

BluePrint 
Advisors

Addressing Burnout at OB/GYN clinic

OB/GYN clinic's staff face high levels of burnout stemming from workflow inefficiencies, communication overload, leadership trust gaps, and environmental strain. Our team conducted 9 contextual inquiry interviews with physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, medical assistants, and front desk staff to better understand these challenges.

Using affinity diagramming, persona creation, and cultural mapping validated through a wall walk, we identified key burnout factors and developed targeted recommendations to improve communication structures, scheduling processes, leadership engagement, workspace environment, and workload management.



Problem Definition: Overview

OB/GYN clinic serves the region with comprehensive outpatient care. The team spans MDs, APPs, nurses, MAs, front desk staff, fellows, and new nurse-midwives.

Recent challenges include HVAC failures, leadership shifts, midwife additions, and clinic expansion plans amid ongoing burnout concerns.

Key Stakeholders	Recent Disruptions
Physicians, APPs, Nurses	HVAC failures
Medical Assistants, Front Desk	Leadership changes
Fellows, Nurse-Midwives	New midwife integration
	Clinic expansion plans

Scope: In and Out of Scope

In Scope

- Investigating operational and cultural burnout factors
- Staff interviews and shadowing observations
- Creating affinity diagrams, personas, and cultural maps
- Recommending system-level changes within OB/GYN team

Out of Scope

- Financial compensation systems
- Broader health system organizational structures
- Legislative or political factors
- Major capital investments or infrastructure projects



Current State Analysis



Administrative Overflow

Staff consistently report difficulty disconnecting after hours due to administrative tasks that spill into personal time, creating work-life imbalance.



High Turnover

Frequent staff departures, particularly among nurses and support staff, create additional stress for remaining team members who must compensate.



Communication Breakdowns

Multiple platforms (Epic, emails, pagers, Teams) create information overload and missed updates, interrupting patient care with non-urgent messages.



Space Constraints

Limited workspace creates privacy issues, concentration difficulties, and insufficient break areas, contributing to environmental stress.

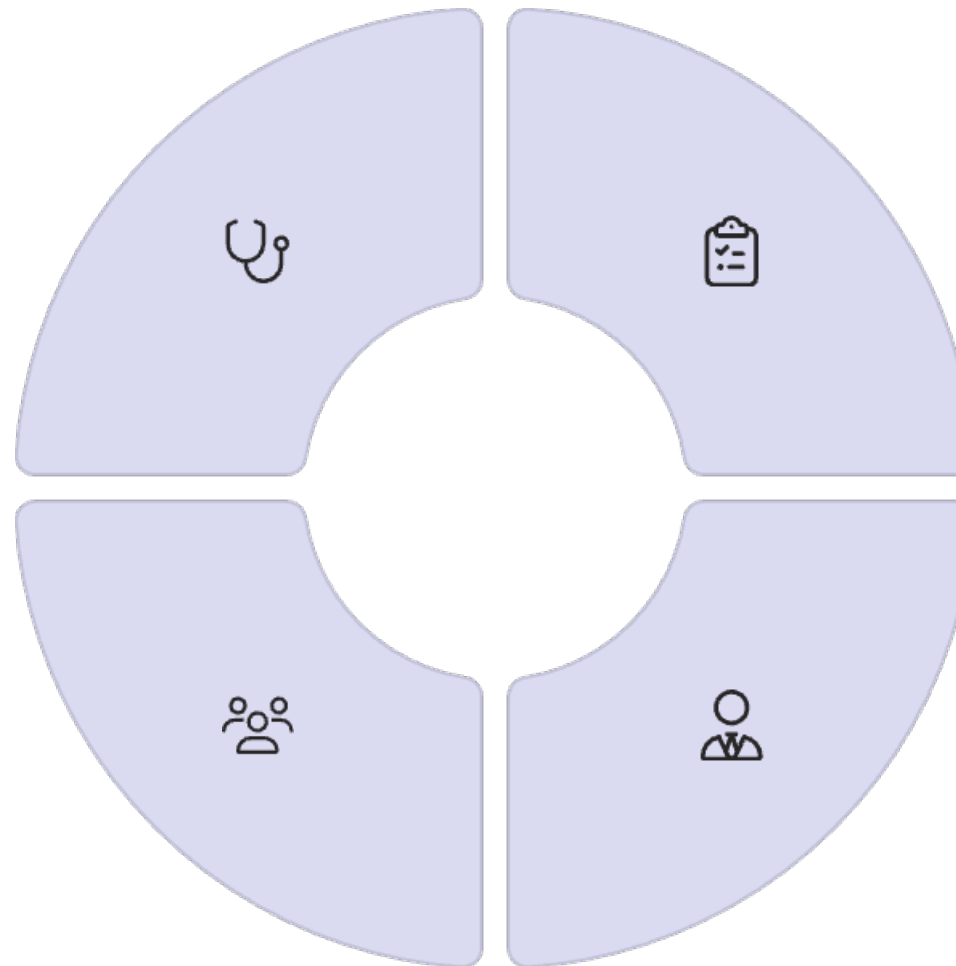
Key Stakeholders

Clinical Staff

Physicians, midwives, nurses, and medical assistants who directly experience operational challenges and provide patient care.

Patients

Indirect stakeholders whose care experience is impacted by staff burnout, communication breakdowns, and operational inefficiencies.



Administrative Staff

Front desk personnel who manage scheduling, patient intake, and administrative workflows.

Leadership

Clinic managers and directors who shape workflows, resource allocation, and staff engagement policies.

Research Methods & Models

1

Affinity Diagram

Captured major burnout drivers clustered into thematic areas, revealing patterns across different roles and responsibilities.

2

Persona Diagrams

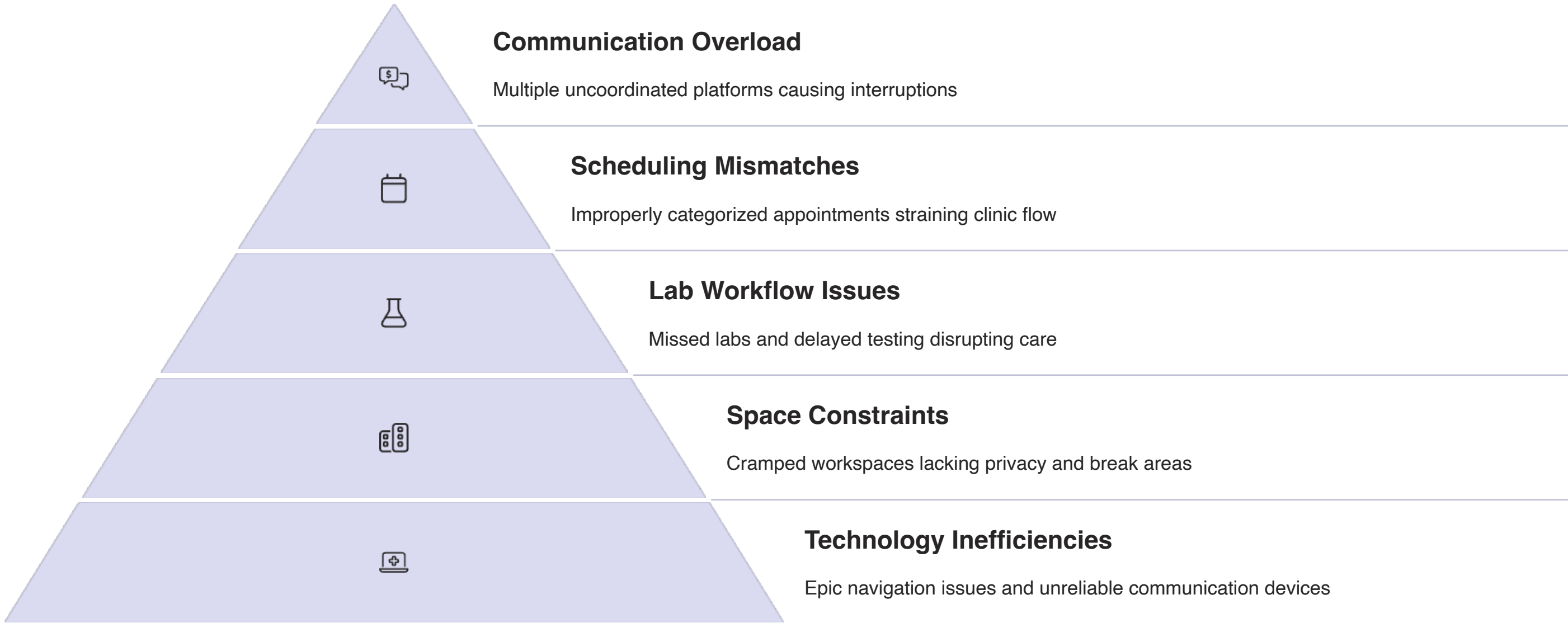
Represented key staff experiences to build empathy and communicate understanding of different roles and their lived experiences.

3

Cultural Model

Mapped systemic influences, highlighting leadership dynamics, team norms, and organizational stressors affecting clinic culture.

Key Breakdown Areas



These breakdown areas create a cascading effect, where issues in one domain amplify problems in others. For example, communication overload combined with space constraints means staff receive interruptions in environments where they cannot effectively focus, further degrading productivity and increasing stress.



Ideal Future State

Clear Communication Pathways

Staff experience consistent communication channels with clear urgency indicators, reducing interruptions during patient care and eliminating confusion about task priorities.

Specialized Scheduling

Appointments managed by individuals with OB/GYN-specific knowledge, ensuring proper categorization and alignment with clinical needs and appropriate time allocation.

Transparent Leadership

Regular engagement between leadership and staff, fostering psychological safety, building trust, and providing visible responses to concerns with clear updates on resolution progress.

Improved Environment

Clean, functional, and comfortable clinic spaces with designated private areas for breaks and charting, supporting staff wellbeing and concentration.



Methodology for Recommendations



Contextual Inquiry Interviews

Conducted 9 interviews across clinical and administrative roles to gather real-time insights into workflows, frustrations, and pain points.



Affinity Diagramming & Persona Creation

Grouped recurring statements into thematic categories and created persona profiles to humanize staff experiences and highlight diverse perspectives.



Cultural Mapping

Mapped internal dynamics influencing team behavior and leadership relationships to understand systemic factors.



Wall Walk Validation

Shared models with clinic staff who validated, refined, and prioritized findings while rating workplace stressors through an impact-effort survey.

Proposed Changes

Communication Improvements

- Implement daily or weekly huddles for updates
- Create urgency-tagged Epic messaging standards
- Establish clear channels for different message types

Scheduling Enhancements

- Train schedulers in OB/GYN-specific requirements
- Implement checklists for proper time allocation
- Create alternative options for prolonged procedures

Leadership Engagement

- Establish quarterly town halls
- Offer confidential feedback mechanisms (e.g., QR code)
- Provide regular updates on issue resolution

Physical & Tech Upgrades

- Expand and refurbish break spaces
- Provide dedicated work phones or tablets
- Improve Epic access and protected health messaging





Implementation Considerations

Quick Wins

Start with daily huddles and OB/GYN-specific scheduler training to build momentum

Leadership Buy-in

Ensure visible support and consistent application of changes

Measure Progress

Track burnout metrics and staff satisfaction to validate improvements

Implementation success depends heavily on leadership follow-through, resource availability, and staff capacity. Quick wins can help build early momentum and trust, while long-term changes require sustained effort and organizational buy-in. Potential risks include inconsistent application of changes, lack of visible leadership support, or operational constraints that delay progress. Addressing these proactively will be key to maintaining engagement and delivering lasting improvements.