

# Healing the Healers

Addressing burnout and mental health concerns  
among healthcare workers in long-term care

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Institut de recherche en santé du Canada

# Outline



Existing challenges in the health system



New challenges from COVID-19



Strategies to combat burnout and mental distress



Healing the Healers' project

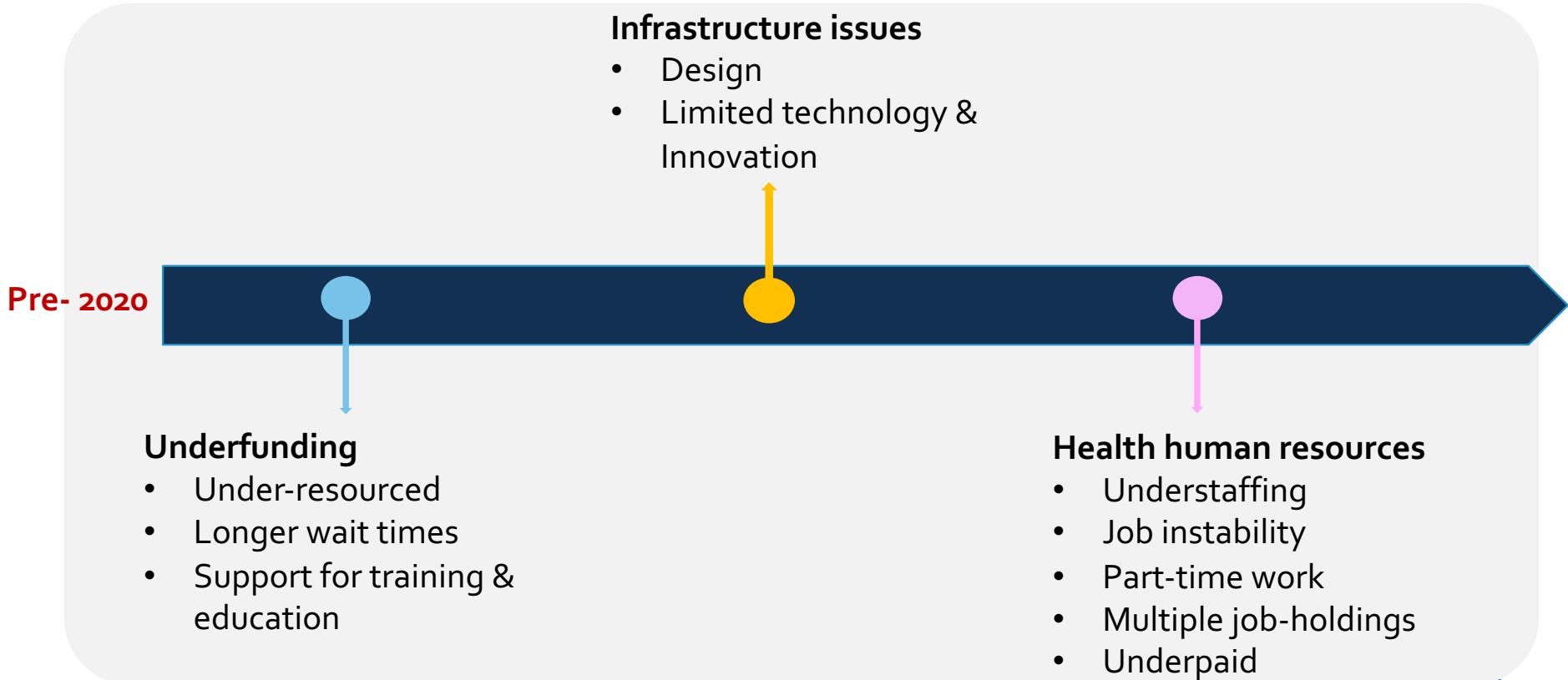


Goals and impact

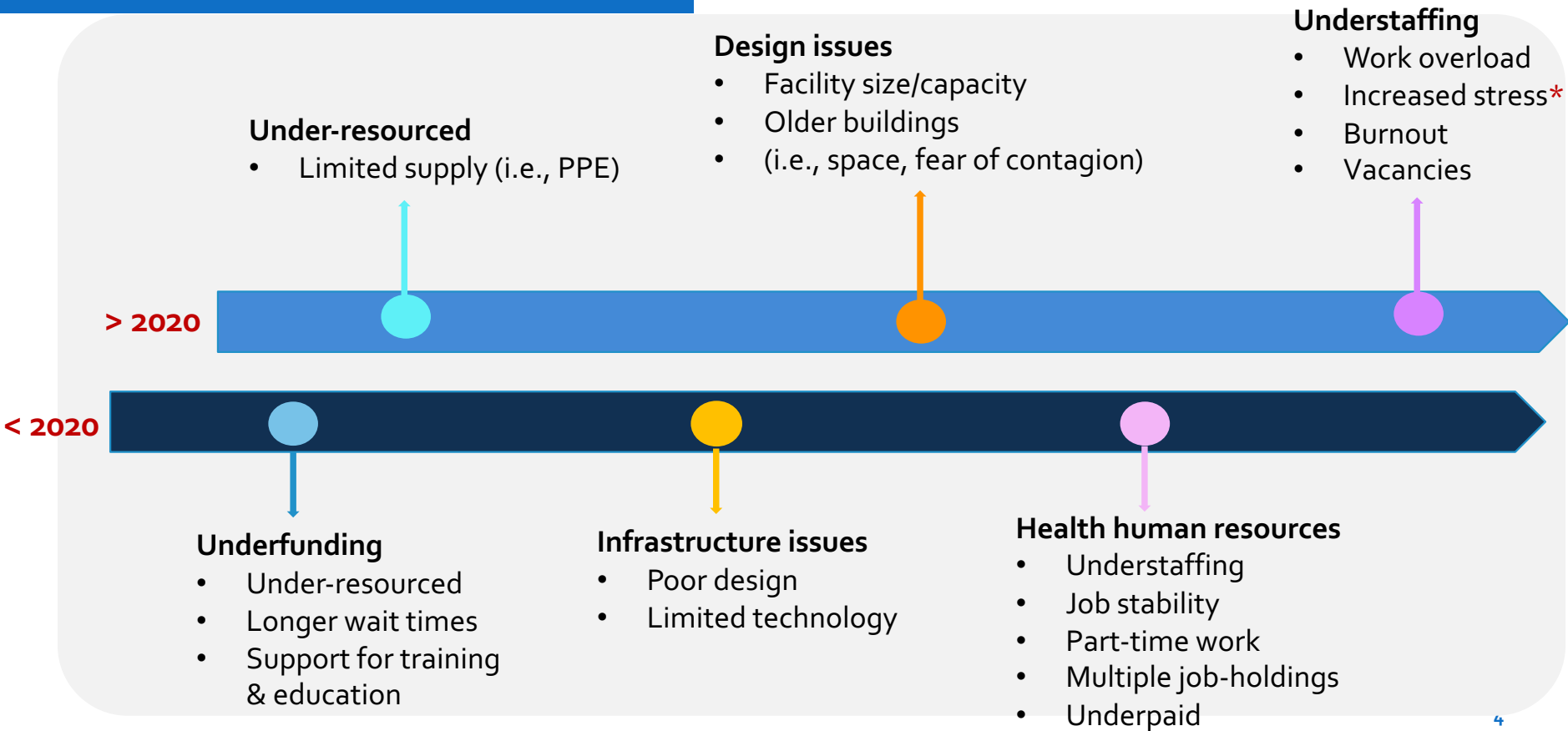


Next steps

# Existing Challenges

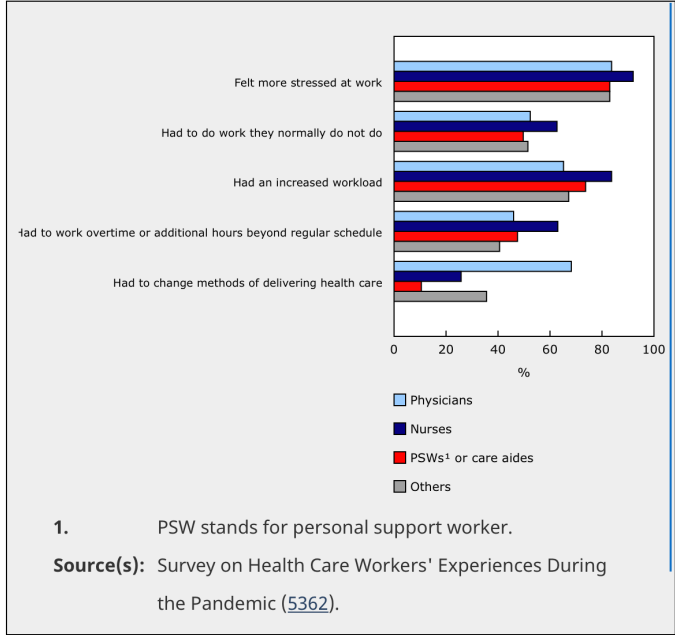


# New Challenges



# Stress & Workload

(statistics Canada, 2021)



Impacts experienced by health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, by occupation, Canada, September to November 2021, %

|                                                                  | Physicians | Nurses | PSWs¹ or care aides | Others |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| Felt more stressed at work                                       | 83.7       | 92.0   | 83.0                | 83.0   |
| Had to do work they normally do not do                           | 52.4       | 62.7   | 49.7                | 51.5   |
| Had an increased workload                                        | 65.2       | 83.7   | 73.7                | 67.2   |
| Had to work overtime or additional hours beyond regular schedule | 46.0       | 63.0   | 47.5                | 40.6   |
| Had to change methods of delivering health care                  | 68.2       | 25.8   | 10.5                | 35.6   |

\*Nurses are most likely to report intending to change jobs or leave their current job in the next 3 years, among HCWs.



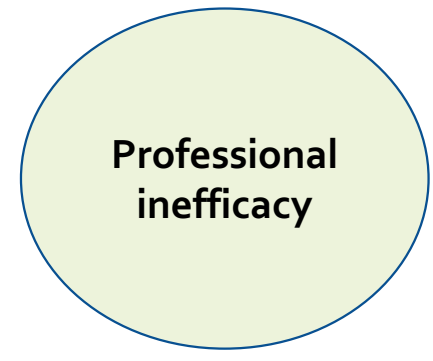
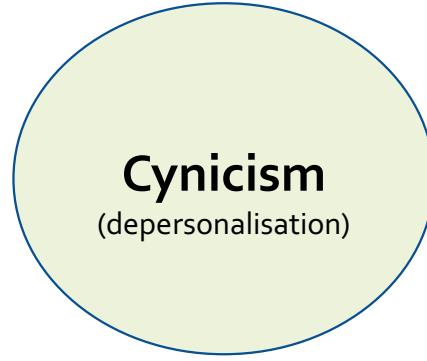
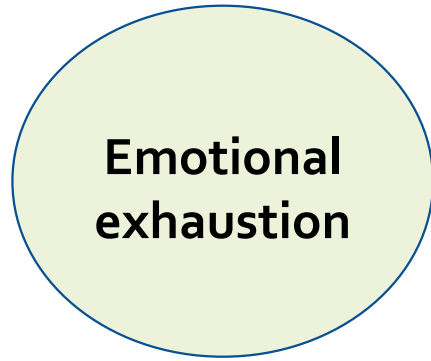
## Long-term care

**A large majority of HCWs in this sector are:**

- ✚ Female
- ✚ Middle-aged
- ✚ Racialized
- ✚ Largely unregulated care providers
- ✚ Under-paid
- ✚ Newcomers



**Intersectionality effect**



- loss of energy
- depletion
- overextension
- fatigue

- Withdrawal/disengagement
- increased mental distance from one's job
- feelings of negativism related to one's job
- Irritability

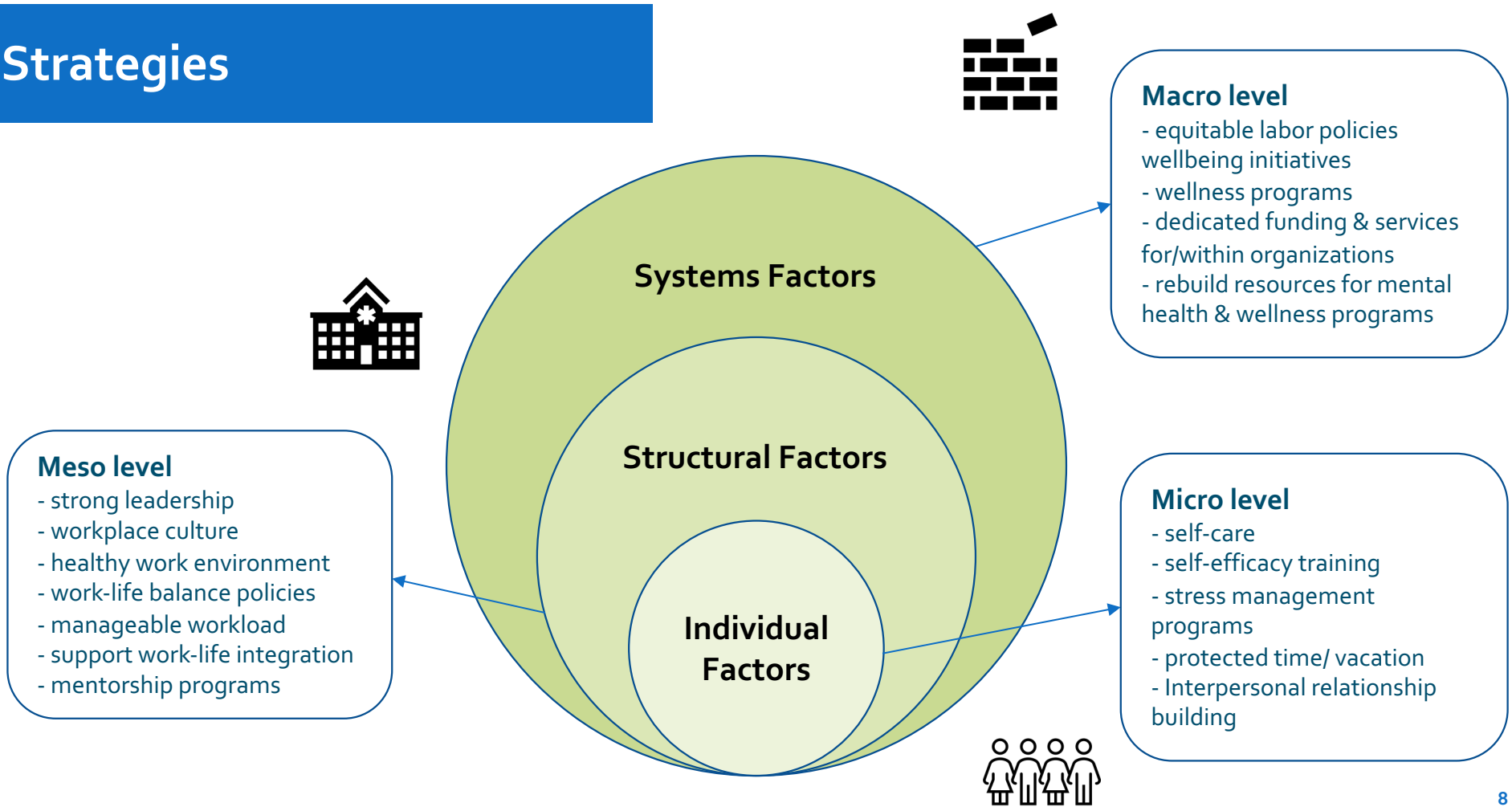
- Low sense of personal accomplishment
- reduced feelings of productivity
- Withdrawal from participating in organizational operations



**Burnout**



# Strategies



# Healing the Healers

- 🕒 2-year research project
- 👤 Meet our team





Sandra Moll  
(Co-I)



Sheila Boamah  
(PI)



Rachel Weldrick  
(Co-I)



Brenda Vrikljan  
(Co-I)



Elizabeth Alvarez  
(Co-I)



Scott Mitchell  
(P-KU)

# Goal

- Identify strategies at **individual, organizational, and system level** to lessen or prevent the effects of burnout and mental distress experienced by healthcare workers.

# Design

👤 An experience-based, **co-design process** will be undertaken with diverse range of HCWs:

Personal support workers (PSWs)

Nurses (RN; RPN)

Physicians

Social workers

Physiotherapist; Occupational therapist

LTC directors; manager

Administrators

Policymakers

👤 Mixed methods (focus groups and survey)

# Phases



1

Collaborative focus  
group sessions



2

Online survey to  
assess burnout and  
mental distress risk  
among LTC HCWs



3

Identify top 10  
priorities  
to address and mental  
health concerns (i.e.,  
burnout)

# Impact



**Generate effective strategies to better support HCWs in LTC.**



**Findings will inform staffing decisions, workload management and other system-wide level challenges.**



**Strategies to address some of the key workforce issues and systemic inequities in the sector.**

# Next steps



## Recruitment for Healing the Healer's project

For further information about the study:  
Information available on the CLRI website  
Flyers with study information available



To participate please contact us at:

[healers@nurseworklife.com](mailto:healers@nurseworklife.com)

# References



<sup>1</sup>Estabrooks, C. A. et al. Restoring trust: COVID-19 and the future of long-term care in Canada. *Facets* 5, (2020).

<sup>2</sup>Tsamakis, K. et al. COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on mental health of healthcare professionals. *Experimental and Therapeutic Medicine* 19, (2020).

<sup>3</sup>Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI). *The Impact of COVID-19 on Long-Term Care in Canada: Focus on the First 6 Months*. (2021).

<sup>4</sup>Leiter, M. P., & Maslach, C. Areas of worklife: A structured approach to organizational predictors of job burnout. *Research in Occupational Stress and Well-Being* 3, (2004).

<sup>5</sup>Adisa, T.A. et al. Exploring the implications of the influence of organisational culture on work-life balance practices: evidence from Nigerian medical doctors. *Personnel Review*, (2017).

<sup>6</sup>Allen, T.D. et al. Work–family conflict and flexible work arrangements: Deconstructing flexibility. *Personnel psychology* 66, (2013).

<sup>7</sup>Maher, L. M., Hayward, B., Hayward, P. & Walsh, C. Increasing patient engagement in healthcare service design: a qualitative evaluation of a co-design programme in New Zealand. *Patient Experience Journal* 4, (2017).

<sup>8</sup>Statistics Canada. Experiences of health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, September to November 2021.  
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220603/dq220603a-eng.htm>

## Acknowledgements

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# Thank you!

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