

Ontario Critical Care Clinical Practice Rounds (OC3PR)

February 13, 2025

ICU Staffing Patterns: Outcomes for Patients and for Learners

Chaired by Dr. Dave Neilipovitz

Presented by Dr. Hannah Wunsch & Dr. Dominique Piquette



Meeting Etiquette



- Attendees can submit questions to Q&A in the Zoom icon in the menu



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Weill Cornell Medicine
Anesthesiology

Is 'continuity of care' always good for ICU patients?

Hannah Wunsch, MD MSc

Professor and Vice Chair for Research

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AICORN

Acute & Intensive Care Outcomes Research Network



Disclosures

Book (***The Autumn Ghost***), Greystone Books

Research Funding

NIH (US)

CIHR (Canada)

Department of Defense (US)

AFP (Canada)

Continuity of care is a patient-centered outcome

What enabled delivery of continuity of care?

Why is continuity of care so much harder to deliver now?

Are there any benefits to a decrease in continuity of care?

1958

Barrie Fairley



Max Harry Weil



Peter Safar



The ultimate continuity...

Working/On call 24/7
365 days a year

Let's dissect

On call/working 24/7 for 1 month straight

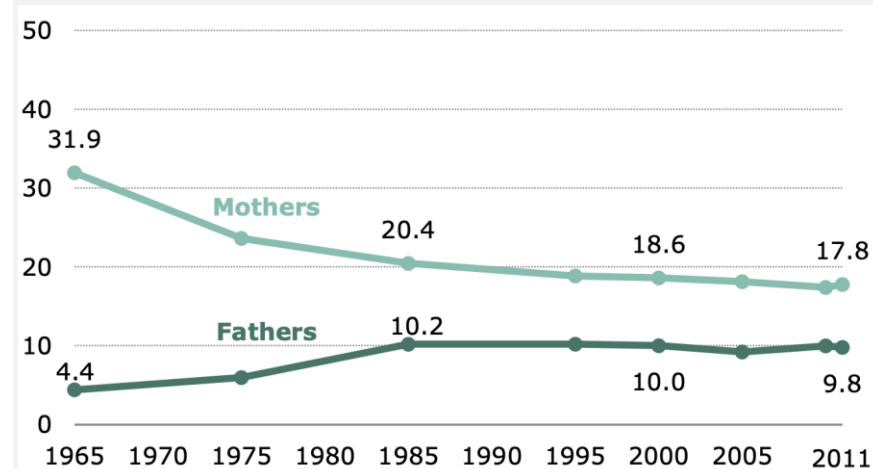
What enabled delivery of continuity of care?

1950s

- Percentage of doctors who were women: 6%
- Marriage rate for men: 90%
- Percentage of married women who worked outside the home: 20%

Parents' Time in Housework, 1965-2011

Hours per week



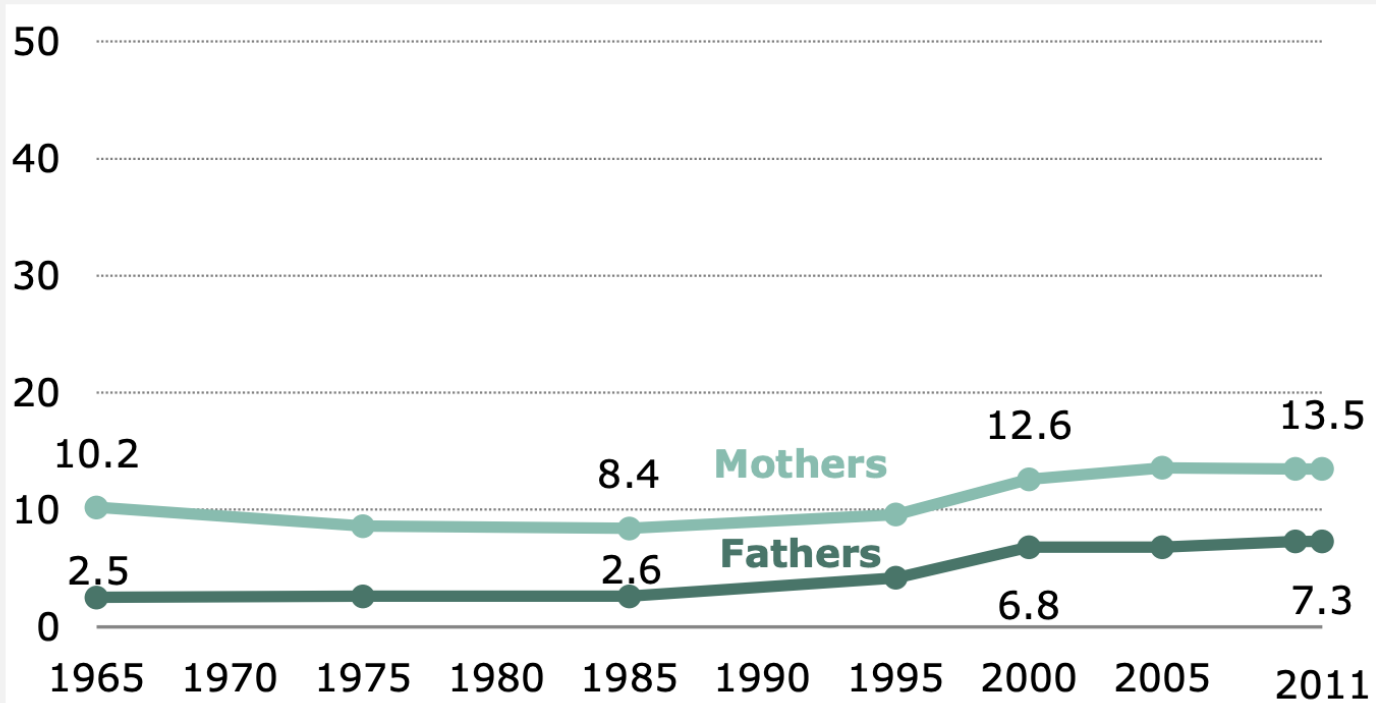
Note: Based on adults ages 18-64 with own child(ren) under age 18 living in the household.

Source: 1965-2000 data from Table 5A.1-2 in Bianchi, et al. (2006). 2003-2011 data from Pew Research analysis the American Time Use Survey.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Parents' Child Care Time, 1965-2011

Hours per week



Note: Based on adults ages 18-64 with own child(ren) under age 18 living in the household.

Source: 1965-2000 data from Table 5A.1-2 in Bianchi, et al. (2006). 2003-2011 data from Pew Research analysis the American Time Use Survey.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Nørre Alle – nursing residence, Copenhagen



- A 'calling'
- Unmarried
- Often lived 'on-site'
- 8 hr shifts (often longer)

“Back in the days of the giants...”

- How many patients?
 - ICUs were small(er), so generally not so many
- What could be done for patients?
 - Not a lot
- How much help?
 - Academic centers: a lot
- Who does nights and weekends?
 - Junior trainees (staff never called even though ‘on call’)
- Expectations of patients and families
 - Minimal

Why is continuity of care so much harder to deliver now?

- ICUs are bigger
- Workforce is more diverse
- Administrative and other support has ↓
- Patient complexity ↑
- Speed of delivery of care has ↑
- Length of hospital stay ↓
- Family expectations have ↑

ICU Staffing in the United States



Hayley B. Gershengorn, MD; Allan Garland, MD; Deena K. Costa, PhD, RN; Amy L. Dzierba, PharmD; Robert Fowler, MDCM; Andrew A. Kramer, PhD; Vincent X. Liu, MD; Danny Lizano, MSHS, PA-C; Damon C. Scales, MD, PhD; and Hannah Wunsch, MD



596 US ICUs

TABLE 2] Staffing Characteristics Stratified by ICU Type

Characteristic	Mixed ICU ^a	Medical ICU ^b	Surgical ICU ^c	Specialty ICU ^d
Consecutive days by intensivist				
> 14 d	10 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.5)	2 (3.7)
14 d	34 (8.9)	6 (11.3)	2 (3.0)	2 (3.7)
7 d	238 (62.6)	36 (67.9)	55 (82.1)	39 (72.2)
5 d	54 (14.2)	7 (13.2)	5 (7.5)	9 (16.7)
Other/variable	25 (6.6)	2 (3.8)	2 (3.0)	1 (1.9)
Unknown	19 (5.0)	2 (3.8)	2 (3.0)	1 (1.9)



Association Between Consecutive Days Worked by Intensivists and Outcomes for Critically Ill Patients

Hayley B. Gershengorn, MD, FCCM, ATSF^{1,2}; David V. Pilcher, MBBS, MRCP, FRACP, FCICM^{3,4,5};
Edward Litton, MBChB, FCICM, MSc, PhD^{6,7}; Matthew Anstey, MBBS, FCICM, FACEM, MPH^{8,9};
Allan Garland, MD, MA^{10,11,12}; Hannah Wunsch, MD, MSc, FCCM^{13,14}

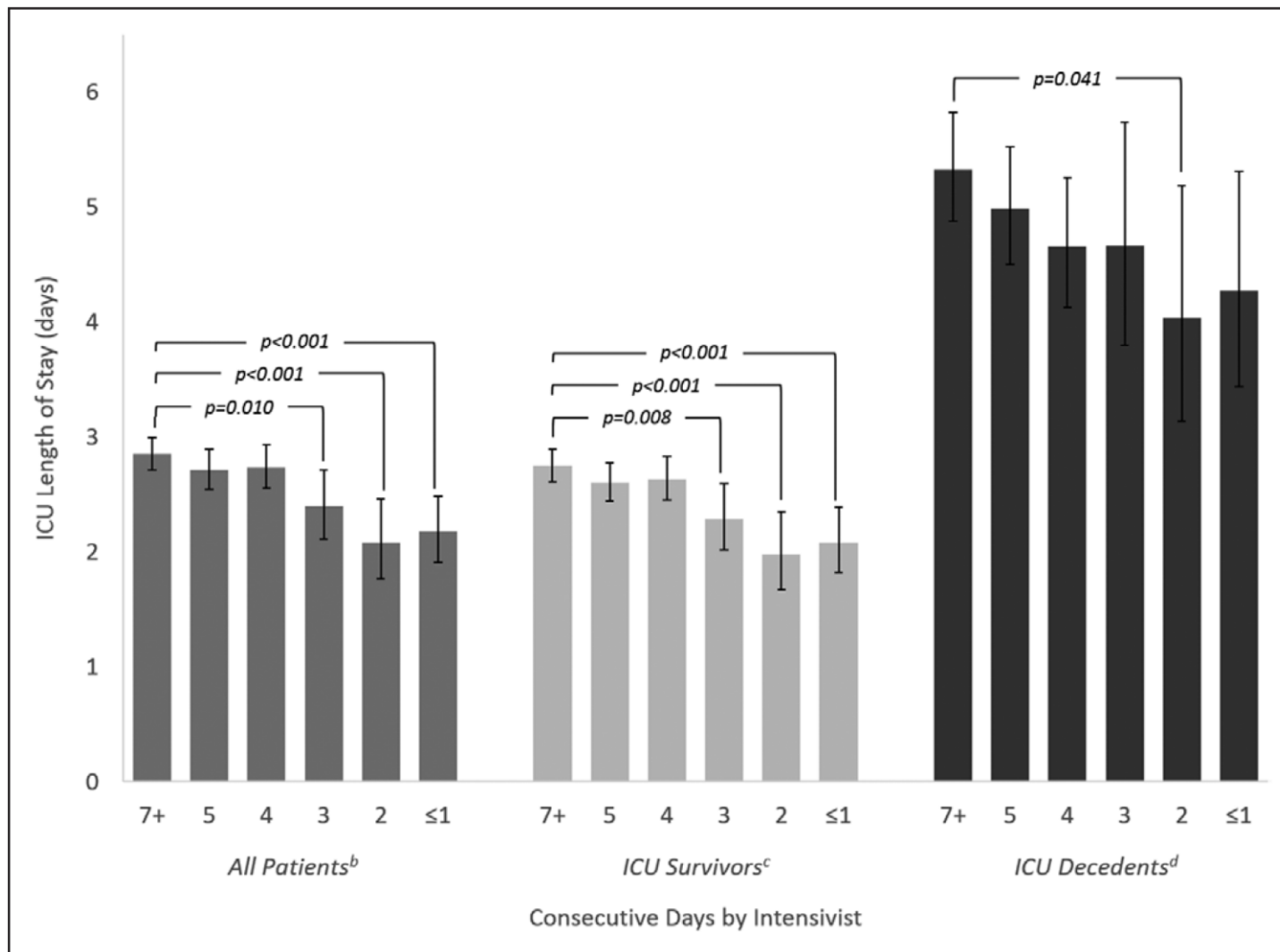


Figure 1. Association between consecutive days worked by the intensivist and severity-of-illness-adjusted ICU length of stay. ^aAssuming cohort average value for predicted mortality spline terms; error bars = 95% CIs.

^b $p < 0.001$ for overall association between consecutive days and ICU length of stay. ^c $n = 214,596$ (95.4%);

$p < 0.001$ for overall association between consecutive days and ICU length of stay. ^d $n = 10,259$ (4.6%);

$p = 0.15$ for overall association between consecutive days and ICU length of stay.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



Nighttime Cross-Coverage Is Associated with Decreased Intensive Care Unit Mortality

A Single-Center Study

Andre Carlos Kajdacsy-Balla Amaral^{1,2}, Bernardo S. Barros¹, Camilla C. P. P. Barros¹, Cameron Innes^{1,3}, Ruxandra Pinto¹, and Gordon D. Rubenfeld^{1,2}

¹Department of Critical Care Medicine, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Toronto, Canada; ²Interdepartmental Division of Critical Care Medicine, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada; and ³School of Medicine, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, United Kingdom

Table 4: Primary and Sensitivity Analysis of the Effects of Nighttime Cross-Coverage on Mortality

Statistical Analysis	Definition of Exposure	Population	Outcome Measured	Estimated Benefit of Additional Cross-Coverage (95% CI)	P Value
Logistic regression	Counts of cross-coverage on first 7 d	All	ICU mortality	OR, 0.77 (0.60–0.99)	0.040
Time-dependent Cox model	Counts of cross-coverage on first 7 d	All	Time to ICU death	HR, 0.78 (0.63–0.96)	0.018
Landmark analysis with logistic regression	Counts of cross-coverage on first 7 d	Alive at Day 7	ICU mortality	OR, 0.86 (0.62–1.18)	0.345
Landmark analysis with Cox model	Counts of cross-coverage on first 7 d	Alive at Day 7	Time to ICU death	HR, 0.74 (0.56–0.99)	0.042
Time-dependent Cox model	Percentage cross-coverage on first 7 d, per 10%	All	Time to ICU death	HR, 0.91 (0.84–0.99)	0.048
Unadjusted comparison of highest and lowest quartiles	Quartile of exposure to cross-coverage	Highest and lowest quartiles	ICU mortality	RR, 0.83 (0.56–1.24)	0.240
Time-dependent Cox model	Cross-coverage status until discharge (binary, noncumulative)	All	Time to ICU death	HR, 0.82 (0.54–1.27)	0.387

Definition of abbreviations: CI = confidence interval; HR = hazard ratio; ICU = intensive care unit; OR = odds ratio; RR = relative risk.

Table 5: Comparisons between Cross-Covering and Continuity Nights

	Fellow Cross-Covering	
	Yes (n = 400)	No (n = 125)
Age, yr, mean (SD)	54.7 (22.5)	56.6 (20.6)
APACHE II, median (IQR)	24 (21 to 29)	24 (21 to 28.5)
ICU length of stay, median (IQR)	7 (3 to 19)	7 (3 to 14)
SOFA score at day of assessment, mean (SD)	6.5 (4.1)	6.2 (4.1)
Nighttime decisions, n (%)	77 (19.3)	13 (10.4)*
Computed tomography scan	20 (5)	1 (0.8)
Antibiotics	31 (7.8)	6 (4.8)
Changes in mechanical ventilation	17 (4.2)	4 (3.2)
Changes in extubation planning	13 (3.2)	2 (1.6)
Sedation and analgesia		
Sedatives (changes in mg/h of midazolam equivalents), mean (SD)	−0.3 (8.8)	−0.1 (11.2)
Opioids (changes in µg/h of fentanyl equivalents), mean (SD)	3.3 (33.2)	−6.6 (34.7)*
Resuscitation		
Fluid bolus (changes in ml), median (IQR)	+233 (−778 to +933)	−583 (−778 to +622)
Transfusion (changes in ml), median (IQR)	−78 (−415 to +266)	−544 (−724 to −417)*

Definition of abbreviations: APACHE = Acute Physiology and Chronic Health Evaluation; ICU = intensive care unit; IQR = interquartile range; SOFA = Sequential Organ Failure Assessment.

* $P < 0.05$.

Burnout, and Fulfillment, in the Profession of Critical Care Medicine

To the Editor:

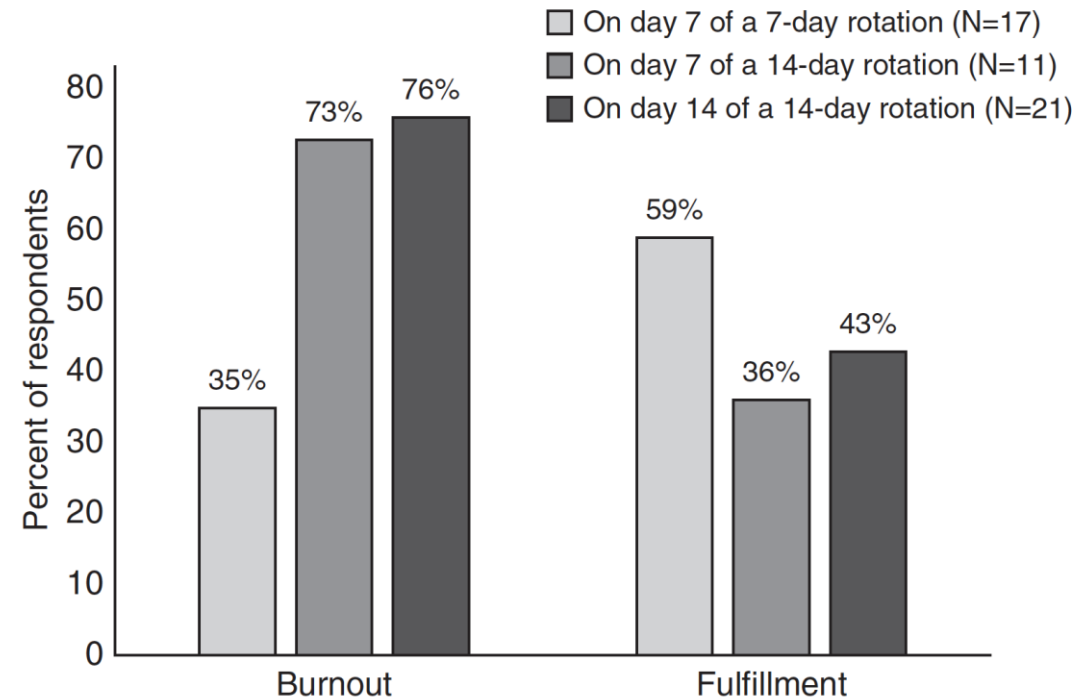


Figure 1. Burnout and fulfillment by rotation length in medical ICU A.

Published in final edited form as:

Health Aff (Millwood). 2012 November ; 31(11): 2501–2509. doi:10.1377/hlthaff.2011.1377.

The Longer The Shifts For Hospital Nurses, The Higher The Levels Of Burnout And Patient Dissatisfaction

Amy Witkoski Stimpfel,

Research fellow at the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research at the University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing, in Philadelphia

Douglas M. Sloane, and

Adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing

Linda H. Aiken

Claire M. Fagin Leadership Professor of Nursing, a professor of sociology, and director of the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research at the University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing

Amy Witkoski Stimpfel: amywit@nursing.upenn.edu

Relationship Between Nurses' Shift Length And Outcomes For Patients

Patient outcome	Adjusted coefficients for percent of nurses working in the shift length category			
	>13 hours	12–13 hours	10–11 hours	8–9 hours
Patients rated hospital ≤ 6 of 10 ^a	1.2**	0.1	–1.2	–0.1
Patients would not recommend the hospital ^b	0.8**	0.1**	–1.2**	–0.2**
PATIENT OUTCOMES REPORTED AS “SOMETIMES” OR “NEVER”				
Nurses communicated well ^c	1.0***	0.2***	–1.4***	–0.2***
Staff explained medications ^d	1.1**	0.2**	–1.1	–0.2**
Pain was controlled ^e	0.9***	0.2	–0.9**	–0.1
Patients received help as soon as they wanted ^f	2.1***	0.3**	–1.3	–0.3***

Relationship Between Nurses' Shift Length And Outcomes For Nurses

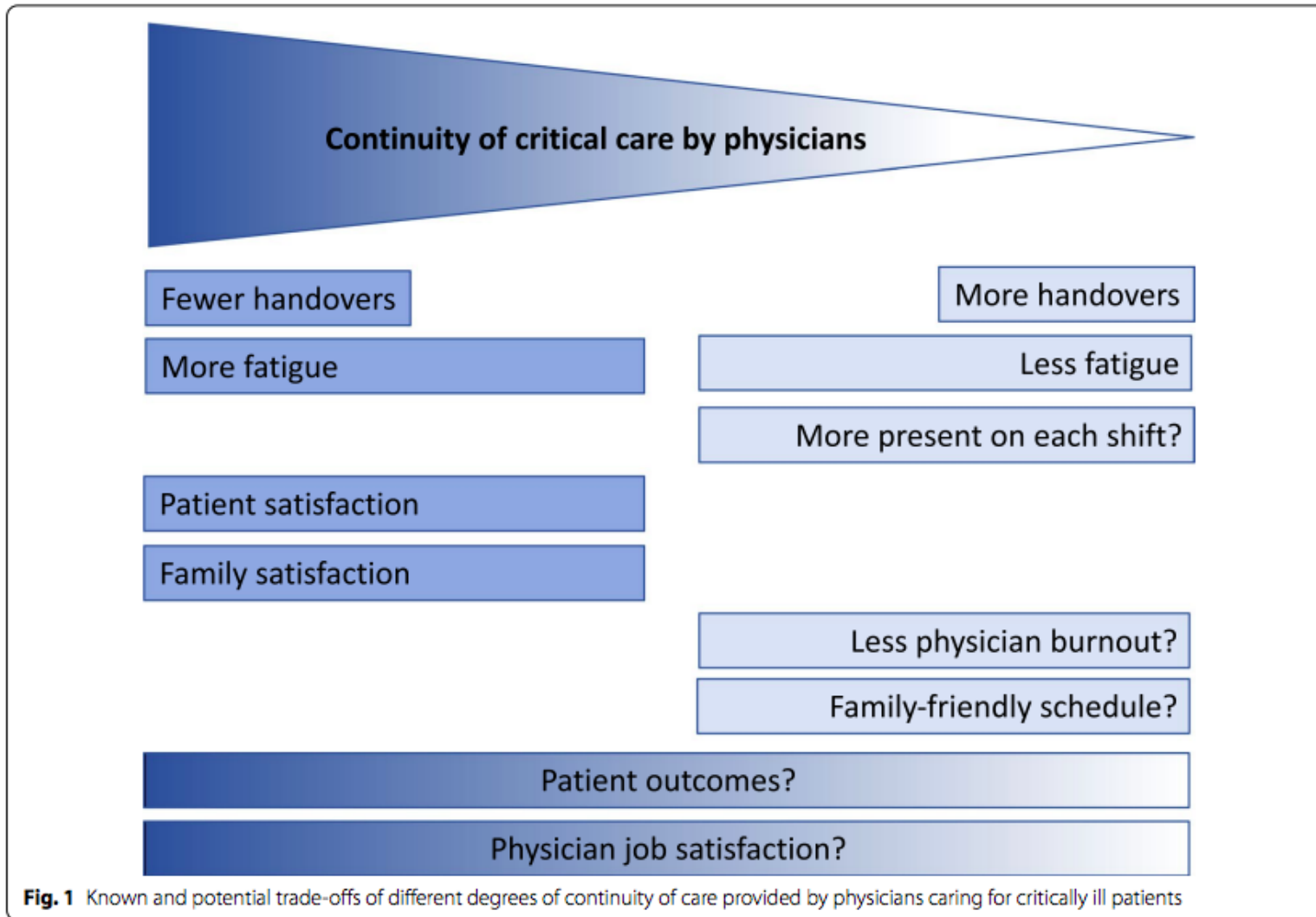
Shift length, hours	Unadjusted		Fully adjusted ^a	
	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
BURNOUT				
10–11	1.71	1.48, 1.97	1.58	1.35, 1.84
12–13	1.13	1.04, 1.22	1.11	1.02, 1.20
>13	2.85	2.47, 3.28	2.70	2.32, 3.15
JOB DISSATISFACTION				
10–11	1.72	1.47, 2.02	1.67	1.40, 1.99
12–13	1.10	1.00, 1.20	1.12	1.03, 1.22
>13	2.42	2.09, 2.81	2.38	2.04, 2.79
INTENTION TO LEAVE EMPLOYER WITHIN A YEAR				
10–11	1.49	1.21, 1.85	1.55	1.24, 1.95
12–13	1.52	1.27, 1.71	1.45	1.20, 1.62
>13	2.79	2.32, 3.35	2.57	2.10, 3.15

Table 3. Participation in formal clinical intensive care unit (ICU) rounds by healthcare worker (HCW) type. Values are: N (% of those with those rounds) [% of all 574 ICUs]

<i>Healthcare worker type</i>	<i>Weekday rounds</i>	<i>Weekend rounds</i>	<i>p-value*</i>
INDIVIDUAL HCW TYPES			
Intensivist	530 (96.7) [92.3]	402 (93.7) [70.0]	0.03
Clinical pharmacist	468 (85.4) [81.5]	164 (38.2) [28.6]	0.001
Respiratory therapist	396 (72.3) [69.0]	241 (56.2) [42.0]	0.001
<i>All three of the above</i>	333 (60.8) [58.0]	123 (28.7) [21.4]	0.001
Dietitian	340 (62.0) [59.2]	85 (19.8) [14.8]	0.001
Social worker	274 (50.0) [47.7]	78 (18.2) [13.6]	0.001
Physical therapist	198 (36.1) [34.5]	55 (12.8) [9.6]	0.001
Occupational therapist	132 (24.1) [23.0]	32 (7.5) [5.6]	0.001
Pastoral care	123 (22.4) [21.4]	54 (12.6) [9.4]	0.001
Speech pathologist	87 (15.9) [15.2]	12 (2.8) [2.1]	0.001
COMPOSITES OF TYPES			
Nutrition practitioners ¹	342 (62.4) [59.6]	82 (19.1) [14.3]	0.001
Rehabilitation practitioners ²	199 (36.3) [34.7]	55 (12.8) [9.6]	0.001
Social support practitioners ³	288 (52.6) [50.2]	82 (19.1) [14.3]	0.001
<i>All three of the above</i>	154 (28.1) [26.8]	45 (10.5) [7.8]	0.001

* Fisher's exact test, among those with rounds, adjusted for 14 comparisons via Sime's false discovery rate method; ¹dietitians and speech pathologists; ²physical therapists and occupational therapists; ³social workers and pastoral care

LENGTH OF (PHYSICIAN) SERVICE



EDITORIAL

Open Access

Getting out of the 1950s: rethinking old priorities for staffing in critical care

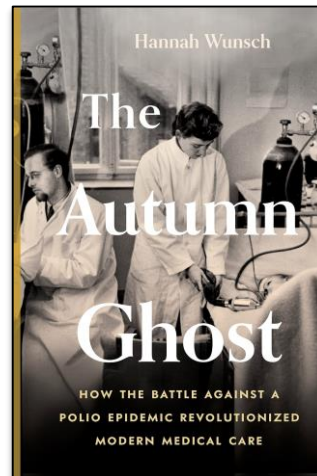


Hannah Wunsch^{1,2,3,4*} 

Thank you!

haw9006@med.cornell.edu

AICORN
Acute & Intensive Care Outcomes Research Network
<https://aicorn-research.com/>



 **Weill Cornell Medicine**
Anesthesiology

No conflict of interest
relevant to this talk.

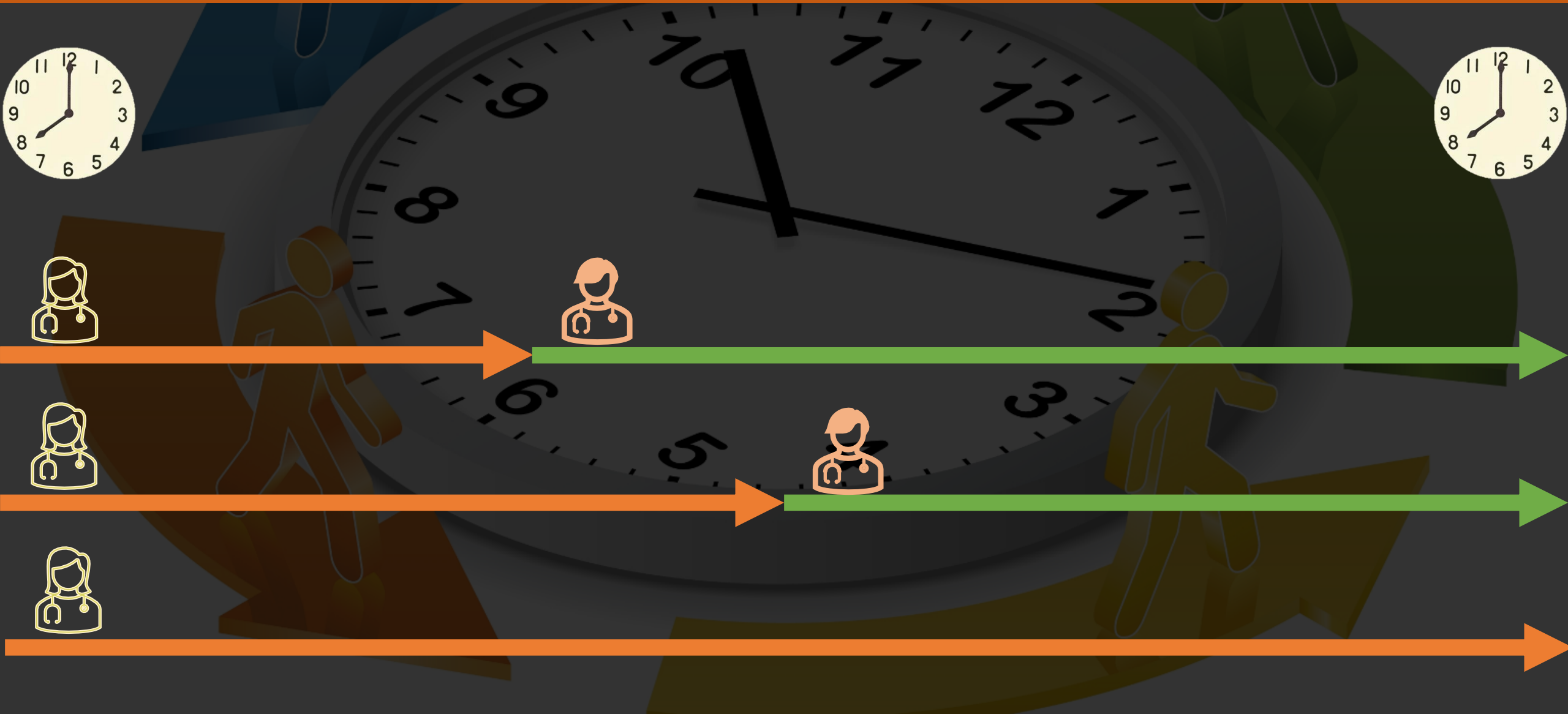
I have received grant funding from
CIHR, RCPSC, The PSI Foundation, AFP
Innovation Funds

I have done a lot of 24h calls.

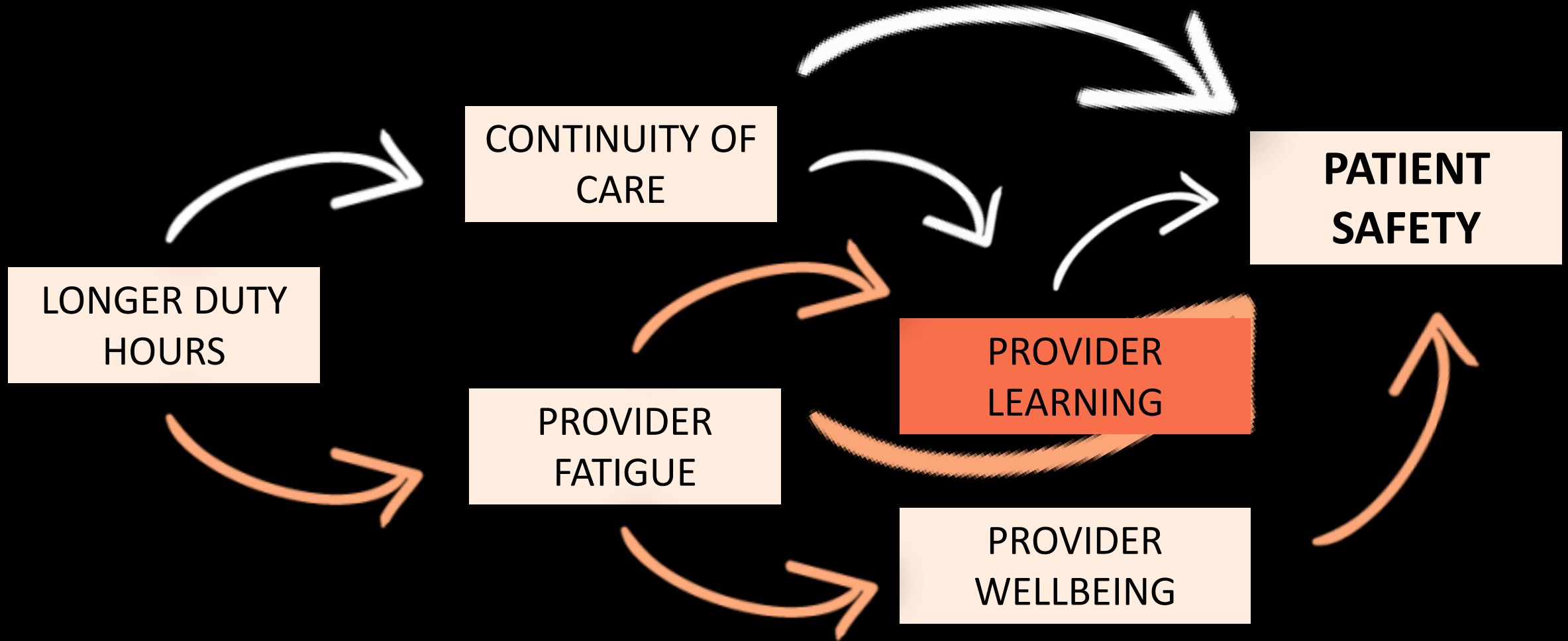
Continuity of Care and Patient Safety: Impact of Resident Schedule



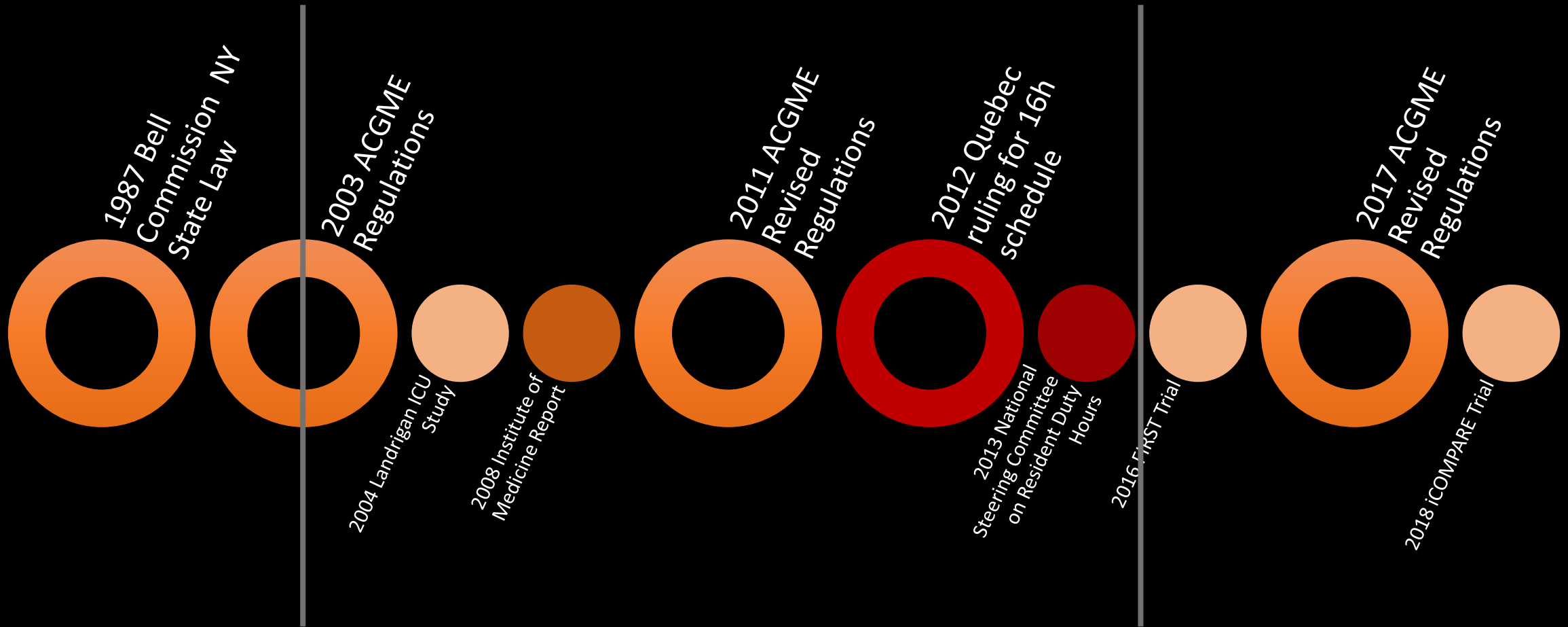
MODELS TO PROVIDE 24H / 7 CARE



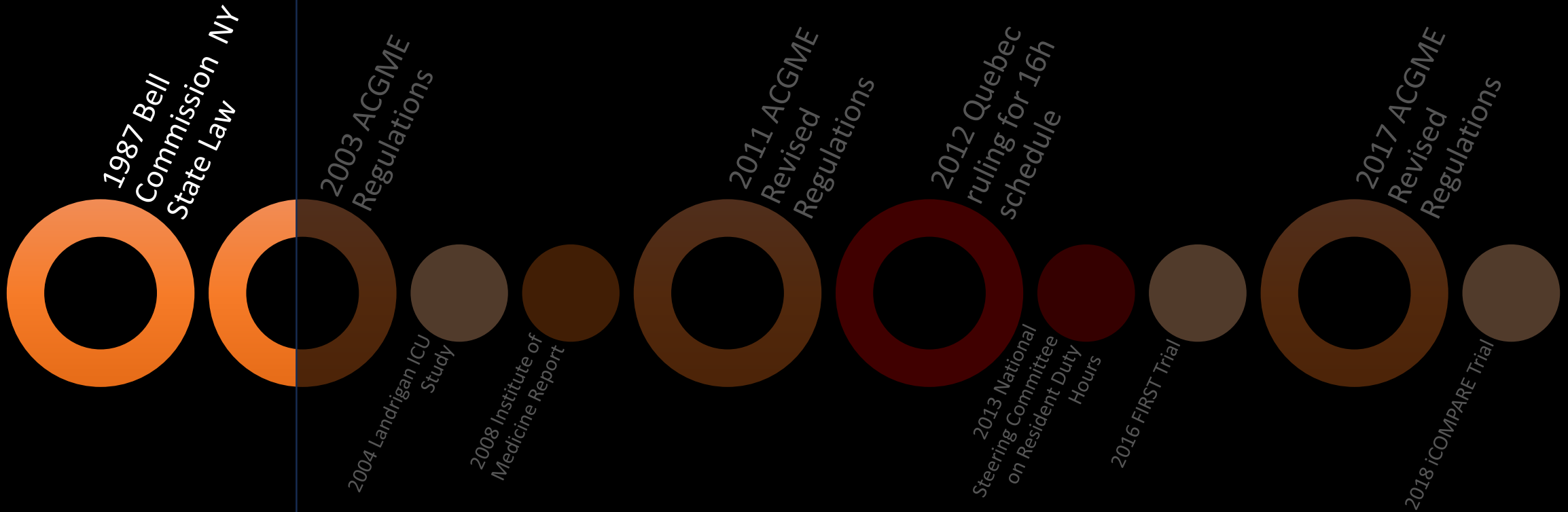
Dilemma



25 Years of **REACTIVE** Evidence Building



Pre-2003: The More the Better Era



Rising Concerns

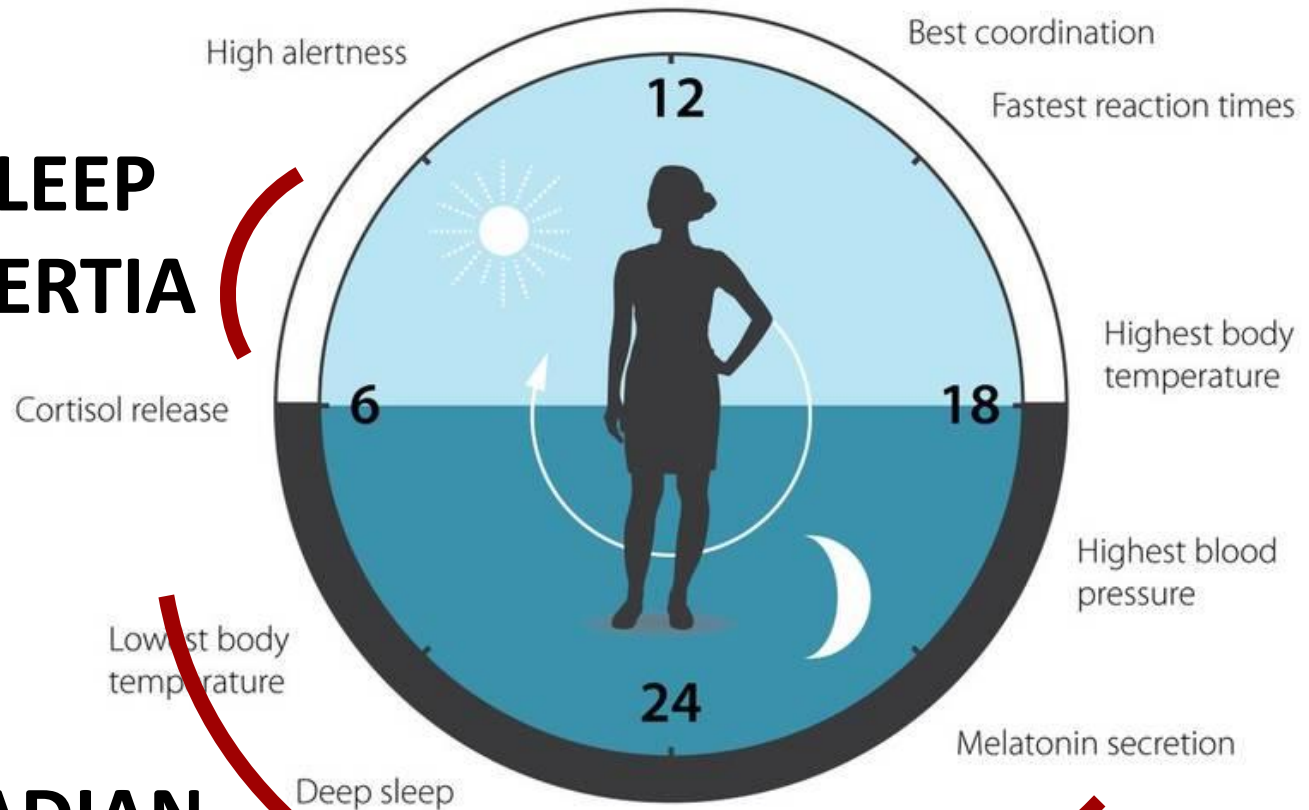
96-108 hours per week



WORK
SCHEDULE
AND
SLEEP

**SLEEP
INERTIA**

**CIRCADIAN
MISALIGNMENT**



SLEEP LOSS

SLEEP LOSS AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE

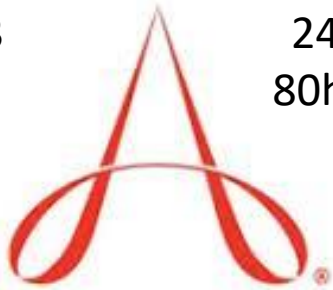
- Attention
- Memory
- Reaction time
- Motor skills
- Injuries
- Judgement
 - (including about their own performance)
- Sickness
- Mood



Case of Libby Zion



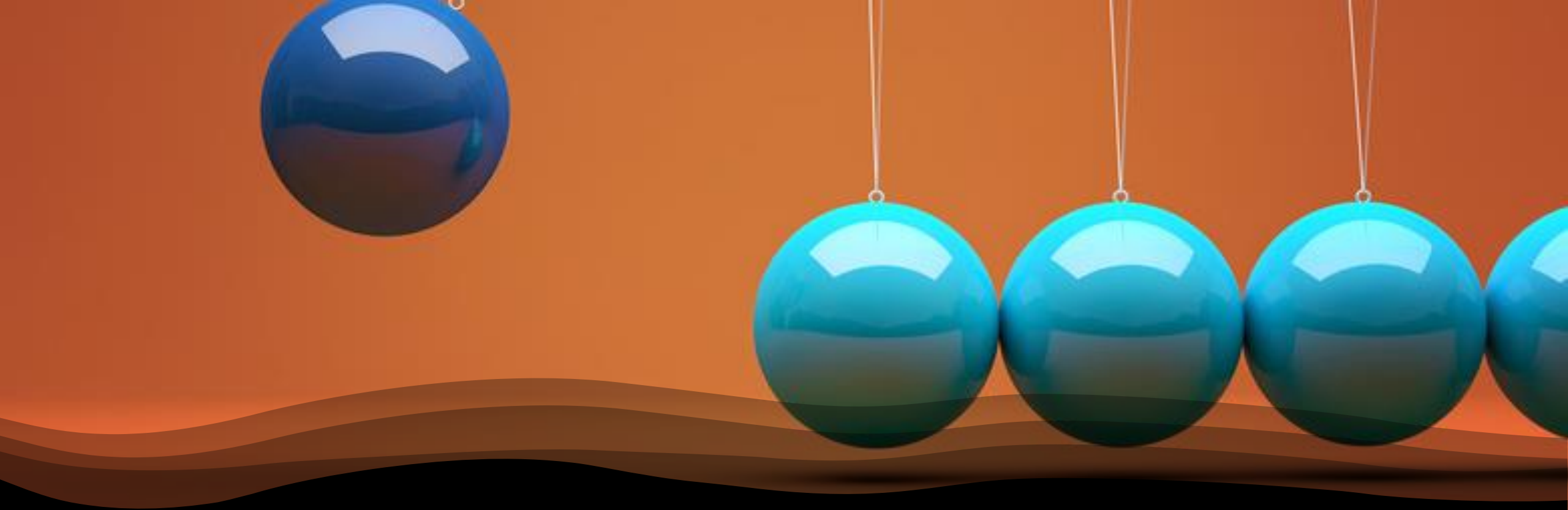
2003



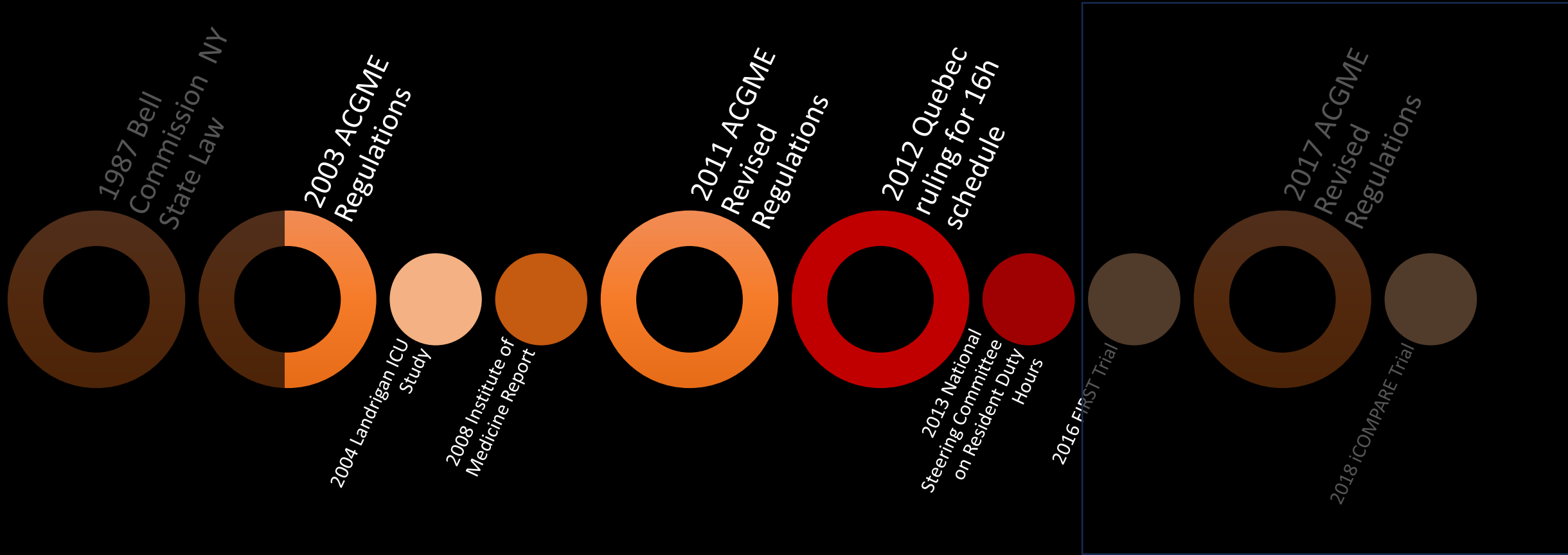
24h/shift
80h/week

Accreditation Council for
Graduate Medical Education

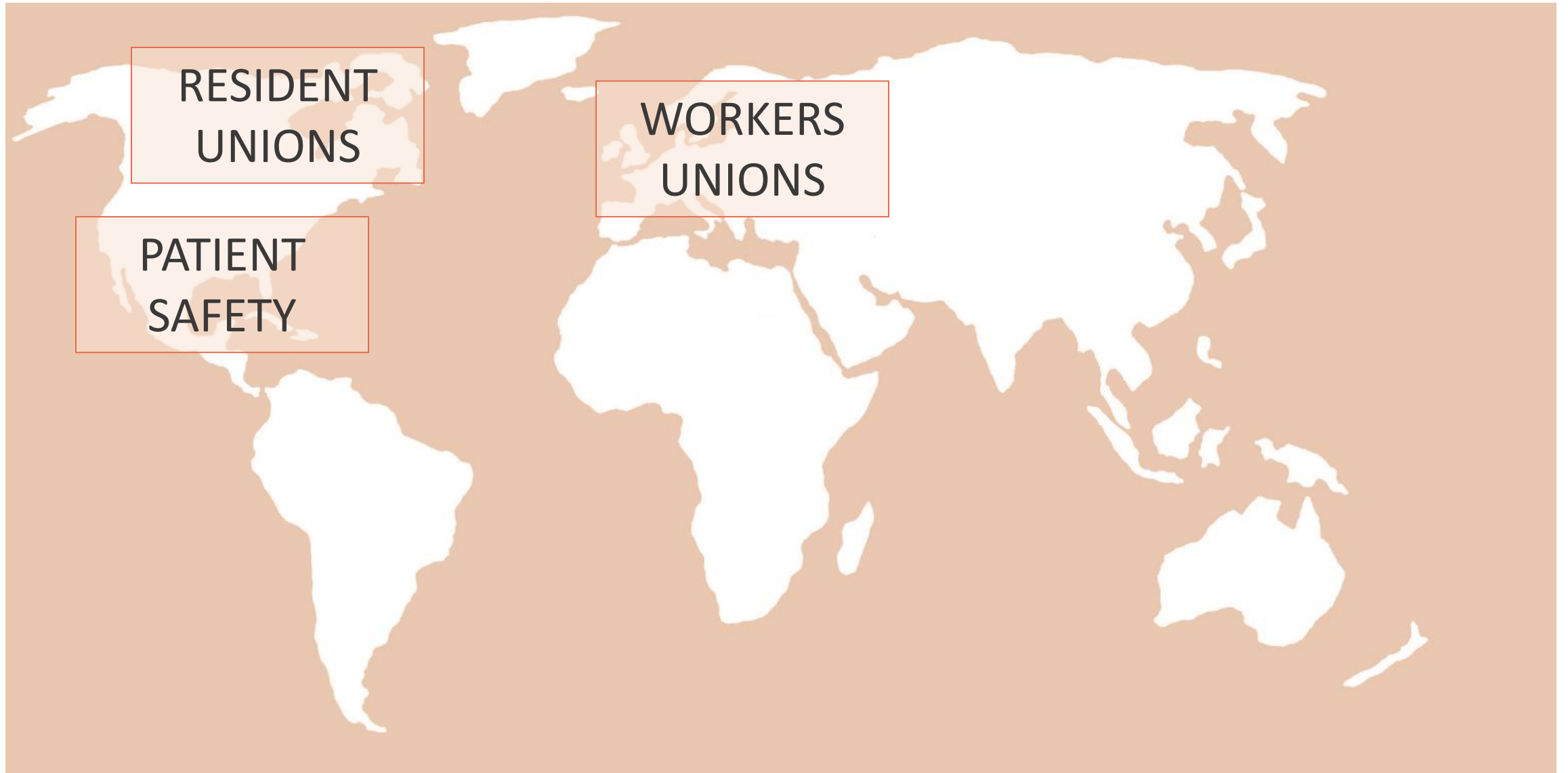




More Is Better... but
TOO MUCH IS DANGEROUS



2003-2013: “Less” Is Better Era



LANDRIGAN Study - NEJM 2004

Fewer Serious Medical Errors

By 20 **INTERNS**

with reduced shift length **(16h)**

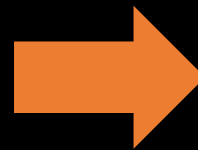
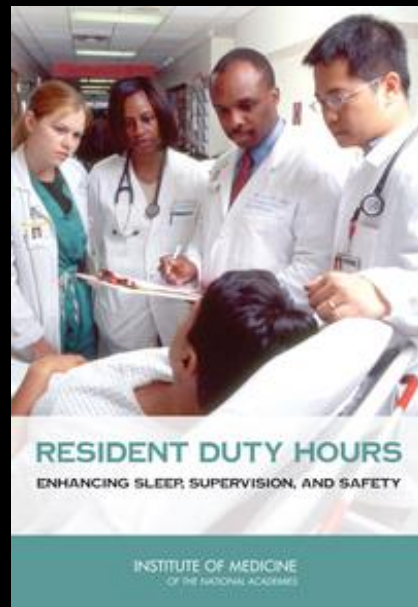
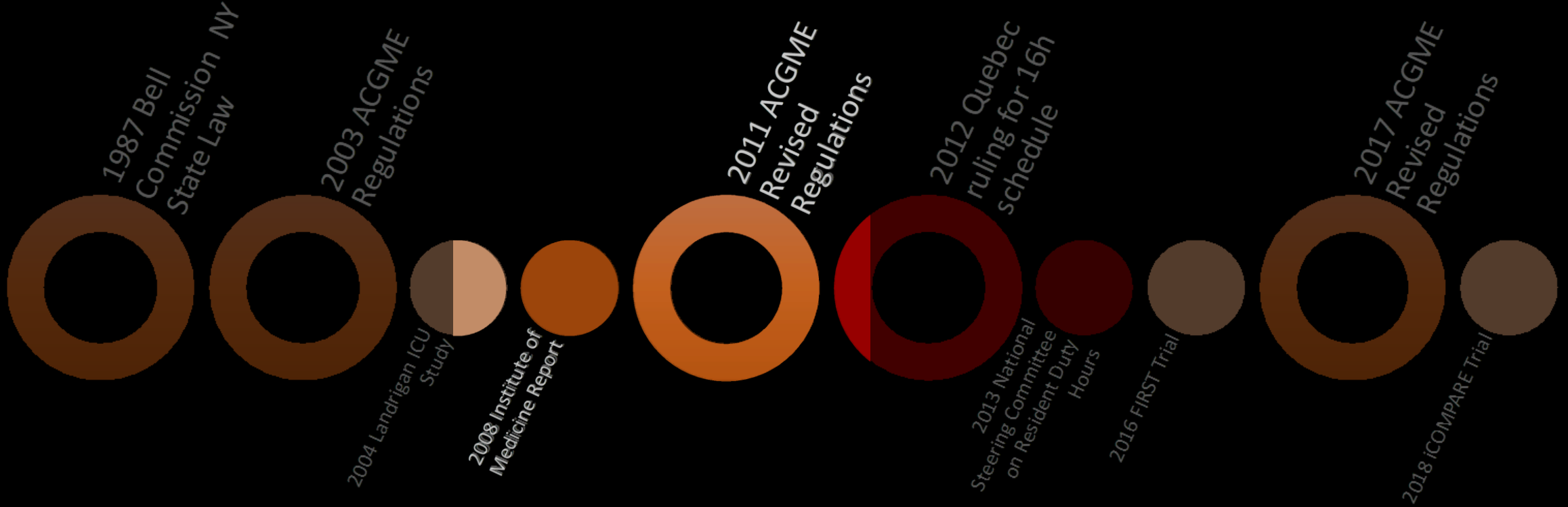
in **2 US ICUs** of one hospital,

but also

MORE SUPERVISION,

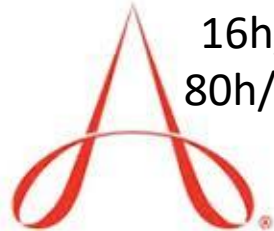
and **33% more INTERNS.**

Variable	Traditional Schedule	Intervention Schedule	P Value
	<i>no. of errors (rate/1000 patient-days)</i>		
Serious medical errors made by interns			
Serious medical errors	176 (136.0)	91 (100.1)	<0.001
Preventable adverse events	27 (20.9)	15 (16.5)	0.21



2011

16h/shift
80h/week



Accreditation Council for
Graduate Medical Education

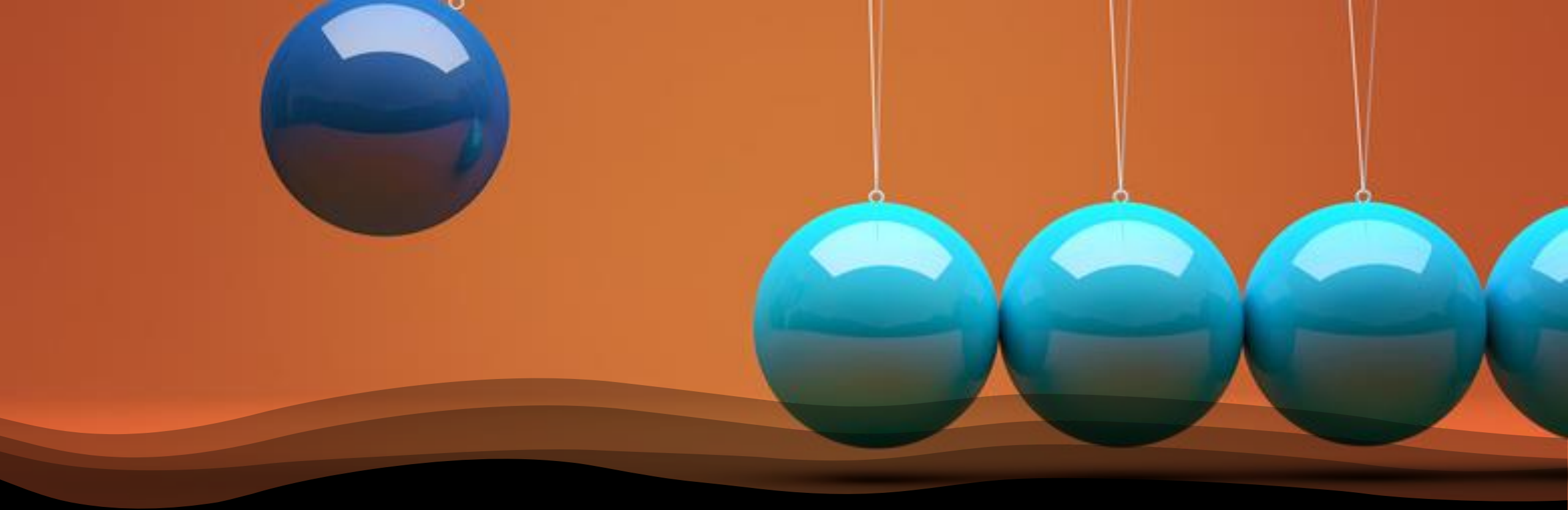
Table 2: Systematic Reviews of Interventions to Decrease Resident Work Hours

Author	Fletcher	Reed	Levine	Moonesinghe	Fletcher	Jamal	Amhed	Bolster	Busireddy
Journal	JAMA	Ann Int Med	SLEEP	BMJ	J Gen Int Med	Br J Surg	Ann Surg	J Grad Med Ed	J Grad Med Ed
Published	2005	2010	2010	2011	2011	2012	2014	2015	2017
Number of Studies Included	1966 - Apr 54	Jan 1989 - 64	Jan 1950 - 23	Jan 1990 - 72	1989 - Mar 60	Jan 2000 - 10	----- 135	Mar 2010- Feb 27	Database 10 (on work hour limits)
Patient Outcomes ¹		↑ ↔ ↓	↑ ↔	↔↔ ↑ ↓	↔↔ ↑ ↓	↔↔	↓ ↔ ↑	↔↔ ↑ ↓	
Education Outcomes ²	↑ ↔ ↓	↔↔ ↑ ↓	↔↔ ↑ ↓	↔↔ ↓ ↑	↔↔ ↑ ↓		↓ ↔ ↑	↓ ↔ ↑	
Wellbeing Outcomes ³	↑ ↔ ↓	↑ ↔	↑ ↔		↑ ↔		↑ ↔ ↓	↔↔ ↓ ↑	↑ ↔

Rising Concerns

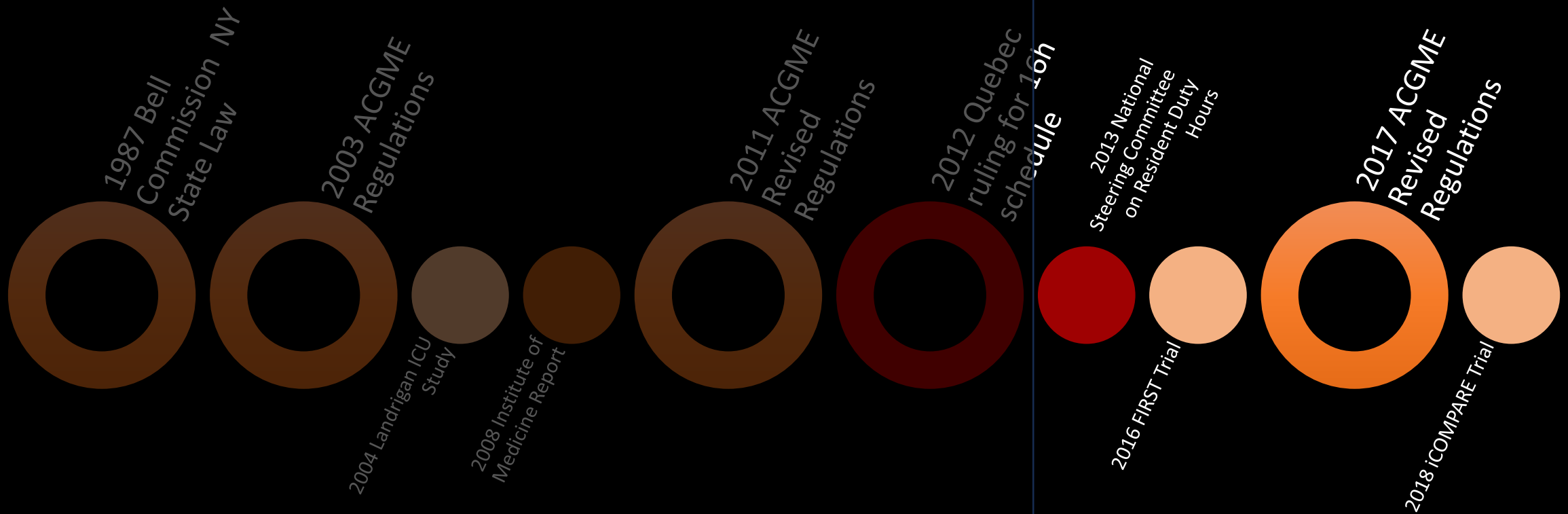


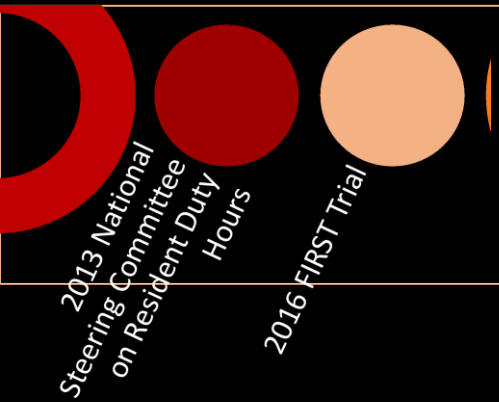
Devitt 2018 Acad Med
Drolet 2014 J Grad Med Educ
Ferraris 2017 J Thor Cardiovasc Surg



Less is not better...and
MAYBE EVEN WORSE!

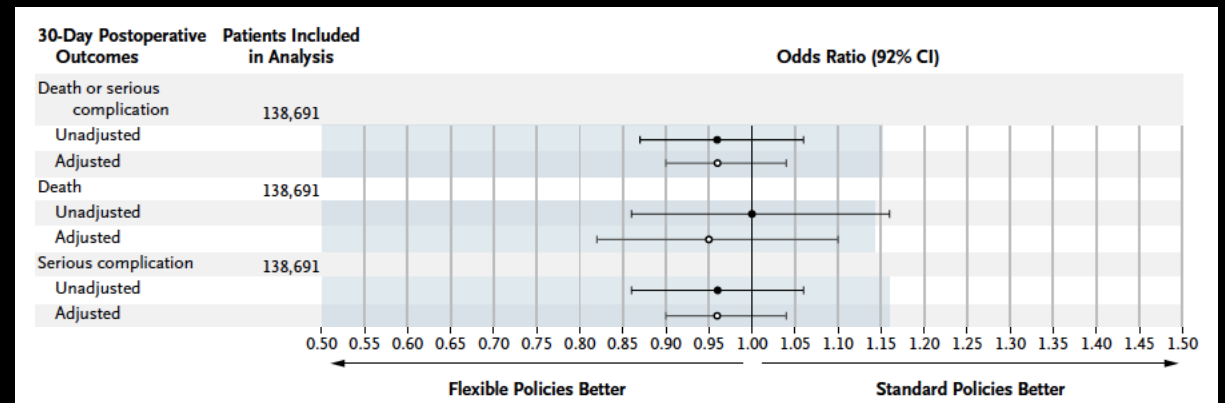
Post-2013: The More Or Less Era





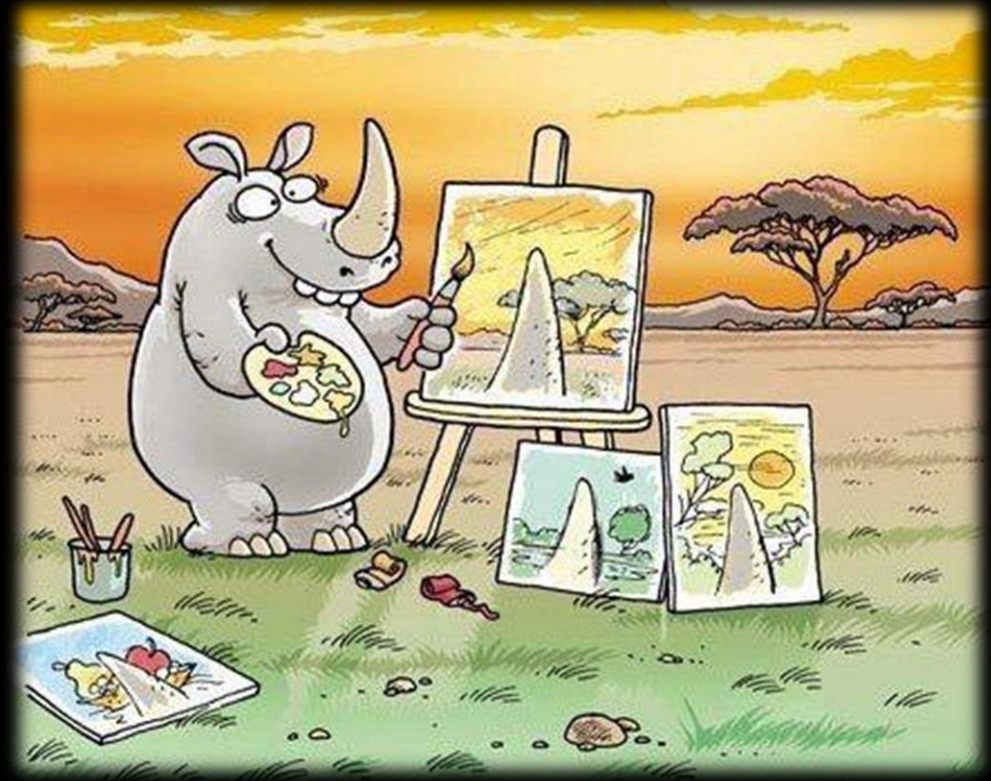
The FIRST trial

Non inferiority of
FLEXIBLE schedule
in **117 surgical** US programs
for **patient** outcomes
but also
more 80h violations and
poorer personal health
[especially in women].



The iCOMPARE trial

Non inferiority of
FLEXIBLE schedule
in **63 medicine** US programs
for **patient 30-day mortality**
but also
more interns' dissatisfaction
with **education** and **wellbeing**
(not shared by PDs).





2017



24h+/shift
80h/week

Accreditation Council for
Graduate Medical Education



LONGER DUTY HOURS...

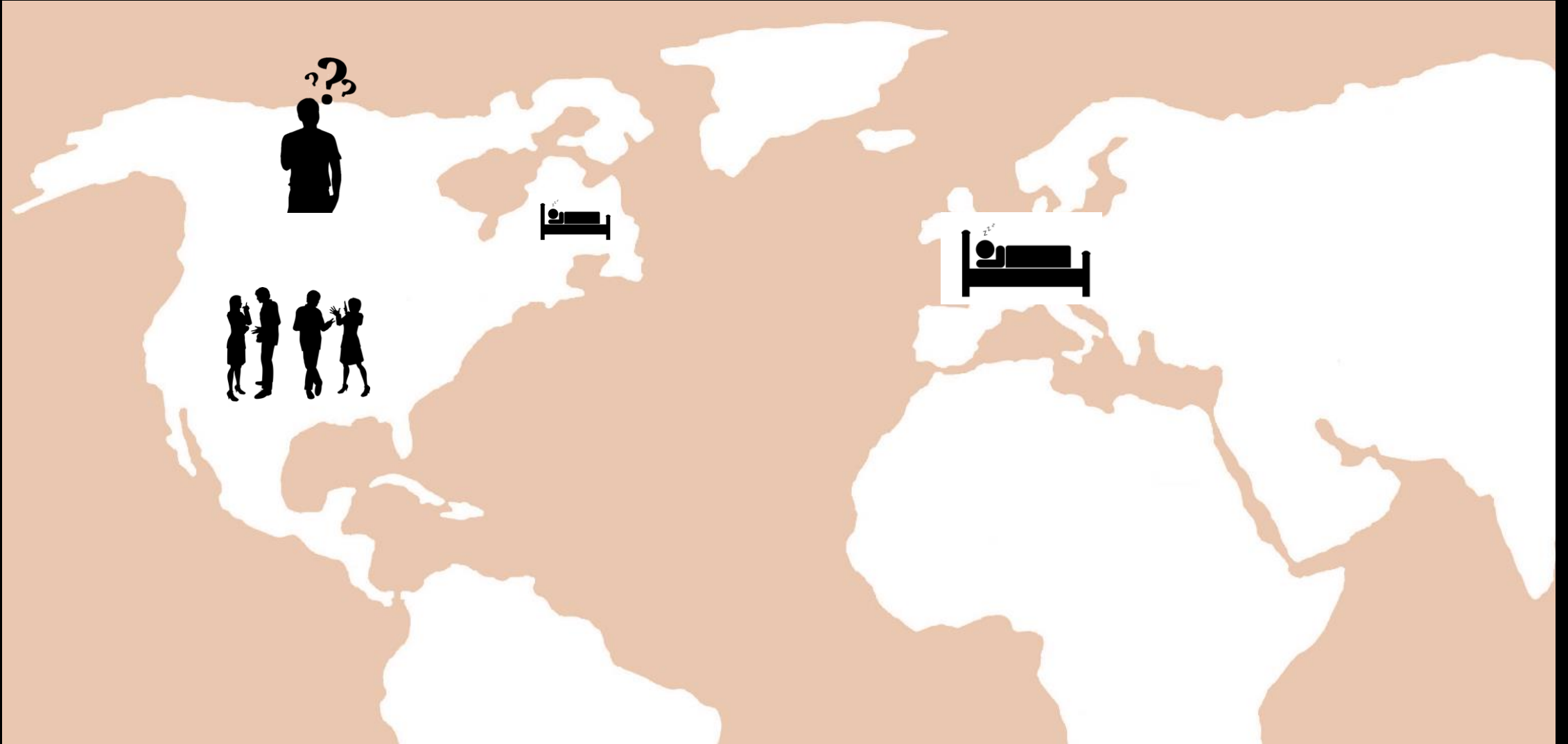
... not worse for patient care.

... worse for resident wellbeing.

... better for staff & sr. trainees.

Weiss, 2018 Sleep Health
Chung, 2018 Health Serv Research
Corey, 2017 J Surg Educ
Arora, JGIM 2019
Roshestky, Acad Med 2013

What about Canada?



ations

2012 Quebec
ruling for 16h
schedule

2013 National
Steering Committee
on Resident Duty
Hours



RDH National Steering Committee
on Resident Duty Hours

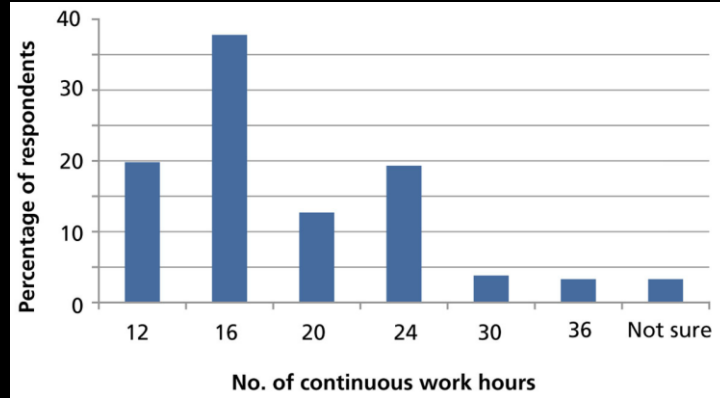
Fatigue, Resilience
& Excellence

Towards a Pan-Canadian
Consensus on Resident
Duty Hours

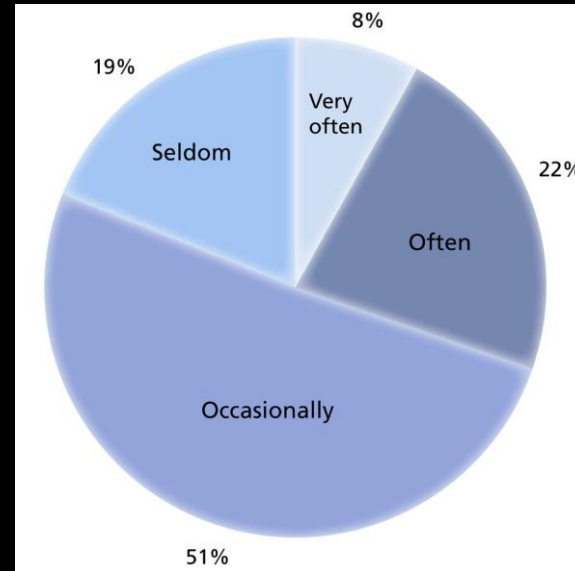
June 2013

Canadian Steering Committee

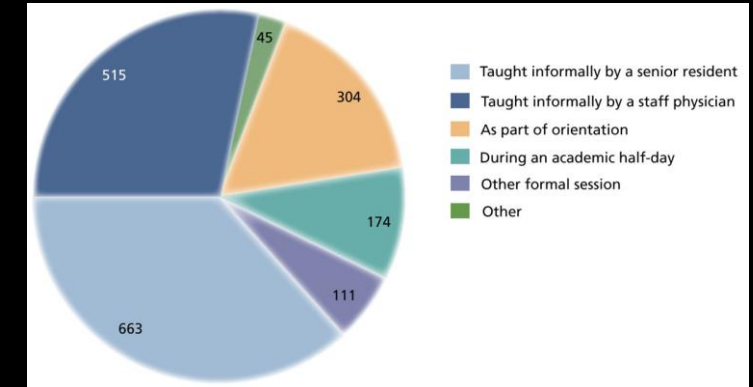
“In order to ensure decisions regarding patient care and residency work environments ... further research regarding the impact of resident duty hours, particularly in light of the unique Canadian context, must be undertaken.”



Maximum Period of Safe Care



Long Hours Compromising Care



Handover Training

Canadian Resident Opinion



2018 National Resident Survey



Current Resident Wellbeing

- 72% work > 60h / week
- 70 % trouble sleeping
- 20% report mistakes because of fatigue
- 52% symptoms of burnout
- 75% victims of harassment and intimidation
- 10-13% depression symptoms and suicidal thoughts/plans



POSITION PAPER

Canadian Patient and Physician Safety and Wellbeing: Resident Duty Hours

April 2012

residentdoctors.ca

Resident physicians' duty hours must be managed such that they do not in any way endanger their health or the health of patients. In particular, limits are required on the number of continuous uninterrupted hours that residents are on duty. In keeping with current evidence, RDoC urges that all provinces and regions in Canada work towards a system that limits continuous uninterrupted duty hours to 16 hours or less at a time.ⁱⁱⁱ Additionally, the scheduling of duty hours must allow for adequate time in-between work periods to eliminate the effects of sleep deprivation. This limitation will enhance residents' ability to provide safe, high quality patient care, while protecting their own personal health and safety.

Resident duty hours must be such as to allow for an optimal educational experience. Specifically, trainees' duty hours must not impair their ability to learn or to train others.

Residents must be formally trained in handover skills, the ability to transfer care appropriately when going off duty.

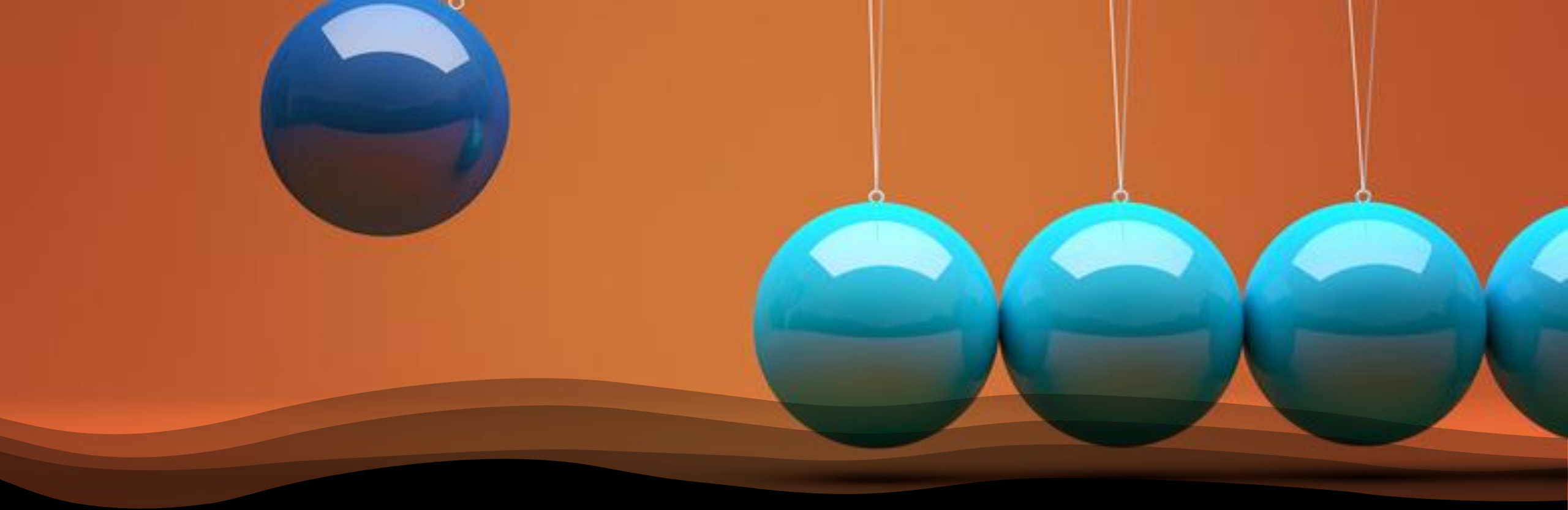
Societal Expectations

Quebec Population (2010):

92% AGAINST shifts >16h

72% FOR informing patient if
shift > 16h





MORE EMPIRICAL DATA...?

InCURS



Intensive Care Unit Resident Scheduling trial

OBJECTIVE

To evaluate the effects of

16-hour and 24-hour

overnight work schedule

on

patient mortality and safety,

resident education

and

resident wellbeing.

Co-Intervention: Structured Handover



CHALLENGES

Fewer residents rotating in the ICU

Fellow/faculty burnout

Programs under accreditation review

Unilateral adoption of shorter duty hours



Continuity of Care Comes at a Cost

For the trainees, the faculty, the staff, the patients

Thank you for your attention

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Thank you for joining us today

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the next topic?

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