



Washington Physicians Health Program

Commitment to Reverse Clinician Burnout and Promote Well-Being

History: The Washington Physicians Health Program (WPHP) was founded in 1986 by concerned members of the Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) who represented the “Committee on Personal Problems of Physicians.” In 1993, WPHP became an independent, physician-led, non-profit corporation solely authorized as the therapeutic alternative to discipline for physicians, dentists, physician assistants, and veterinarians in the state of Washington. For 30 years, WPHP has been on the front lines of physician health, providing support and advocacy to professionals with potentially impairing health conditions, ensuring public safety through early intervention and addressing shame and stigma through education of community stakeholders. Virtually all health care organizations, professional associations, and licensing authorities in Washington recognize WPHP’s leadership and expertise on issues related to physician health, wellness, and professional fulfillment.

Our Mission: To facilitate the rehabilitation of healthcare professionals who have physical or mental conditions that could compromise public safety and to monitor their recovery.

Affiliations: WPHP enjoys a robust collaboration with the University of Washington School of Medicine, serving medical students, residents, and fellows across the 5 state WWAMI region. WPHP is also an affiliated training site for the University of Washington Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Residency Training Program. Dr. Bundy, WPHP Executive Medical Director, is Assistant Clinical Professor in the department and is supervisor for this training site. He is also active in the supervision of psychiatry residents and regularly presents material to medical students, residents, and faculty in the School of Medicine. WPHP also works closely with the University of Washington PA Program (MEDEX) and School of Dentistry, the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine at Washington State University, and the Washington State University Veterinary Medicine Program. Finally, WPHP remains closely associated with the Washington State Medical Association and is the Washington state member of the Federation of State Physician Health Programs and serves on the Board of Directors of both organizations.

Organizational Goals and Commitments to Action:

- **Provide consultation, education, and leadership development for our community and organizational stakeholders.** WPHP synthesizes information from a variety of sources and disseminates emerging research and best practices to assist organizations with their professional fulfillment and wellbeing initiatives.
- **Curate relationships among WPHP’s network of stakeholders to develop shared resources and innovative partnerships.**

- **Provide wellness interventions that are sensitive to the demanding careers of health professionals while promoting peer support that is impervious to geographical boundaries.** WPHP offers Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction workshops and series to health professionals and their spouses in Washington. In 2018 WPHP will deliver this through teleconferencing technology.
- **Participate in research that aims to reduce burnout and increase professional fulfillment.** WPHP will engage in research collaborations that aim to bring evidence-based reforms to the practice environment.
- **Leverage relationships with regulators to bring reforms that support physician help-seeking.** WPHP can influence the process to ensure that physicians have access to the care they need without fear of professional sanction later on.
- **Promote physician health and wellness as professional values through interventions targeting students and trainees.** Changing the culture of medicine to support personal health and well-being starts with delivering the correct messages and challenging the hidden curricula that undermine wellness.