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**T R A C I E**  
HEALTHCARE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS  
INFORMATION GATEWAY

# Healthcare Operations during the COVID-19 Pandemic- Speaker Series

September 2021

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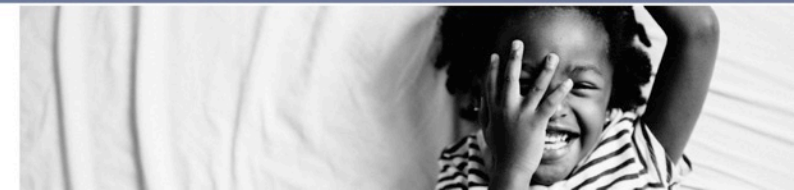


# The Work-Life Pandemic Puzzle: Putting the Pieces Back Together, But Better

Lois Lee, MD, MPH

Rebekah Mannix, MD, MPH

Kelsey Miller, MD, EdM



# TRUTH # 1

## The practice of medicine requires emotional [affective] labor

Two key tasks required of doctors are:

- To hide negative emotions
- To display positive emotions even when you feel the opposite



Raj Persaud BMJ 2004;329:s87

3



Truth #2

# TRUTH # 2

## COVID-19 has changed the emotional landscape of medicine

THE  
NEW YORKER

THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS Latest Coverage How Will the Virus Evolve? The COVID Midlife Crisis The Struggle Against Vaccine Reluctance The Economic Impact

MEDICAL DISPATCH

## THE EMOTIONAL EVOLUTION OF CORONAVIRUS DOCTORS AND PATIENTS



By Dhruv Khullar  
July 7, 2020



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Boston Children's



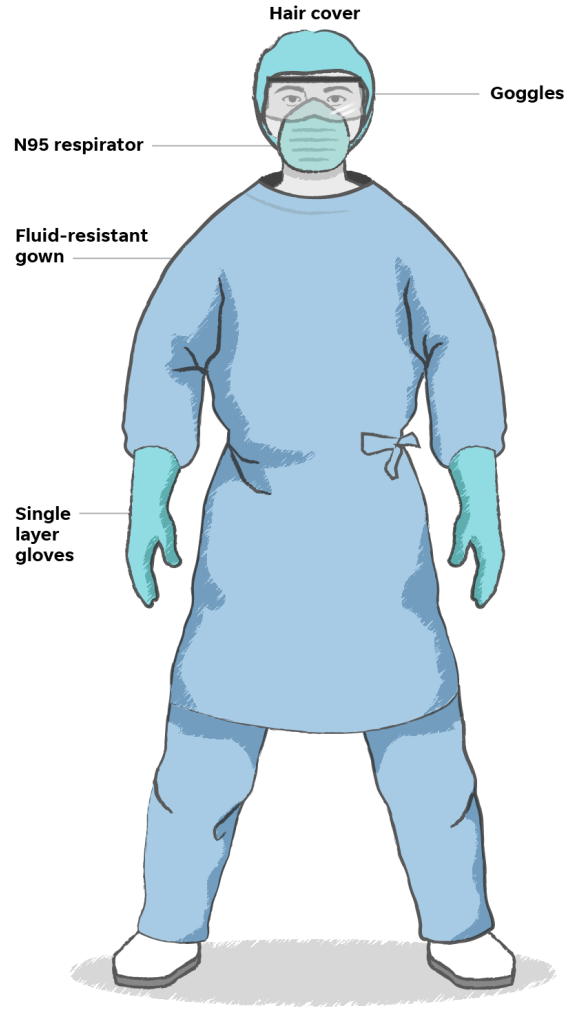
# Emotional Labor and the Emotional Landscape of COVID-19

- PPE
- Bringing it home
- The role of trainees
- Staying connected (to each other and our patients)
- Public health and therapeutic relationships





# PPE.....and [not] Bringing it Home



<https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/2020/03/31/coronavirus-protection-what-health-care-workers-need-stay-safe/2917179001/>



shot Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell, an emergency room physician, sleeps and spends time in an attic bedroom to minimize contact with her family in Boston. (Courtesy Elizabeth Mitchell)

<https://www.wbur.org/news/2020/04/03/bringing-home-something-deadly-how-health-workers-are-isolating-from-their-families>



# Our Trainees



- Are they being exposed unnecessarily to harm?
- Are they learning enough?
- Are they learning the right things?
- How will this entry into medicine affect their careers?

<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hblog20200326.510173/full/>

7





# Staying Connected (to each other and our patients)

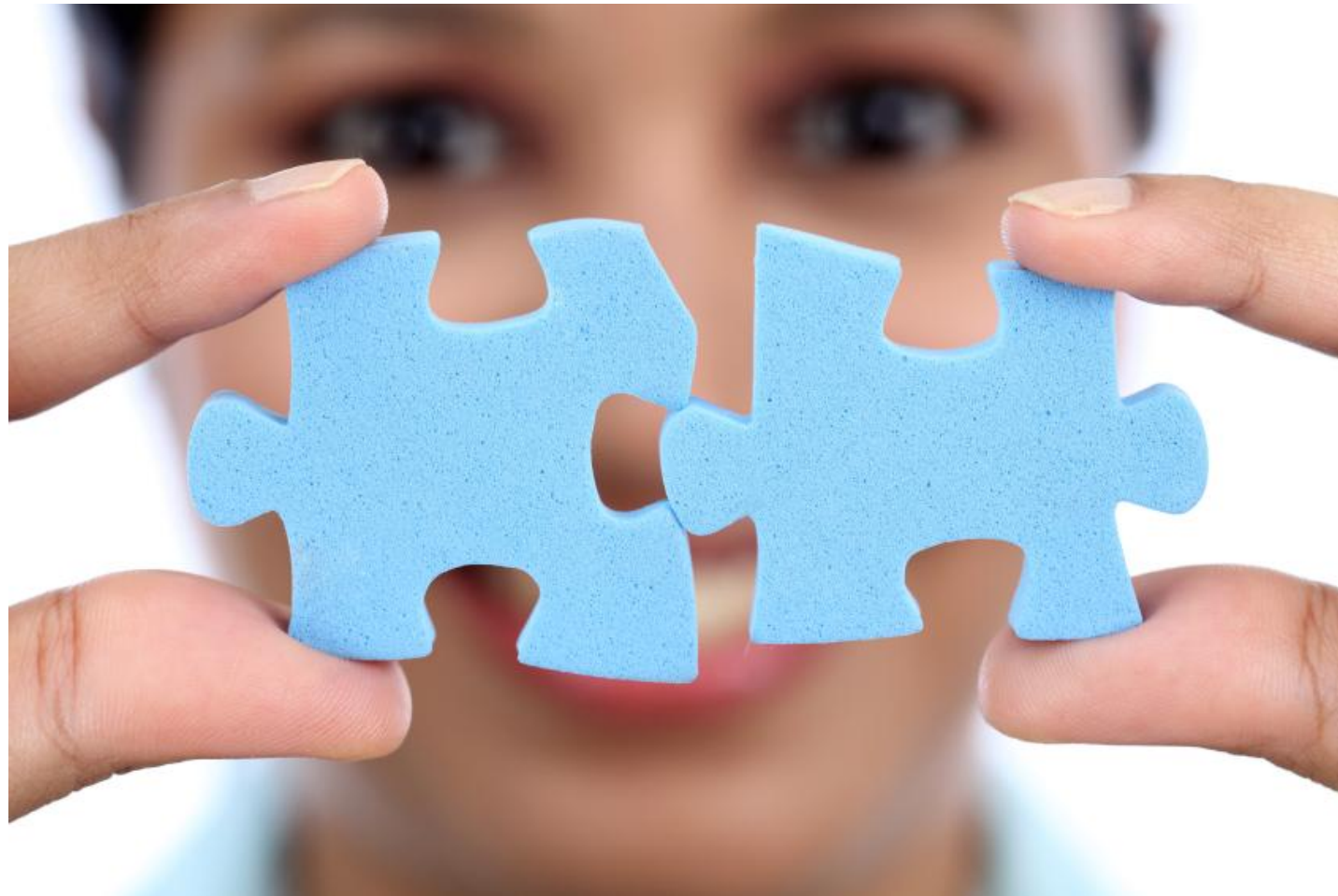




# Public Health and Therapeutic Relationships



# How Did COVID-19 Affect the Work-Life Puzzle?

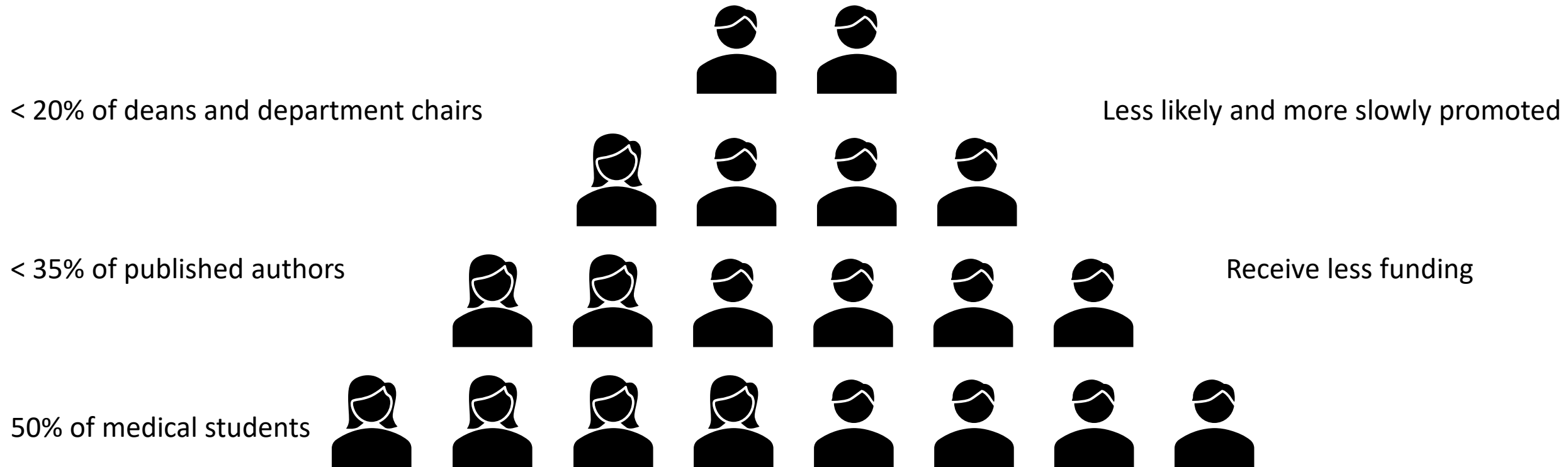


10

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# Where Were We? The Status of Women In Medicine





# COVID Upset Work-Life Integration

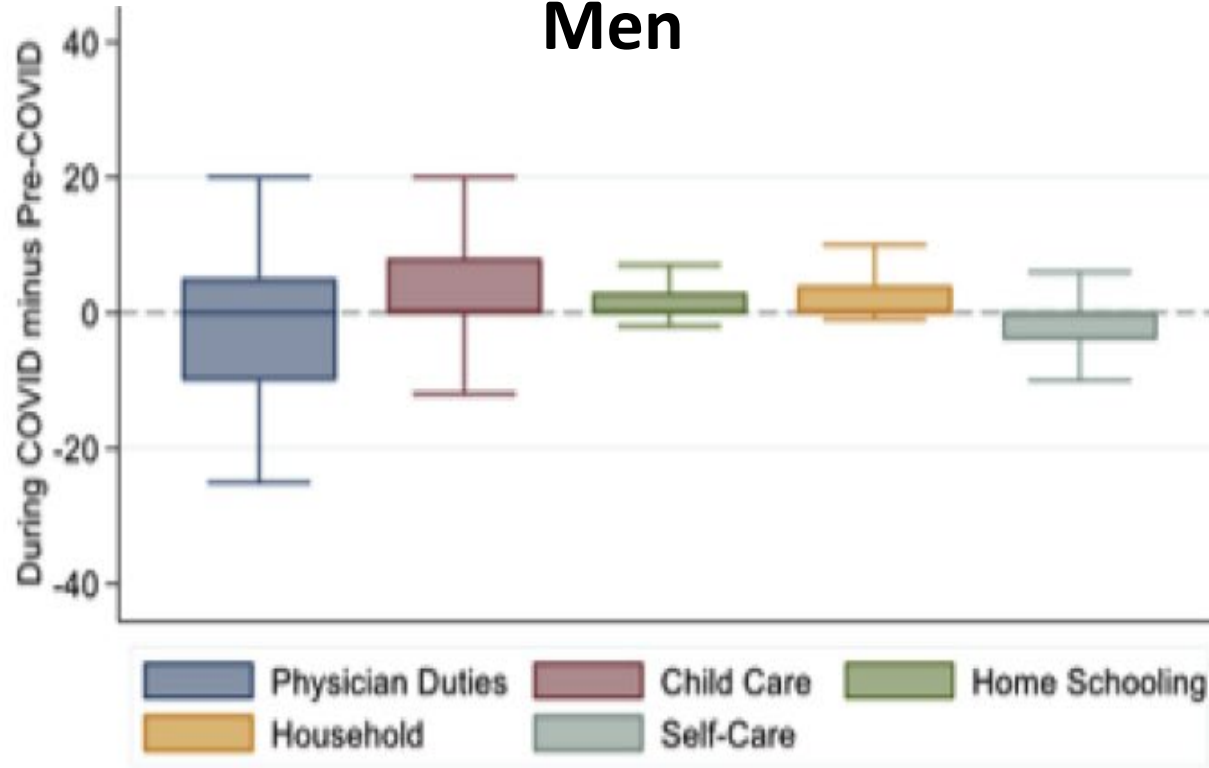
- Children home from daycare or school – implications for childcare and homeschooling
- Limited access to extended family or friends for support
- Challenges caring for elderly family members due to travel restrictions
- Outsourcing difficult – loss of traditional solutions



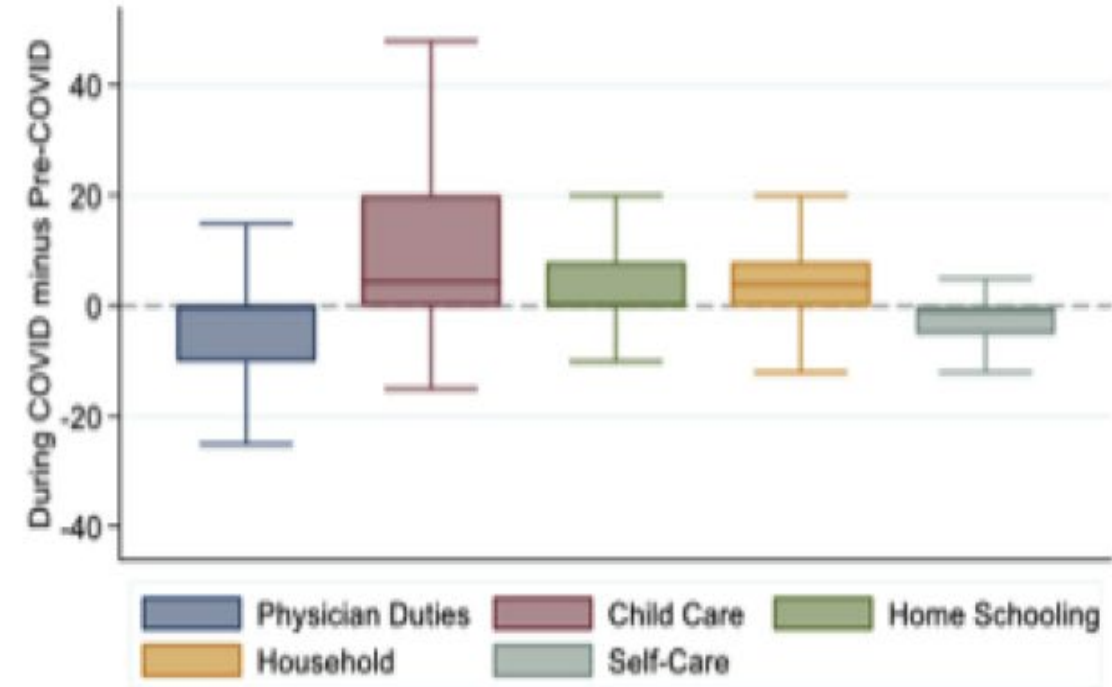
# COVID Upset Work-Life Integration, Continued

More Hours/Week  
Less Hours/Week

## Men



## Women



# Putting This in Perspective

8 hours per week  
x 52 weeks

10 weeks  
of vacation

Time to  
publish 2+  
papers





# Early Data on Detrimental Impact

- Female first authors decreased from 36% of all submissions (2019) to 20% (2020)
- Females less able to participate in virtual national meetings
- Anticipated decrease in grant submissions and funding for females



# Not Just Women: URIM

- Black and Hispanic physicians unrepresented at assistant, associate, and full professor levels in medical and surgical specialties and this trend was worsening
- Disproportionate economic and personal impact on Black and Hispanic communities
- National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine:  
“As we develop immediate solutions and plan for long-term recovery, we also have an opportunity to build back stronger and to create a more just, robust, and resilient nation for all of our citizens.”

Amadd Lett L, et al, PLoSOne. 2018. National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, 2021.

16





# LESSONS LEARNED





# Supporting Work

## Acknowledgement and Recognition



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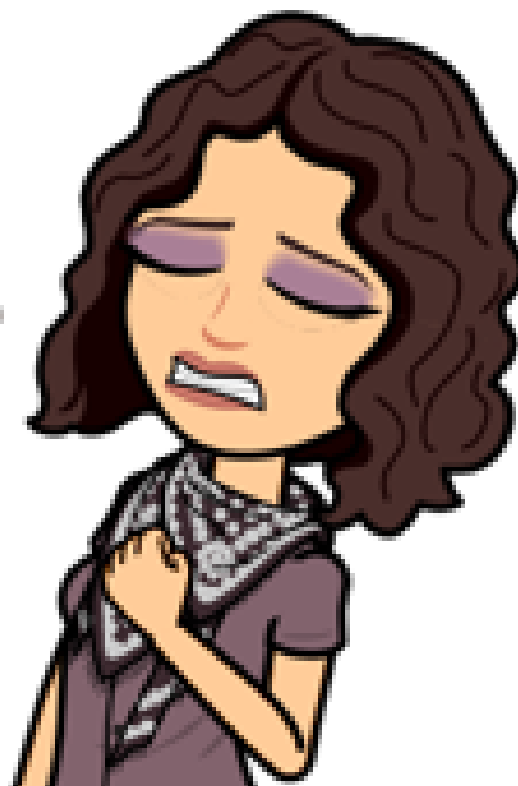
## Psycho-social support and open dialog



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THE  
STRUGGLE  
IS  
REAL



# Supporting Careers

- Re-evaluate promotion criteria and timelines
- Flexibility of hours, part-time work, or job-share
- Share the emotional labor
- Re-entry of caregivers into the workforce

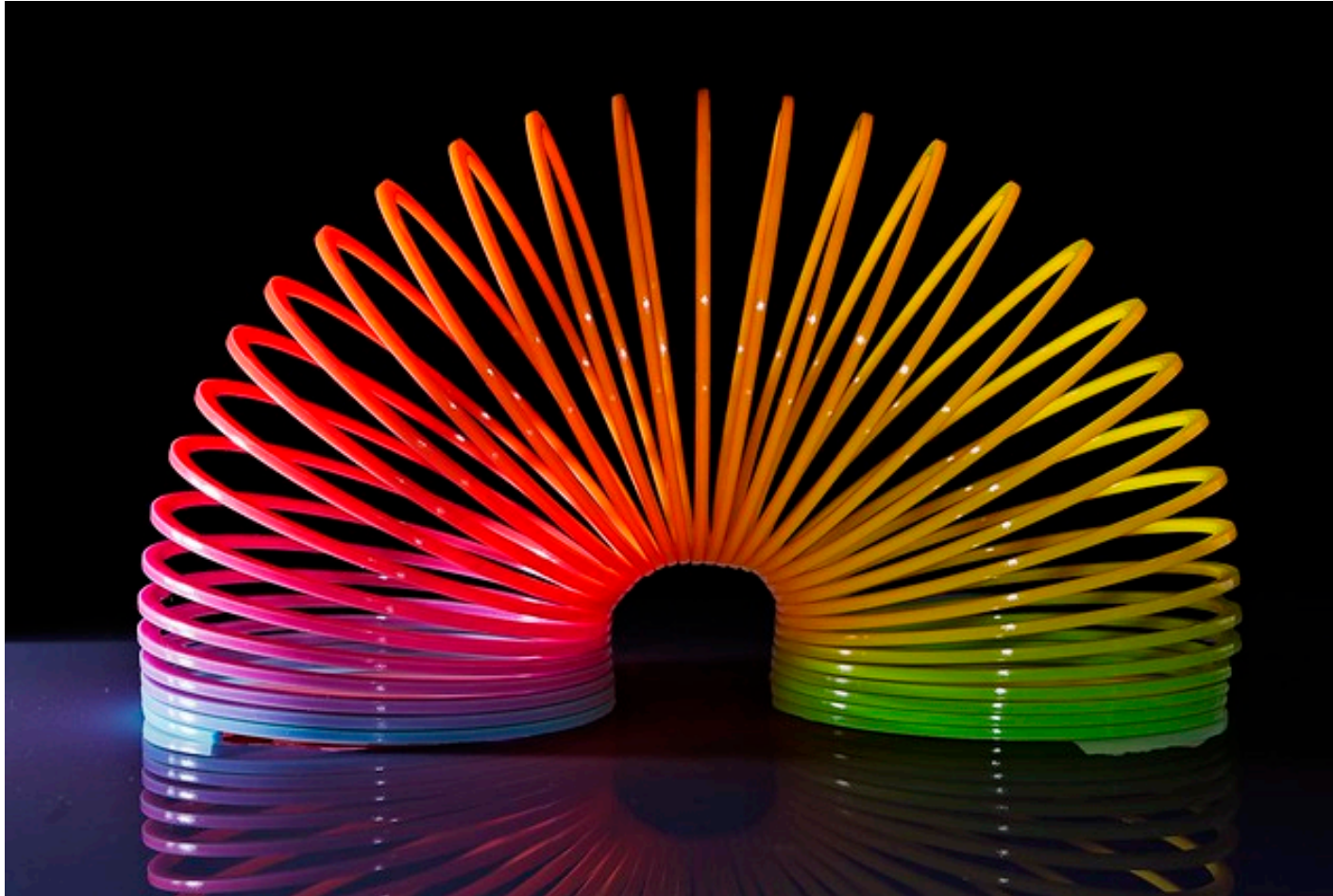


20





# Supporting Careers



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# Supporting Careers



- Virtual work-from home
- Professional organizations' flexibility with dues payment
- Conference/meeting attendance-virtual and in-person
- American Board of Pediatrics provision of Maintenance of Certification (MOC) credits
- Grant deadlines
- Formally recognize time spent on wellness, gender diversity, and health equity work
- Develop social support groups

Gottenberg E, et al. BMC Hlth Svc Res 2021. Waitowich NC, et al. Acad Med. 2021.

22

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# Supporting Life



## Child and Elder Care

- Home, hospital
- Routine, emergency
- Education support



## Other Home Supports

- Grocery delivery
- Home necessities
- Home services



## Financial Support

- Short-term assistance
- Longer-term planning
- Unemployment assistance

Gottenberg E, et al. BMC Hlth Svc Res 2021. Waitowich NC, et al. Acad Med. 2021.

23

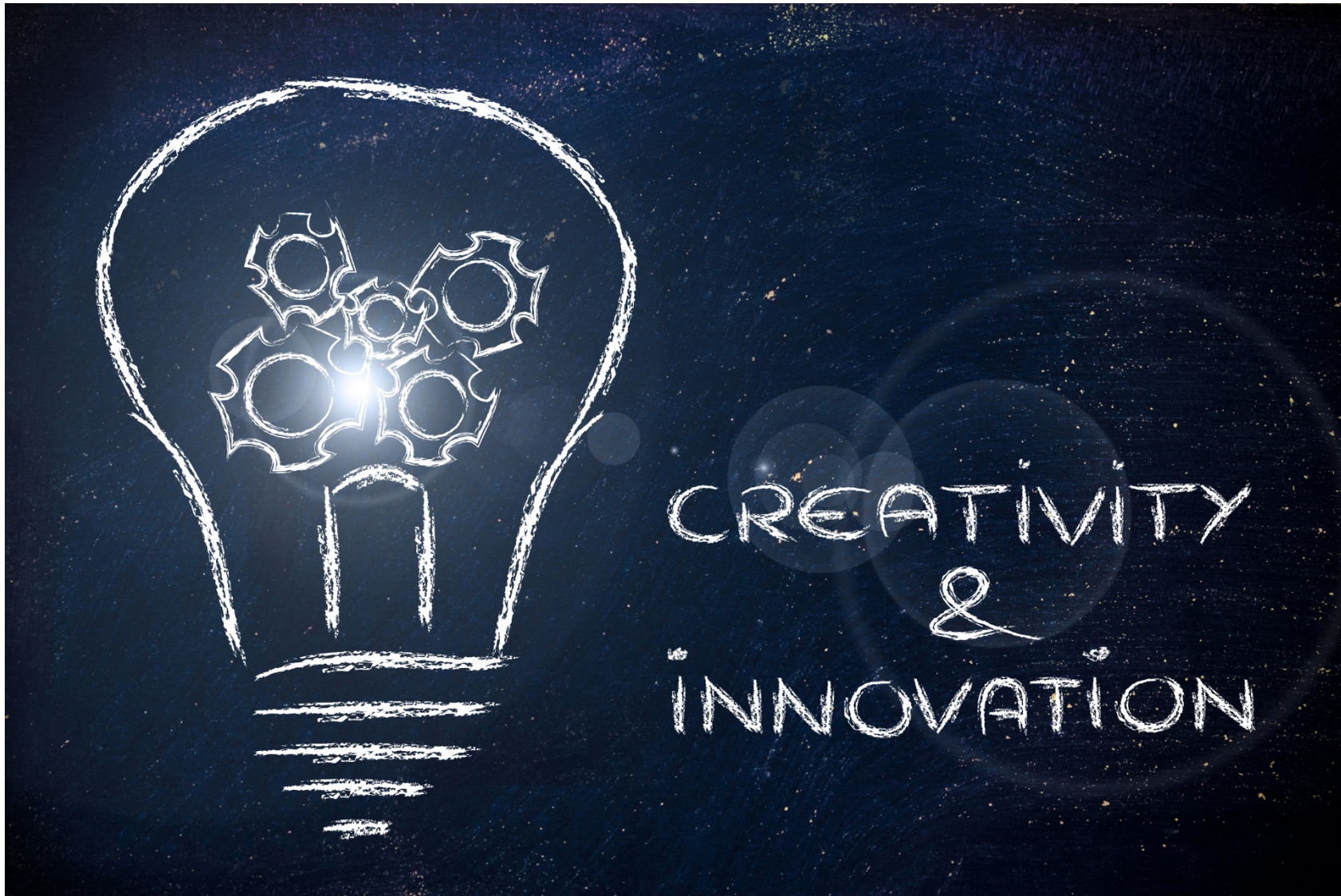
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# Working Together



25

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# Putting the Pieces Back Together



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# Moderator Roundtable



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