

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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America's Doctors: 'This Is Not What We Signed Up For'

Citizens' Council for Health Freedom: Physician 'Mass Exodus' Blamed on Frustration, Burnout, Regulations, Inefficiency and More

ST. PAUL, Minn.—The practice of medicine has become frustrating and painful, thanks to Congress forcing government-mandated electronic health records (EHRs) on doctors.

How does this impact patients? For one, patients may lose their longtime doctors who are choosing to leave their occupations because of these unnecessary but very real frustrations, says [Citizens' Council for Health Freedom \(CCHF\)](#). **CCHF** president and co-founder Twila Brase has written a new book on how government EHRs negatively impact both patients and doctors and has changed the way medical professionals care for those in their exam rooms.

In "[Big Brother in the Exam Room: The Dangerous Truth About Electronic Health Records](#)," Brase cites a [2016 physicians survey](#), which found that 48 percent of doctors are considering leaving patient care or making a drastic reduction in the number of patients they see.

Since the July release of Brase's book, an updated survey has been released. Just last week, the "2018 Survey of America's Physicians: Practice Patterns & Perspectives" was published by The Physicians Foundation. The [2018 survey shows](#) even more frustration: 60.6 percent of physicians now plan to cut back on hours, retire, find a non-clinical job or position or work part-time.

"People in America think we have the best medical care there is, and yet a mass exodus of physicians is taking place," Brase said. "It is not the job they signed up for, not the profession they gave their life for or went to school decades to achieve. They actually cared about patients, and wanted to serve patients, but that care component is being driven out of the system. They were on a mission, and the mission has been thwarted."

As evidence, Brase points to survey findings that say 78 percent of physicians have experienced burnout in their medical practices, and one of the chief culprits contributing to this burnout is the frustration physicians feel with the inefficiency and controls imposed by the government-mandated EHR.

Other key findings included the following:

- 79 percent say the patient-doctor relationship is the most satisfying aspect of their practice
- 65.7 percent say the EHR detracts from their interaction with patients
- Only 10 percent of physicians feel the ability to impact the health care system
- 31 percent of physicians are in independent, private practice, down from 48 percent in 2014

- 80 percent of physicians report being at full capacity or being overextended
- 17 percent plan to retire in the next three years, reducing the workforce by 136,000 physicians
- 46 percent of physicians plan to change career paths
- Of the 47 percent of physicians whose compensation is tied to value-based algorithms, 56.8 percent did not believe the method improves care or reduces costs.

Brase also noted that of the 8,774 respondents in the 2018 physician survey, 2,472 provided written comments in addition to their answers.

“Today’s physicians are overwhelmed, yet 25 percent of them took the time to write comments,” Brase noted. “This shows how strongly physicians feel about what’s happening to the practice of medicine today and how bureaucracy, the EHR and burnout are affecting their profession and their lifelong careers.”

Brase quoted a doctor in ***“Big Brother in the Exam Room”*** who [wrote](#), “The Electronic Health Record they have in place makes me so slow and inefficient I want to scream when I come to work every day. . . . I am so frustrated and just want to walk away . . . I feel trapped and betrayed. I did not go to medical school to sit on my butt for four to six hours a day doing data entry in a computer.”

Dr. Rahma Mustapha is quoted in ***“Big Brother in the Exam Room”*** as well: “The introduction of electronic medical records was one of my many reasons [for retiring]. . . . I do miss seeing patients but very glad to say adios to the regs and EHR.”

Brase also pointed to the example of [Tom Davis, MD](#), who left his 25-year practice and 3,000 patients because of the “demands of data entry, the use of that data to direct care”—in other words, outside control of treatment decisions—“and [his] overall uncertainty about how medical data was used.”

Besides highlighting the tracking of prescriptions as a meaningful use of EHRs, ***“Big Brother in the Exam Room,”*** published in July by Beaver’s Pond Press and previously ranked at least three times as the No. 1 best-seller on Amazon (in the privacy and surveillance category and the Medical History and Records category), also includes the negative impact of EHRs on privacy, personalized care, costs, patient safety and more, according to doctors and data from more than 125 studies. ***“Big Brother in the Exam Room”*** is available online wherever books are sold and at www.BigBrotherInTheExamRoom.com.

For more information about **CCHF**, visit www.cchffreedom.org, its [Facebook](#) page or its Twitter feed @CCHFreedom. Read more about ***“Big Brother in the Exam Room”*** [here](#), and view the [media page for CCHF here](#). For more about **CCHF**’s free-market, cash-based care initiative, ***The Wedge of Health Freedom***, visit www.JointheWedge.com, ***The Wedge*** [Facebook](#) page or follow ***The Wedge*** on Twitter @wedgeoffreedom.

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To interview Twila Brase of ***Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom*** or for a review copy of ***“Big Brother in the Exam Room,”*** contact Deborah Hamilton, Media@HamiltonStrategies.com or 610.584.1096, ext. 102, or Patrick Benner, ext. 104.