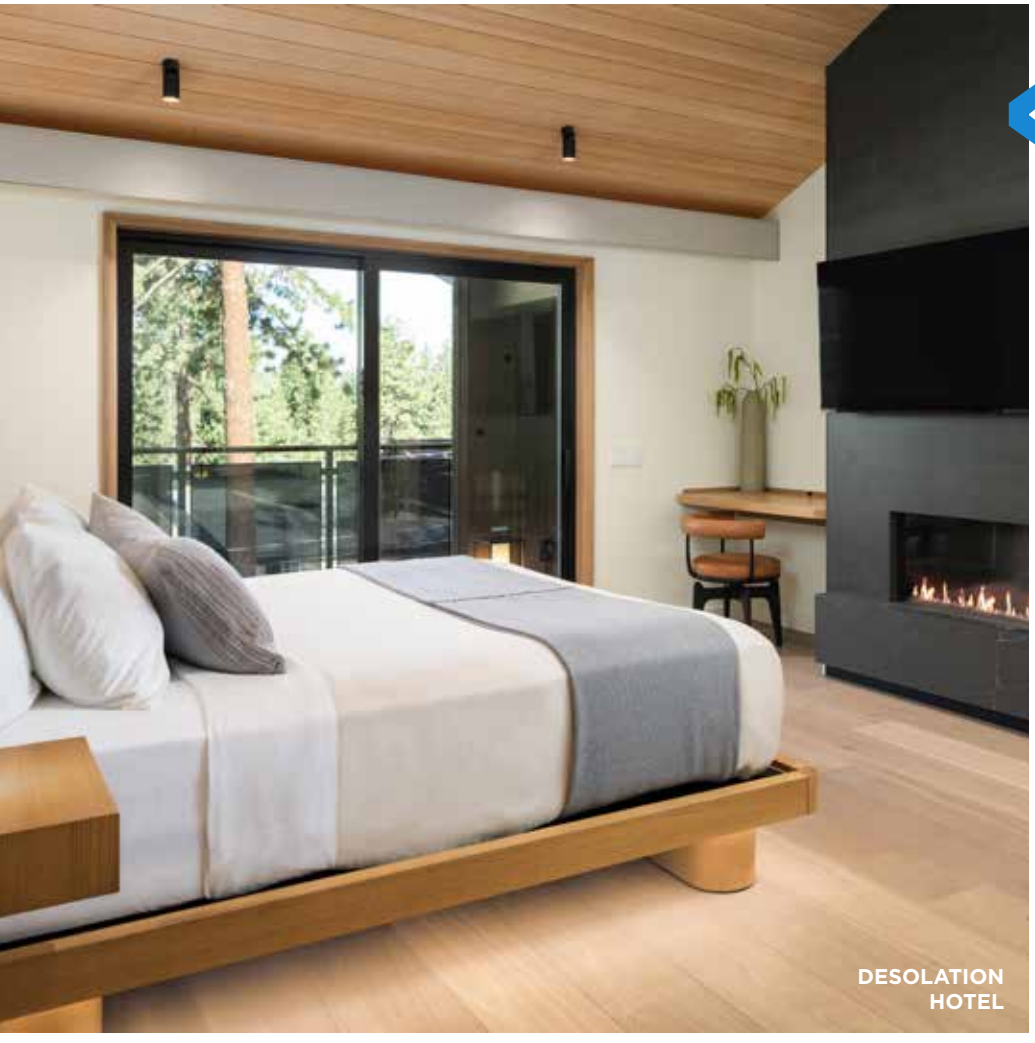
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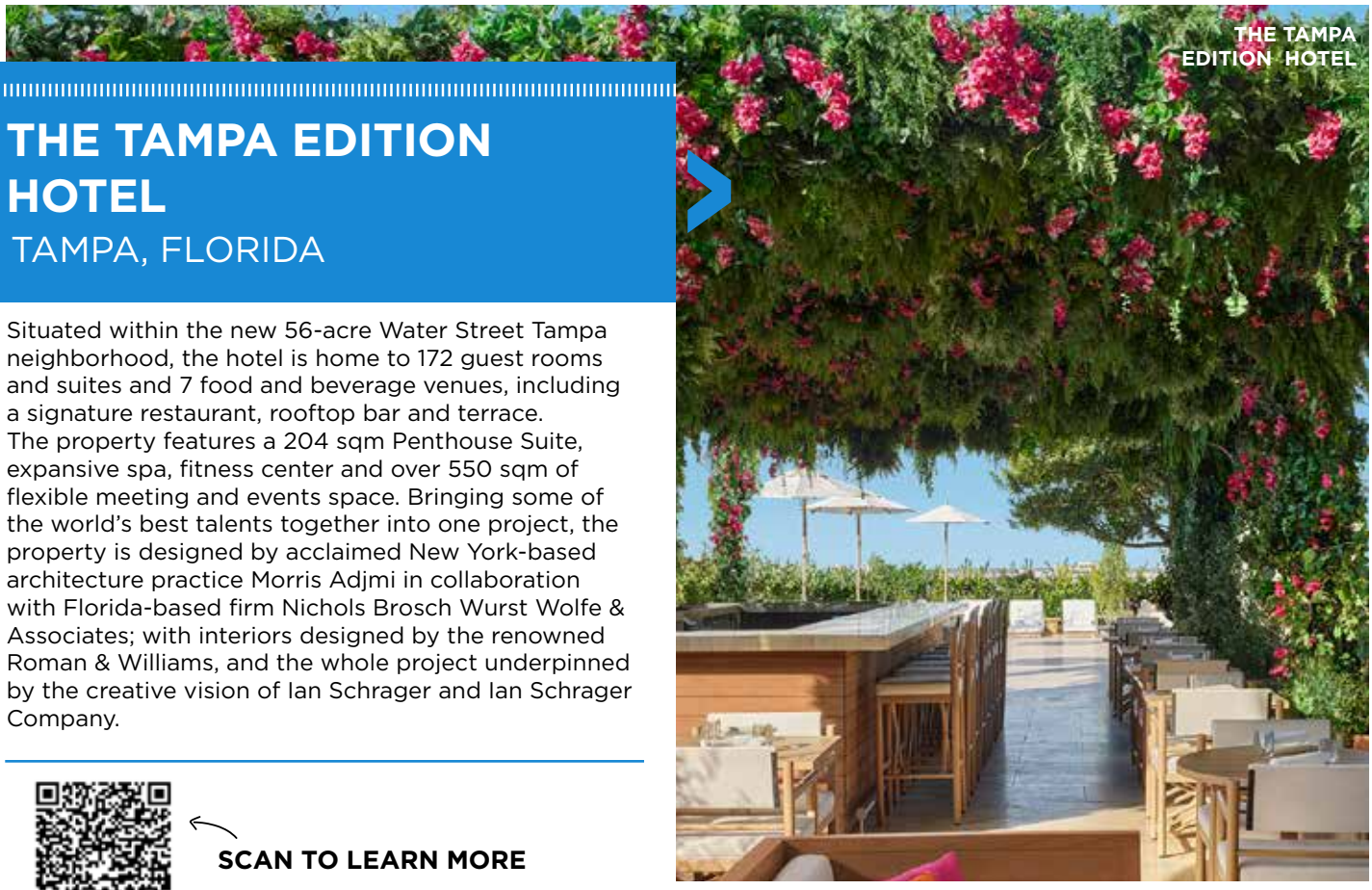
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DESOLATION HOTEL

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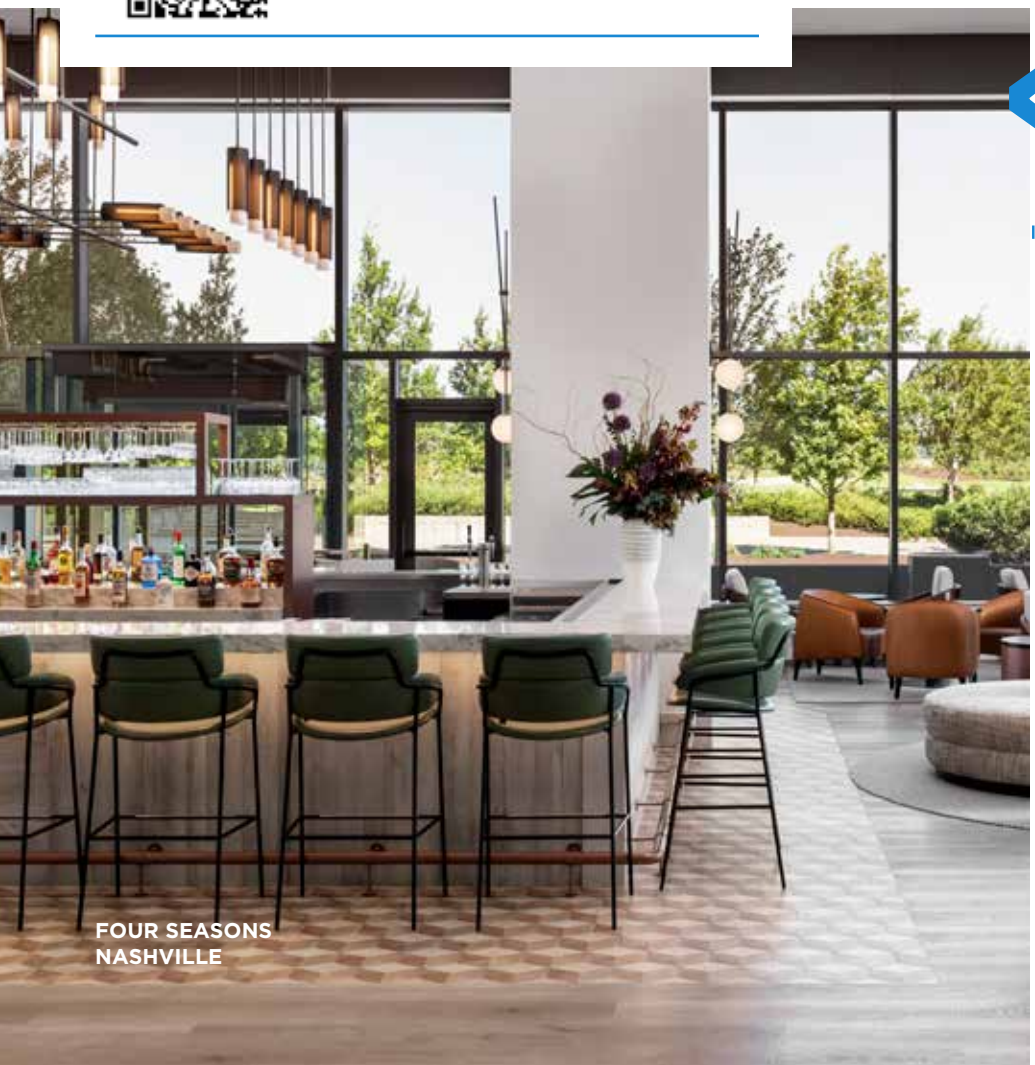
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TRAVEL TRENDS '25

BY: BRANDI BROWER, TRAVEL EDITOR

TO QUOTE POET ROBERT FROST:

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

The most significant travel trend for 2025 will be taking 'the one less traveled by.' Research conducted by various travel industry leaders revealed several common themes in their conclusions. One emerging trend that stands out among all of the rest is the "Destination Dupes."

Post-pandemic travel exploded over the past few years, with tourists ticking off bucket-list cities and flocking to the usual suspect destinations. Hotspots, the perennial favorites of the past, are becoming quite overcrowded (Amalfi Coast automatically comes to mind). The new year will shift from the cliche must-see cities to the 'second-city' trend. Travelers will opt for hidden gem holiday hubs as a respite from the saturation of sightseers.

You don't need to go to remote areas or off the beaten path to discover 'untouched tourism' - there are many comparable alternatives to the world-favorite cities. Some suggested 'authenti-cities' to consider: if you're thinking Spain, skip Barcelona and visit Girona, swap St. Martin for Curacao, pass on Italy's



Positano, and meander throughout Maratea instead, leave London for the locals, and fall in love with Liverpool, say so-long to Seoul and try Taipei.

Some of these "Detour Destinations" are in the shadow of the global fan faves, but the opportunity awaits to discover the charms of these rising stars. When planning a trip to France, put Riems on the itinerary as an add-on to Paris or the new and final destination; Porto, Portugal over Lisbon; Cozumel instead of Cancun in Mexico; and Bresica instead of Milan; Verona over Venice in Italy. The Greek island of Paros instead of Santorini, or hop to Ischia, a much bigger island, is where the Italians choose to go, while the throngs of tourists are in Capri.

Modern travelers are drawn to the underexplored regions, seeking immersive interactions with local cultures, traditions, and nature. These under-the-radar destinations offer similar experiences, the quieter equivalents to the familiar faves, free from mass tourism and the inflated prices that come with it. Like the line from the Robert Frost poem, discovering a not-hot destination may make 'all the difference.'

Another trend for traveling is "Soft Travel" or JOMO, which stands for Joy Of Missing Out. The travel industry tapped the GOAT trend post-pandemic, having the 'greatest of all trips.' Still, travelers in '25 will be flipping a 180 and taking journeys encouraging simplicity and ease to benefit their well-being. Soft Travel leans into simplicity or spontaneity, with individualism and an inward-looking focus. Putting away your phones, avoiding pre-planning, and allowing the exploration to unfold naturally. No fads or gimmicks, stepping away from the always connected, hectic life and embracing self-care and tranquility,



just discovering somewhere untouched and allowing opportunities to reconnect with loved ones, travel in its perfect form.

The experts say that togetherness is still the biggest driver of travel. Harnessing the healing power of quality time with family members never goes out of style. Whether it's celebrating a specific milestone, a multi-generational excursion, or a memorable one-on-one parent/child trip, the number one travel motivator is spending time with loved ones. On the flip side, solo travel is becoming more mainstream. In 2025, "Solo Sojourns" is trending, where more individuals embrace the empowerment and freedom of traveling alone. Setting the pace, following personal interests, and setting their own schedules, solo travelers step out of their comfort zones and focus on personal growth and self-reflection while immersing themselves more deeply into their chosen destination. Men traveling solo keep to the familiar, sticking to the places they've been before. Women are more curious and daring. Women-Only Wandering, all-women group trips are booming. Female intrepid travelers come together, venturing on trips designed with them in mind.

With the increasing use of technology and lack of human connection, "Friendtrips'"are rising. The drawback of the digital world is that face-to-face contact is lost. Meeting and making friends organically is more complex; traveling solo or joining a "Friendtrip"turns strangers into new friends and expands social circles. Travelers are opening their passports and closing down their dating apps to find romance/connections in real life (IRL). People are choosing to look to the past, simpler times when swiping right wasn't an option, turning to traditional means of making human connections.

Another growing trend is "New Heydays," also called "Rosy Retrospection" travel. Nostalgia is fueling the phenomenon. Culture is embracing the retro everywhere you look, and adults seek to relive childhood vacations, distant honeymoons, and gap-year travels of yore. The mode of transportation hearkens back to earlier times with the rail renaissance, with travelers opting to experience at a slower, more relaxed pace. Unlike air travel, a rail trip offers a chance to skip the airport/TSA and soak up the views of the countryside.

Experiential travel is growing and has evolved into "Play" travel. Traveling abroad to see the Taylor Swift Eras Tour is one example. Travel that includes entertainment, sports, cultural experiences, foodie, and fitness events as the primary focus is considered "Play" travel. The new year will bring more globe-trotting spectators to events worldwide instead of staying close to home, playing in their own backyard.

Some other growing trends for 2025 are "Noctourism" and "Nature's Greatest Shows." With the frequency of the Aurora Borealis and last year's solar eclipse, nocturnal tourism is rising as travelers seek various destinations to view the northern lights and experience the night in all its glory. Low light pollution is the goal for these enthusiasts seeking dark-sky zones to be as close to the cosmos as earthly possible. Another motivation for the northern exposure tourists is the weather. With global temperatures continuing to rise and the uncomfortable heat in some destinations, people are searching for destinations where they spend less time in the sun. Leading to the travel trend of "Coolcations." With some destinations being unbearably hot in peak summer months, there's a shift in focus toward regions with cooler climates and fewer crowds. Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, are ideal destinations for cooler temperatures and stunning landscapes. After reviewing the research, Antarctica, Iceland, and Portugal ranked at the top of the list for "Coolcations."

"Set-Jetting" is still a trend as travelers seek out once-star-studded locations of their favorite TV series or films. The rise of streaming services has made watching movies, and television shows more available. This accessibility has led to a surge in fan engagement, increasing the desire to visit filming locals. A rise in travel to New Zealand for the "Hobbiton movie set tours," Dubrovnik, Croatia for the "Game of Thrones tour," The White Lotus set in Thailand, and the second season of Squid Game is expected to boost travel to South Korea. As fans step into their favorite screen characters' shoes, traditional sightseeing is transformed into a more immersive experience, guaranteeing the "Set-Jetting" trend will continue to reign.

Hitch-hiking on the desire to visit fave film and television locals, the hit series Yellowstone can take some credit for putting Montana on the map for a top spot in the rise of another 2025 trend in travel destinations called "Cowboy Core." According to a report from the World Economic Forum, Biophilia (the instinct to seek connections with nature) is a key factor in choosing where we travel this year. A post-Covid love of open spaces has emerged, and "Frontier Tourism" has grown with travelers seeking spots where horse riding, sleeping under the stars, and eating around a campfire are "Cowboy Core" experiences that scratch that itch.

How about a SKI trip? Skiing has always been a popular vacation option, but this "SKI" trend stands for Spending Kids' Inheritance. The trend is popular with baby boomers, who choose to spend their money on a trip of a lifetime rather than leaving an inheritance. The travelers are not leaving the youngest members behind; however, multi-generational trips will rise in '25, as parents/grandparents plan and pay for part or all of the holiday, prioritizing the shared experience with family over saving their material wealth. Baby Boomers are redefining travel in their later years, changing the norms of what growing old means, pushing themselves outside their comfort zones, and embracing adrenaline-filled experiences like skydiving, trekking across mountain ranges, hunting for remote glaciers, canoeing down the world's largest rivers. They are willing to spend their money on travel, and they're going big, so much so that there won't be any left for the kids to inherit.



Turtle Bay Resort



Four Seasons Orlando

As travel industry leaders test the wind to see which direction the trends are blowing, some destinations include the emerging cachets of 2025: Sanya, China; Trieste, Italy; Joao Pessoa, Brazil; Tromso, Norway; Willemstad, Curacao; Tignes, France; Villajoyosa, Spain; and Naha Okinawa, Japan are front runners for trending journeys. Travelers want to shift from digital distractions to more intentional, soulful travel. The future of travel is about creating deeper connections - culturally, environmentally, and personally. Trends show that travelers want something different, no more cookie-cutter experiences, but defying conventional hotspots and opting for destinations that align with their values.

And in the year ahead, that will make all the difference.

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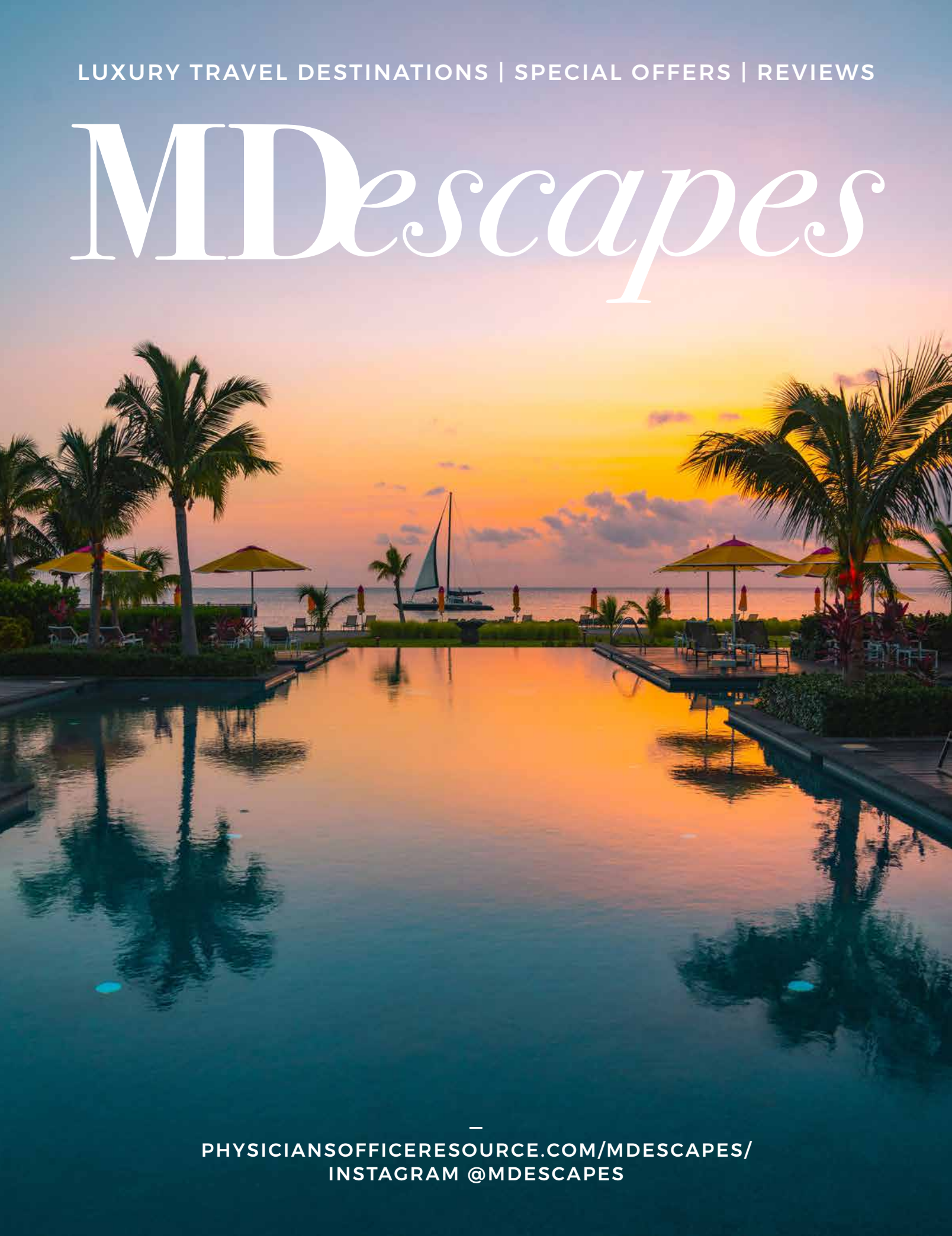
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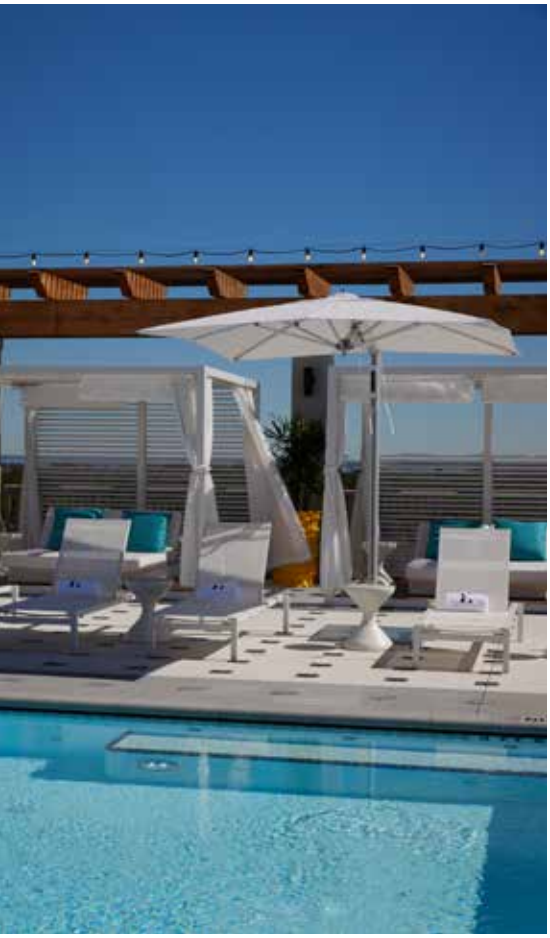
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