

Promoting Physician Mental Wellness: Effective Strategies to Support your Colleagues

Doctors of BC Webinar

Dr. Maureen Mayhew, MDCM MPH PCC

Program Physician, PHP
Clinical Professor, UBC
Leadership Coach



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Territory Acknowledgement

An expression of cultural humility and a
commitment to support culturally safe care.

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Presenter Disclosure

Faculty: Dr. Maureen Mayhew

Relationships with financial sponsors:

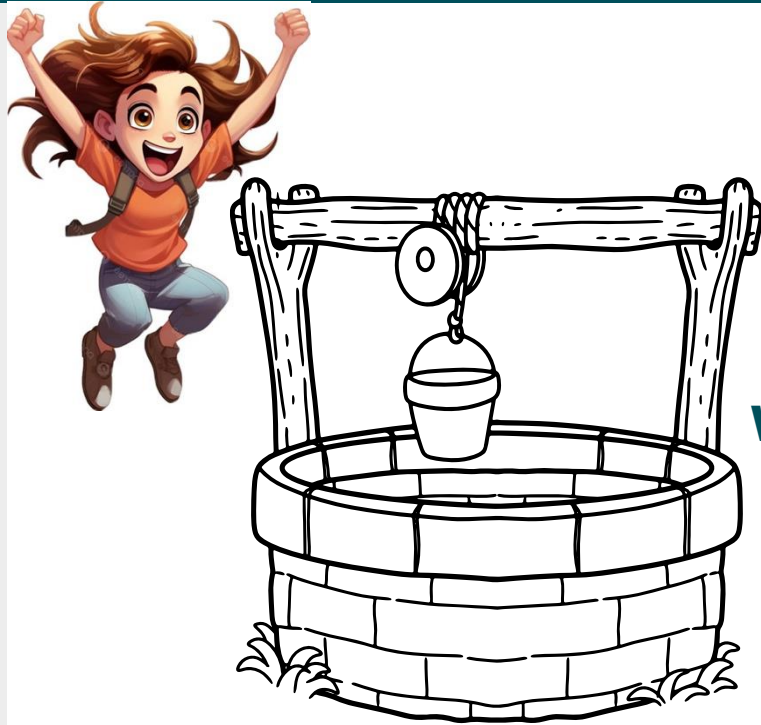
- Grants/Research Support: None
- Speakers Bureau/Honoraria: None
- Consulting Fees: None related to this work
- Patents: None
- Other:
 - Contracted by the Physician Health Program as Program Physician
 - Owner & coach for private life and leadership coaching practice
 - Clinical Professor at University of British Columbia
 - Consult for private corporations and governments on issues related to public health



Learning Objectives

- Highlight key services and resources the Physician Health Program provides to nurture physician wellness.
- Offer strategies for identifying signs of distress, burnout, and mental health challenges among colleagues.
- Share effective approaches supporting fellow physicians during difficult times.
- Discuss the importance of community and connection.

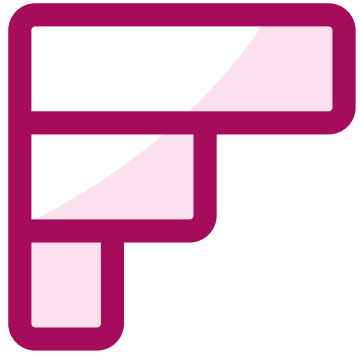
PHP works upstream, downstream & after recovery



Where are you right now?



Slido Code
#2511148



Where are you right now?



What do you need more of to feel healthy?

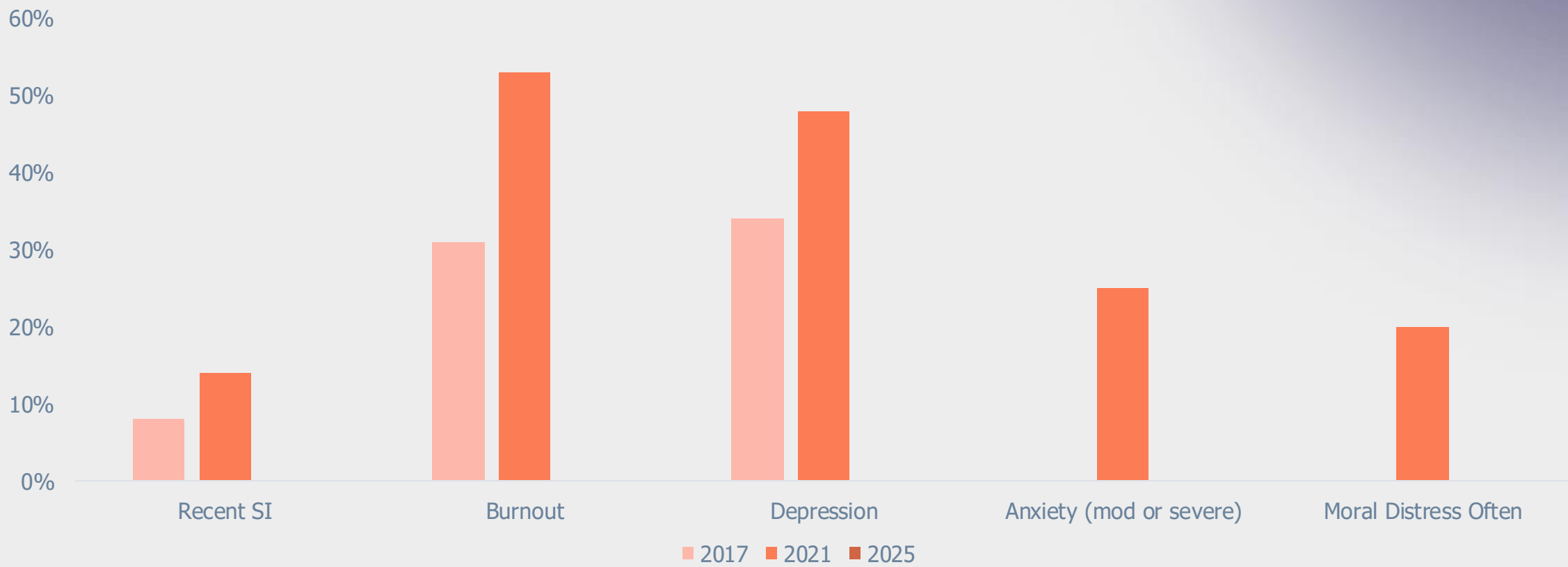
A woman with long dark hair and glasses is smiling and looking towards another person whose back is to the camera. They are sitting at a table in a bright, modern setting.

Physician Health & Symptoms of Distress

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Mental Health in Canadian Physicians 2017 & 2021



CMA Physician Health Survey 2021 https://www.cma.ca/sites/default/files/2022-08/NPHS_final_report_EN.pdf





What symptoms have you recognized in colleagues that indicated they were distressed?

How to recognize when your colleague might be in distress

Feeling
trapped or
hopeless

Anxiety and
agitation

Unclear sense
of purpose

Appearing
tired, eating
less

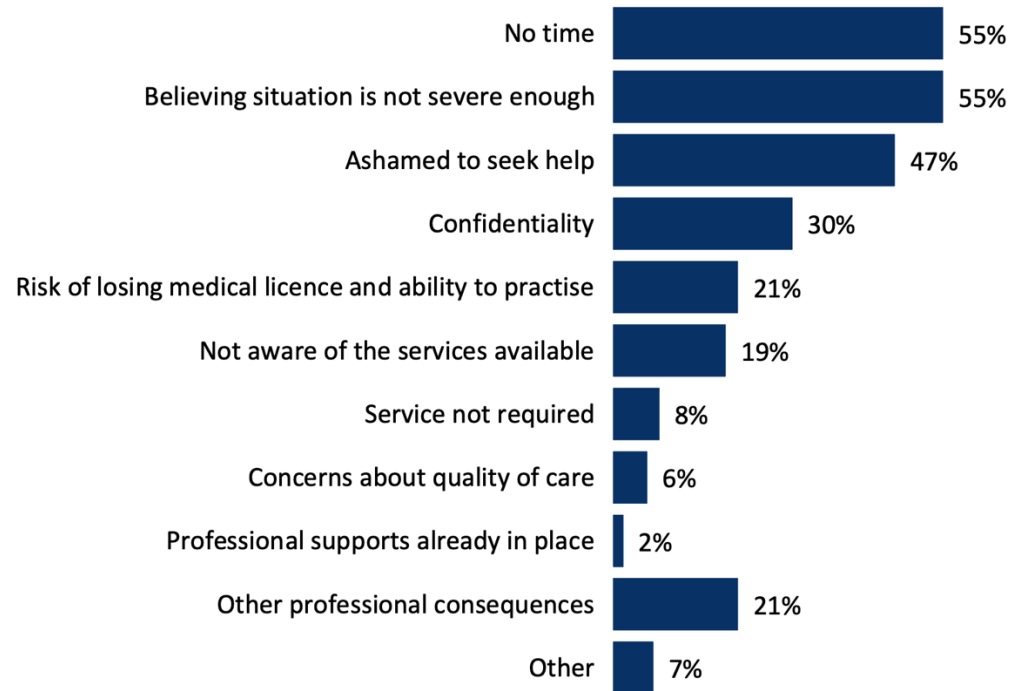
Withdrawal
or low
energy

Rage or
reckless
behaviour

Seeking
firearms or
meds


Thoughts
about death
or suicide

POSSIBLE REASONS PHYSICIANS NOT SEEKING WELLNESS SUPPORT



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Most suicides are multifactorial, many stressors coming together all at once in a person's life, a so-called 'perfect storm.'



- Michael F. Myers, MD, Professor of Clinical Psychiatry

Risk Factors for Suicide



Supporting Fellow Physicians

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Factors Affecting Physician Wellbeing

Laws, Policies, Procedures

Sufficient staffing

Mitigate stressors

Top of scope

Efficient processes

Team care

EMR

Support at home

Self-care

Healthy Habits



Measure MD wellness

Discussions/debriefs

Committed leadership

Cohesive team

Shared values

Celebrate success

Normalize support

Healthy Boundaries

Peer support

Stanford Model of Professional Fulfillment

Healing the Healers: System-Level Solutions to Physician Burnout.

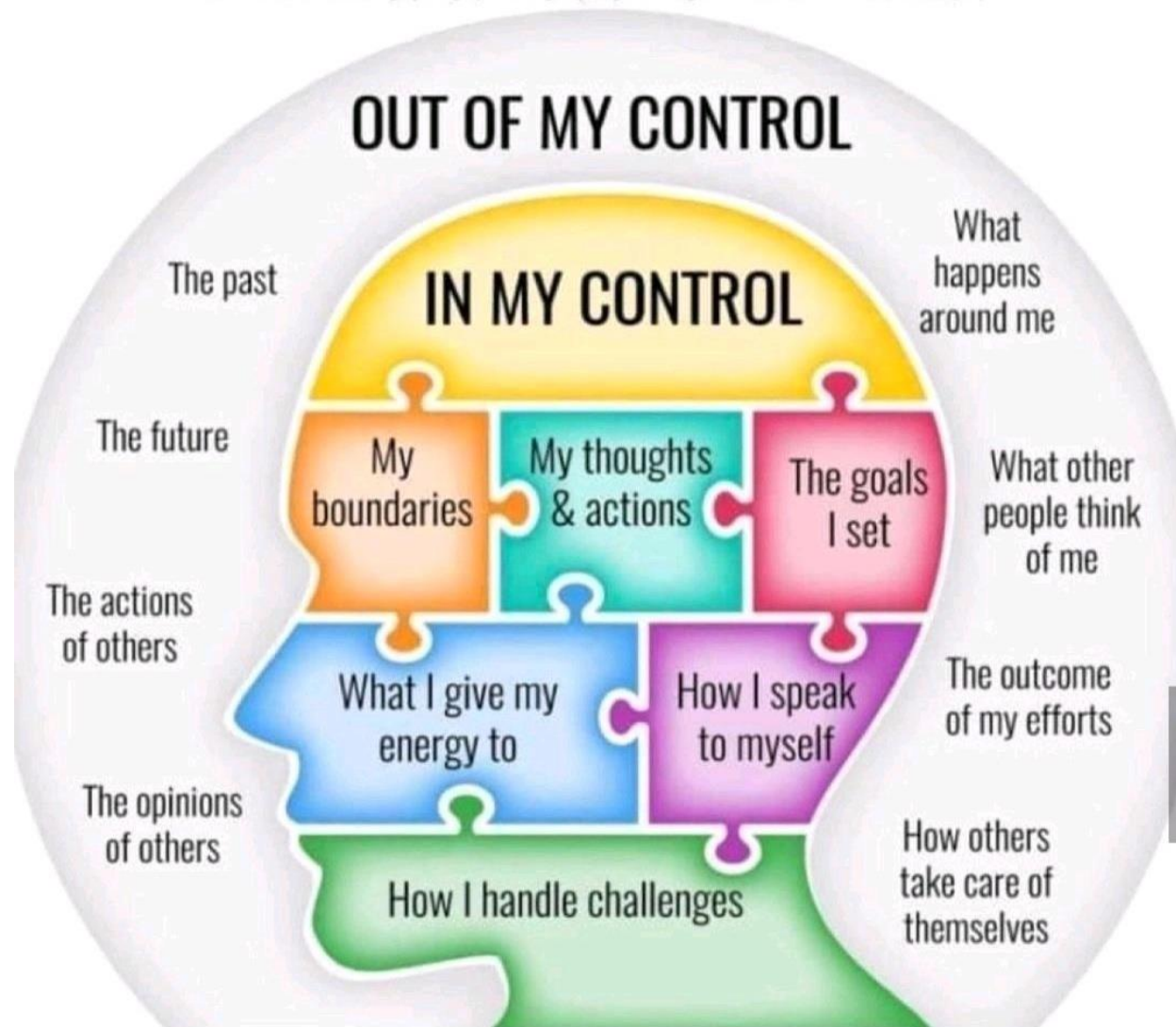
Recommendations of the Ontario Medical Association Burnout Task Force, Aug. 18, 2021

Available from: <https://www.oma.org/siteassets/oma/media/pagetree/advocacy/issues/burnout/burnout-paper.pdf>

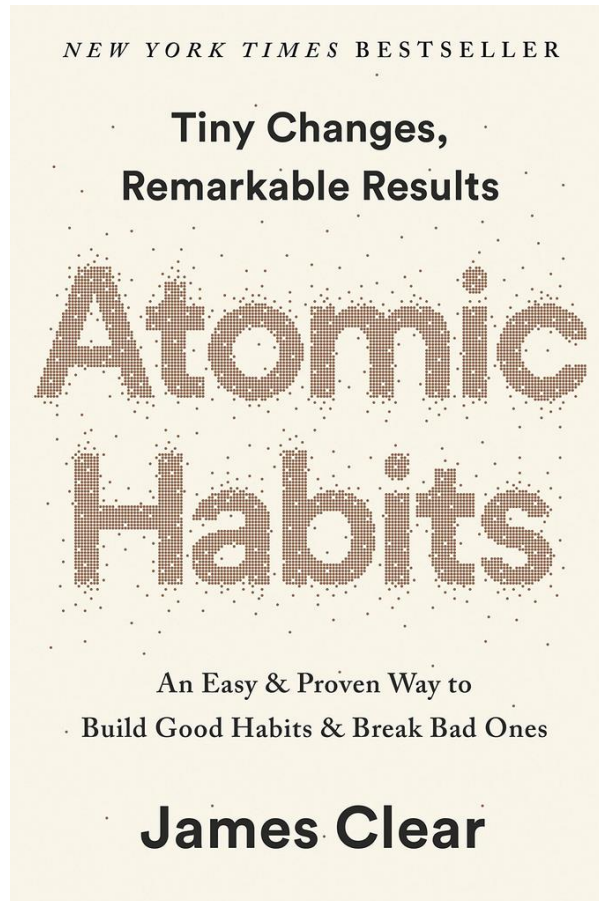
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Focus on Events within Your Control



Personal Health/Resilience



Healthy Mind Platter



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Rock D, Siegel DJ, Poelmans SAY, Payne J. The Healthy Mind Platter. Neuroleadership Journal. 2012;4: 1-23 .

Shifting the Culture of Medicine

- Perfectionism & competition
- Unsustainable work ethic
- Shame & Isolation
- Reluctance to ask for help



- Collegiality
- Compassion
- Caring
- Doing my best
- Sustainability



A woman with long dark hair and glasses is smiling and looking towards another person whose back is to the camera. They are in a meeting room with a white table and chairs. A teal banner is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Shifting Culture

The logo for doctors of bc, featuring a purple rectangle above a cyan rectangle.

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**How does your local culture of
medicine influence your wellbeing?
(1-2 word answer only)**

What Would Be Different If We Reached Out to a Colleague After:

- Adverse events
- Emotionally stressful patient encounters
- Medical Errors
- Known chronic stress
- Patient or colleague complaints
- Patient aggression: physical, verbal, social media



The Doctor as a Patient: Dr. Michael Meyer

Physicians assume that because patient is a MD:

- They can give you a complete overview/appraisal of their situation
- They will be forthcoming, honest, articulate, and committed to helping you understand them

What is missed is the shame and mistrust – and the intellectualization – that characterizes so many doctors as they grow into the patient role.

Open a Conversation & Focus on Connecting

Instead of “How are you?”, try:

- “You don’t seem yourself. How can I help?”
- “I’ve noticed [behaviour(s)]. I’ve been concerned about you lately. Would you like to speak about what is going on?”
- “What brought you joy today? What threatened to derail you today?”

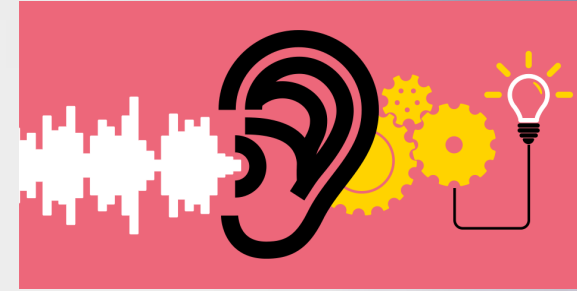
Validate and Inform

- “We physicians aren’t very good at seeking help when we need it”
- “Seeking care is not selfish, you deserve to take care of yourself”
- “Seeking help for your own problems can help improve the care you give your patients”
- “Calling the PHP will be confidential. They are not associated with the college and seeking help rarely impacts your practice”

Jacobson, S and Krutz, B. Well Toolkit. August 2021. Available from: <https://hsc.unmedu/medicine/about/well-being/blocks/links-and-documents/well-toolkit---physician-suicide-prevention.pdf>

Quality of Listening

- Prep: Focus on presence, curiosity, openness and compassion
- Listen to understand & connect
- Use non-verbal expression
- Forego judgement
- Witness – seen, heard and understood, not alone



"Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply."

- Stephen Covey

Self-Compassion

“Rather than wandering around in problem-solving mode all day, thinking mainly of what you want to fix about yourself or your life, you can pause for a few moments throughout the day to marvel at what’s not broken.”

— Kristin Neff, Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself

Physicians are experts in identifying problems and gaps

If your focus is only on mistakes and problems, how accurate is your perspective?

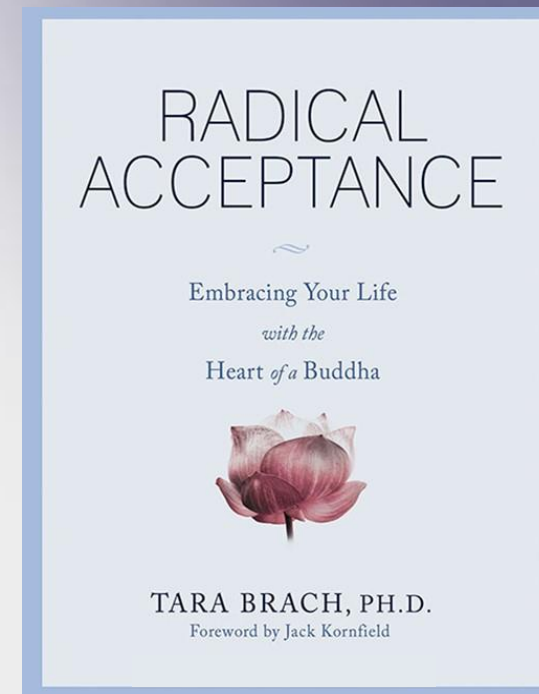


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“Acceptance does not lead to stasis or laziness. It frees you to take action and responsibility in life in ways that you can. It also helps you let go of expectations that are outside of your control.”



— Tara Brach, *Radical Acceptance: Embracing your Life with the Heart of a Buddha*

Acceptance

How do you refer a colleague to PHP?



A woman with dark hair, wearing a green floral patterned shirt, is smiling and looking towards the left. She is sitting in a purple office chair. The background is a blurred clinical or office setting with a whiteboard and some papers.

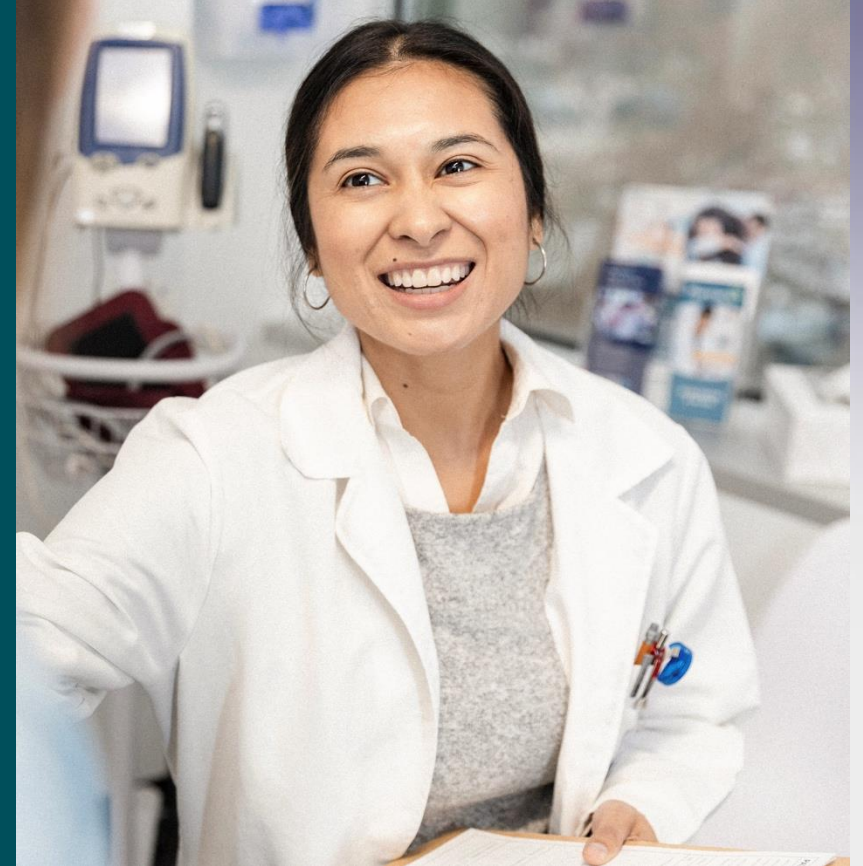
PHP Services

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Top 5 Reasons Physicians Reach Out

- Connection to family physician/nurse practitioner
- Anxiety/stress; occupational stress or burnout
- Marital/partner relationship issues
- Mental health disorders
- Parenting



Our Services



24/7 Helpline



Counselling



Physician
Peer Support



Community Referrals

"The whole process was speedy and efficient but, most of all, I was impressed by the kindness and empathy of the clinical coordinators and intake physician. ..."

- Late Career Physician

Our Services



Concerned Colleagues



Return to Work/School



Primary Care Connection



Psychiatric consultations

"Reaching out to the PHP has been the best decision I have taken during this difficult time.The PHP has accompanied me during the whole process of medical leave, helping me deal with my disability insurance claim and the negotiation for ending my contract, and has connected me with medical support and therapy sessions."

– Early Career Physician

Group Services



BIPOC Peer Support
Group
4-week program



CBT Skills for Physicians
& Residents
8-week program



CBT for Insomnia
6-week program



ADHD/Executive
Function Groups

PHP – Privacy and Confidentiality

- Reaching out to PHP is as confidential as talking to your personal family physician
- PHP is NOT an operating arm of CPSBC
- Information is only shared when there is consent or as required by law
- You may reach out anonymously

Contact

Kindly contact us if you need support or have any questions.

If everyday you treated yourself and others with compassion and kindness, how might your experience of the day shift? How much more energy would you have at home?

24/7 help: 1 800 663-6729

Office: 604 398-4300

Email: info@physicianhealth.com

More information:
physicianhealth.com

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