Part 2: Implementation

10-MINUTE ACTIVITY: The 5 Cs of compassion fatigue
Tell your team that if they are currently suffering from compassion fatigue, they will need to make some long-term changes. But to get through today, they can try the tips found in this article. Pass out the handout “The 5 Cs of compassion fatigue.” If you have a monitor at your disposal, pull the article, “Navigating the 5 Cs of coping with compassion fatigue,” up on the screen to facilitate discussion. If you don’t, click on the green printer icon in the upper right-hand corner of the article for a printer-friendly version. Briefly read through the article, stopping after each “C” so your team can do the activities outlined below.

1. Calm down: Jot down a quiet place you could use to relax. Maybe it’s a closet. Maybe it’s your car. Whatever it is, write it down.

2. Collect your thoughts: Write one thing you are thankful for and one overwhelming thing on your to-do list you could ask a coworker to help get done.

3. Communicate: If applicable, write the name of a coworker you need to talk to about something that’s bothering you, and don’t confuse gossip with communication.

4. Control boundaries: Jot down how you could respond to a client who wants you to look at her dog’s non-emergency issue at closing time.

5. Consider your needs: Write one way you can reorder your schedule or routine that puts your needs first.

1-MINUTE ACTIVITY: How to help a depressed colleague
Before showing the video “How can I help if I think a veterinary colleague is depressed?” stress that the tips they are about to hear don’t just apply to depressed colleagues—they are great options if they think their coworkers are burned out or suffering from compassion fatigue too.

1-MINUTE ACTIVITY: Thank your team
Give your team a big thanks for being willing to delve into a serious and important topic. Remind them that the meeting should not be seen as a means of diagnosing and treating mental health issues. Tell them to reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline immediately if they or someone they know is having suicidal thoughts. Encourage them to come to you if they have lingering questions or concerns or if they just need to talk.

For additional information and resources, check out dvm360.com/burdenofcare.