

# Breaking Barriers: Embedding Mental Health Support for Healthcare Providers

---

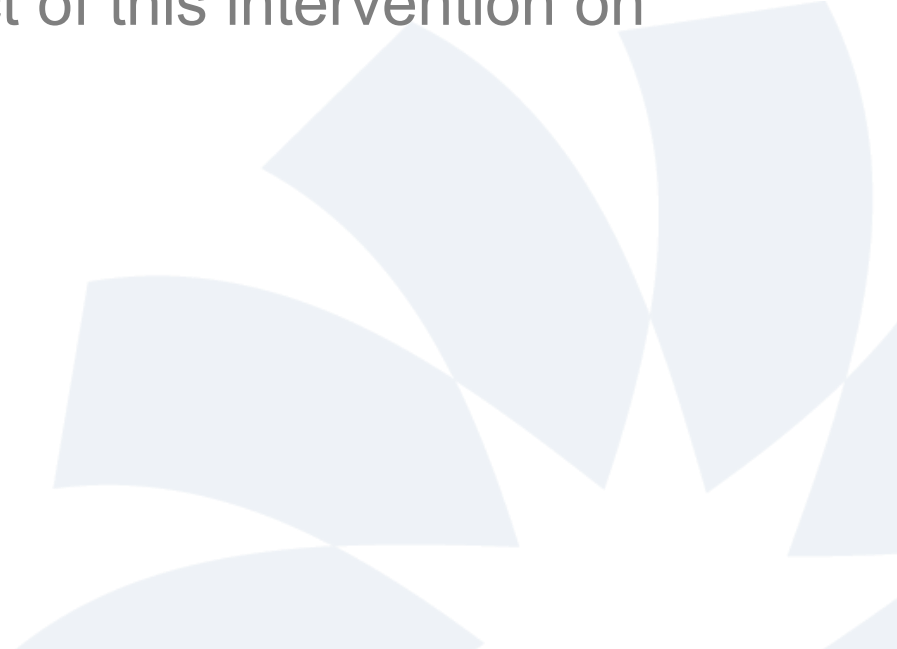
**Megan Grady, LISW-S,** Senior Staff Support Clinician

**Tina Schmitt, MSN, RN,** Director of Employee Health and Wellness

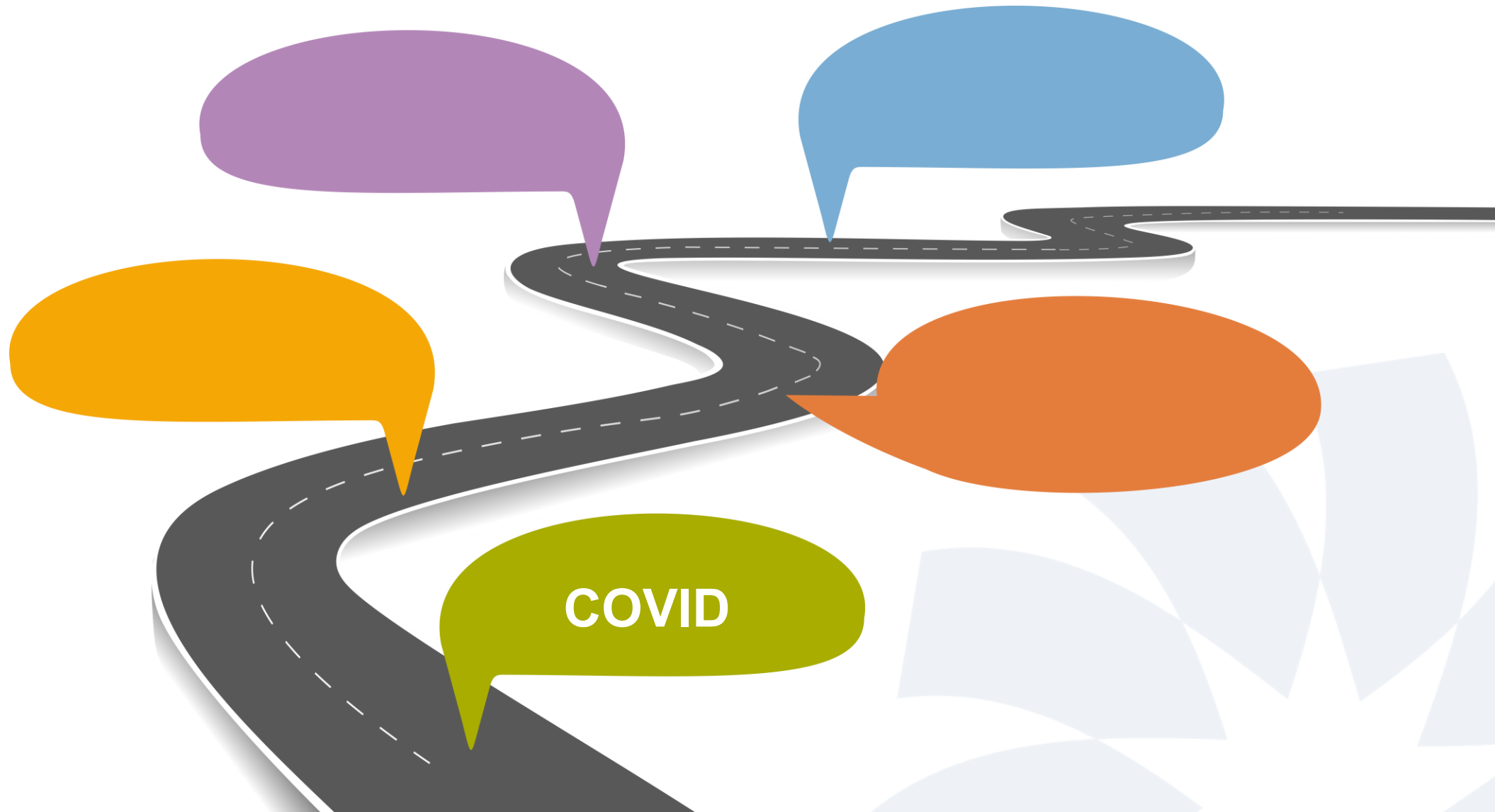
**Sean Antosh, MD,** Chief Medical Wellness & Engagement Officer



# objectives

1. Identify key barriers that limit providers' utilization of mental health services.
  2. Analyze the role of an embedded Staff Support Clinician in improving access and reducing stigma.
  3. Evaluate outcome data demonstrating the impact of this intervention on provider well-being and organizational culture.
- 

# our wellbeing journey



# burnout consequences

**Health worker burnout can have many negative consequences**

*"I can't provide the best care to my patients..."*

*"I can't get the care I need..."*

**Health Workers**

- Insomnia, heart disease, and diabetes
- Isolation, substance use, anxiety, and depression
- Relationship and interpersonal challenges
- Exhaustion from overwhelming care and empathy

**Patients**

- Less time with health workers
- Delays in care and diagnosis
  - Lower quality of care
  - Medical errors

**Health Care System**

- Health workforce shortages and retention challenges
  - Limited services available
- Risk of malpractice and decreased patient satisfaction
  - Increased costs

**Community and Society**

- Erosion of trust
- Worsening population health outcomes
  - Increased health disparities
- Lack of preparedness for public health crises

Office of the U.S. Surgeon General

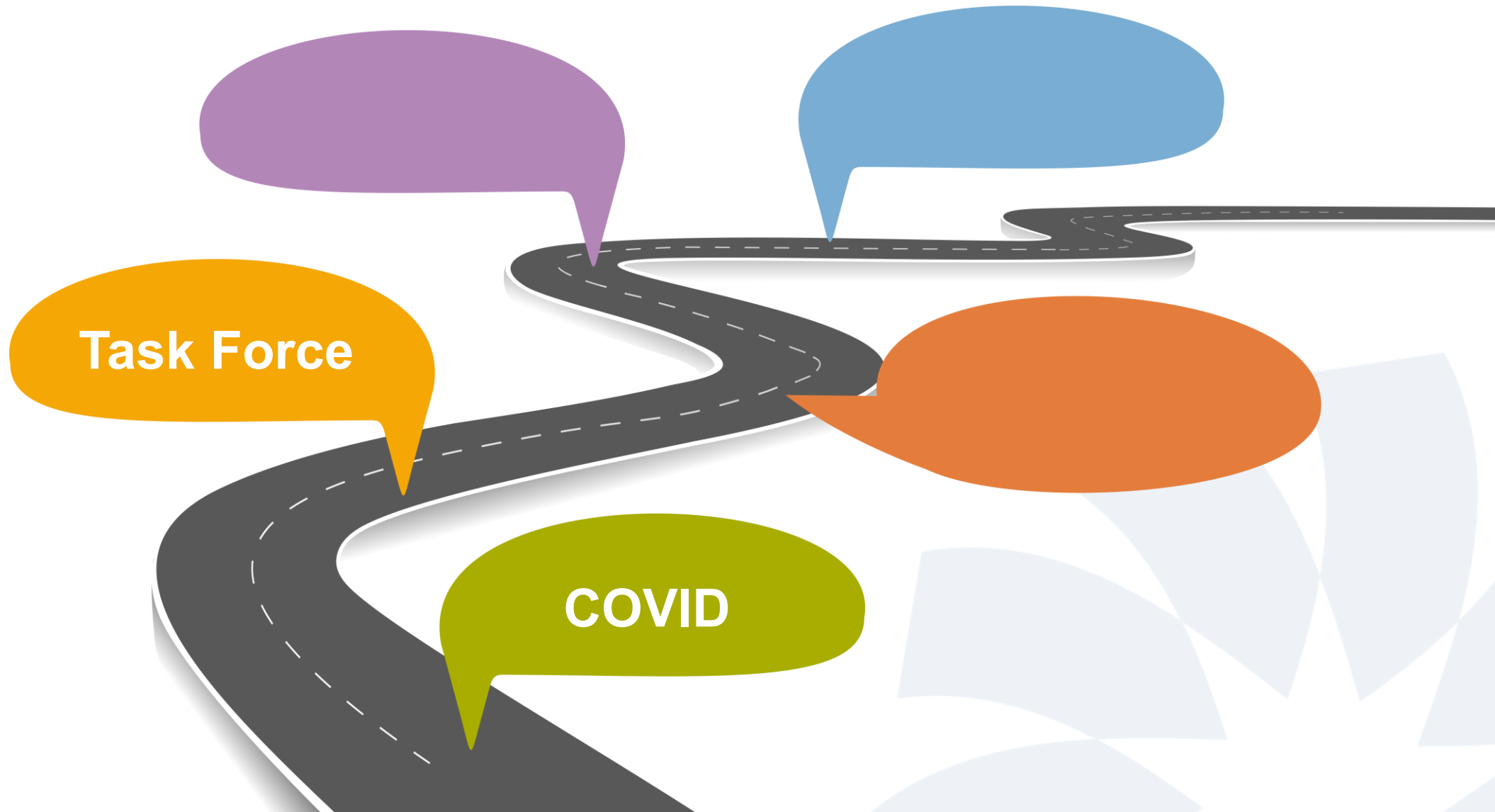
# five essentials for workplace mental health and well-being



Centered on the worker voice and equity, these five **essentials** support workplaces as engines of well-being.

Each **essential** is grounded in *two human needs*, shared across industries and roles.

# our wellbeing journey



Task Force

COVID

# initial mental health resources

## Employee Assistance Program

- Vendor driven program
- Approximately a dozen requests per month for mental health support

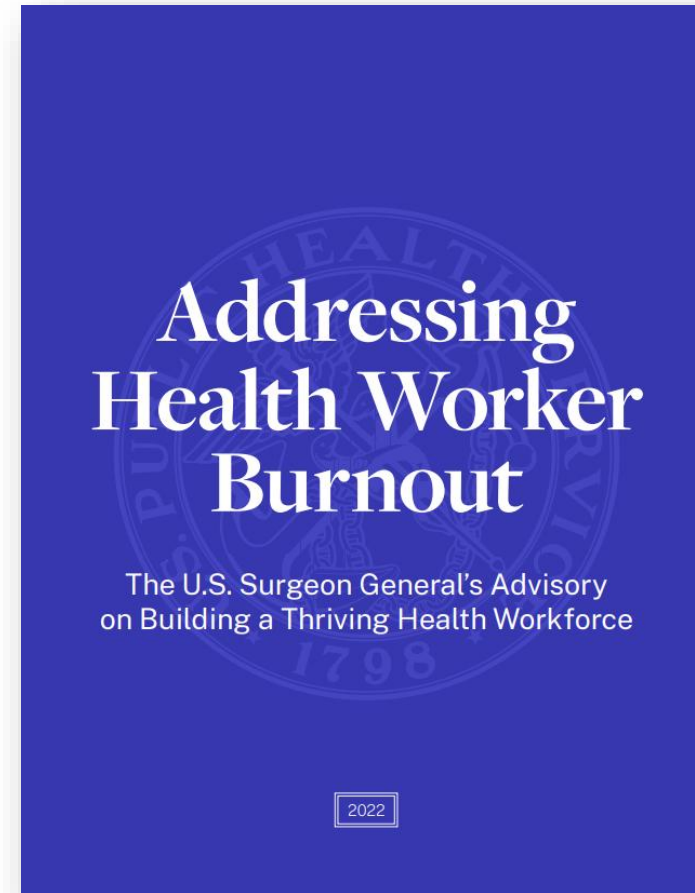
## Employee Experience Benefits

- Mental health support via health insurance



# forming safe havens

1. Increase access to high-quality, confidential mental health and substance use care for all health workers
2. Develop mental health support services tailored to the needs of health workers



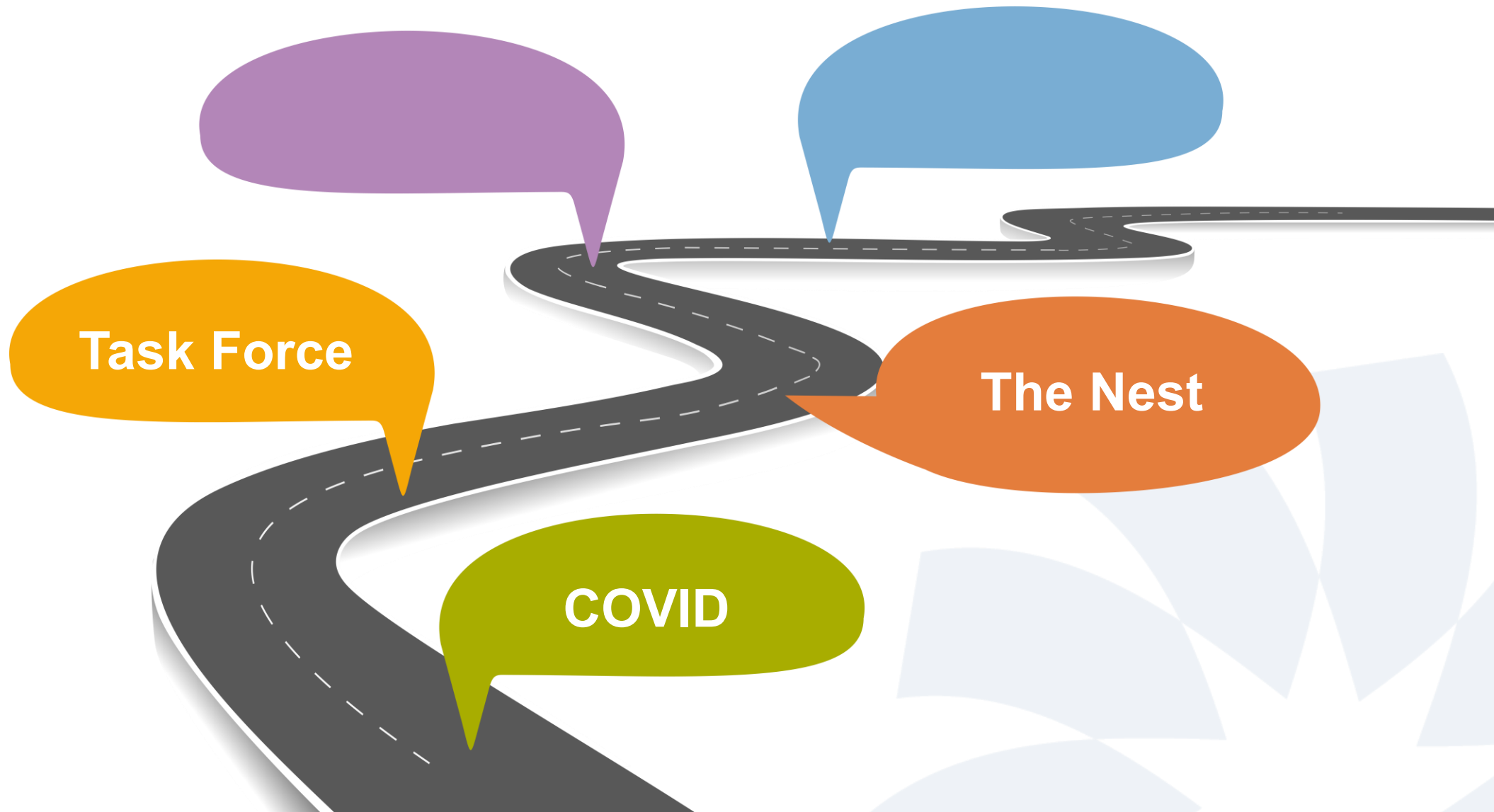
# peer supporter program

Trained staff in all roles, in all departments

- Do routine check-ins with co-workers (routine, after traumatic events, etc.)
- Provide support when staff reaches out to them
- Provide support during their work hours
- Understand available mental health resources
- Give resource information to co-workers



# our wellbeing journey





**wellbeing Wednesday**  
September 11, 2024

**mental health first aid training for suicide prevention**

September is Suicide Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness, reduce the stigma surrounding mental health discussion and focus efforts on directing assistance to those who need it most.

Education from reputable sources is the first step to attacking this mental health crisis. You do not need to be a therapist or a medical professional to positively impact a person's mental health. All you need to do is be empathetic, willing to listen nonjudgmentally and become knowledgeable about the next steps to getting that person the help they need.

We all know that CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack. Similarly, mental health first aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health-related crisis. In the mental health first aid course, you learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations and where to turn for help.

## your portal for everything wellbeing

Wellbeing encompasses the broader holistic dimensions of a well-lived life. It's the general health and happiness of an individual, created by a positive state of emotional, physical and psychological factors.

After reviewing data, literature and evidence-based practices and conducting surveys, the wellbeing taskforce developed a framework to focus efforts in four key areas: physical, wellness of mind, social and financial wellbeing.

Click the icons below to see resources that Dayton Children's currently offers within each pillar.



### wellness of mind

The wellness of mind pillar focuses on the emotional and mental wellbeing of Dayton Children's employees. Our goal is to provide resources that support your mental wellbeing in ways that are meaningful and beneficial to your health. We do this by providing resources to assist you wherever you are on your journey, whether you are currently experiencing a crisis, could use some guidance, or would like tools to help stay on a healthy path.



### financial wellness

The financial pillar focuses on providing a number of benefits and resources to help Dayton Children's employees with their financial health. Financial health looks different for everyone and that is why Dayton Children's is here to provide support throughout all stages of life and your career.



### social wellness




The social pillar of wellness focuses on social wellbeing. Social wellbeing can be defined as sharing, developing and keeping meaningful relationships with others. Adequate social wellbeing makes a person feel authentic and valued, while providing a sense of connectedness and belonging.



### physical wellness

The physical pillar of wellness focuses on the physical wellbeing of employees at Dayton Children's. Our goal is to bring attention the services offered by Dayton Children's which can improve your physical wellness. Our focus revolves around nutrition, hydration, exercise, sleep and lifestyle/preventative health.

# AMA Joy in Medicine Health System Recognition Program

CRITERIA AT A GLANCE			
	 Bronze	 Silver	 Gold
<b>SUPPORT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish peer support program to deal with adverse events.</li></ul> <p><b>AND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Share the current state of your organization's work to remove invasive questions or stigmatizing language around mental health and substance use disorders in your credentialing applications (initial and renewal) and peer reference forms. Attest to your organization's verification through ALL IN/Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation <b>or</b> submit an action plan to align your credentialing applications with best practices for removing stigmatizing language around mental health and substance use disorders.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Implement two or more programs or policies aimed at broader issues of physician support.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop structured program(s) to actively cultivate community at work.</li></ul> <p><b>AND</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to confidential 24-hour mental health services/support.</li></ul>

# metrics



## Decreasing Mental Health Stigma

### Physicians

What may prevent you from seeking mental health services or support? (select all that apply)	February 2023 (N=124)
I am concerned about what others would think if they knew I sought help	15.3%
I am concerned about confidentiality	29.8%
Such services are not accessible or convenient	22.6%
I am concerned this would impact on my professional licensure	17.7%
I am concerned this would impact my employment (e.g., loss of hospital privileges)	10.5%

### APPs (NP, PA, CRNA, Psychologists)

What may prevent you from seeking mental health services or support? (select all that apply)	February 2023 (N=87)
I am concerned about what others would think if they knew I sought help	11.5%
I am concerned about confidentiality	14.9%
Such services are not accessible or convenient	10.3%
I am concerned this would impact on my professional licensure	4.6%
I am concerned this would impact my employment (e.g., loss of hospital privileges)	4.6%

# wellbeing strategic goal 1: decreasing mental health stigma and barriers to access

## Tactics

- Establishment of peer support – over two dozen providers have now been trained. Barriers were removed such as blocking schedule for training and offering CME.
- Hiring staff support clinicians – licensed independent social workers experienced in providing confidential mental health services for medical personnel.
- Ensuring DCH credentialing and privileging aligns with best practices to decrease stigma of mental health access.

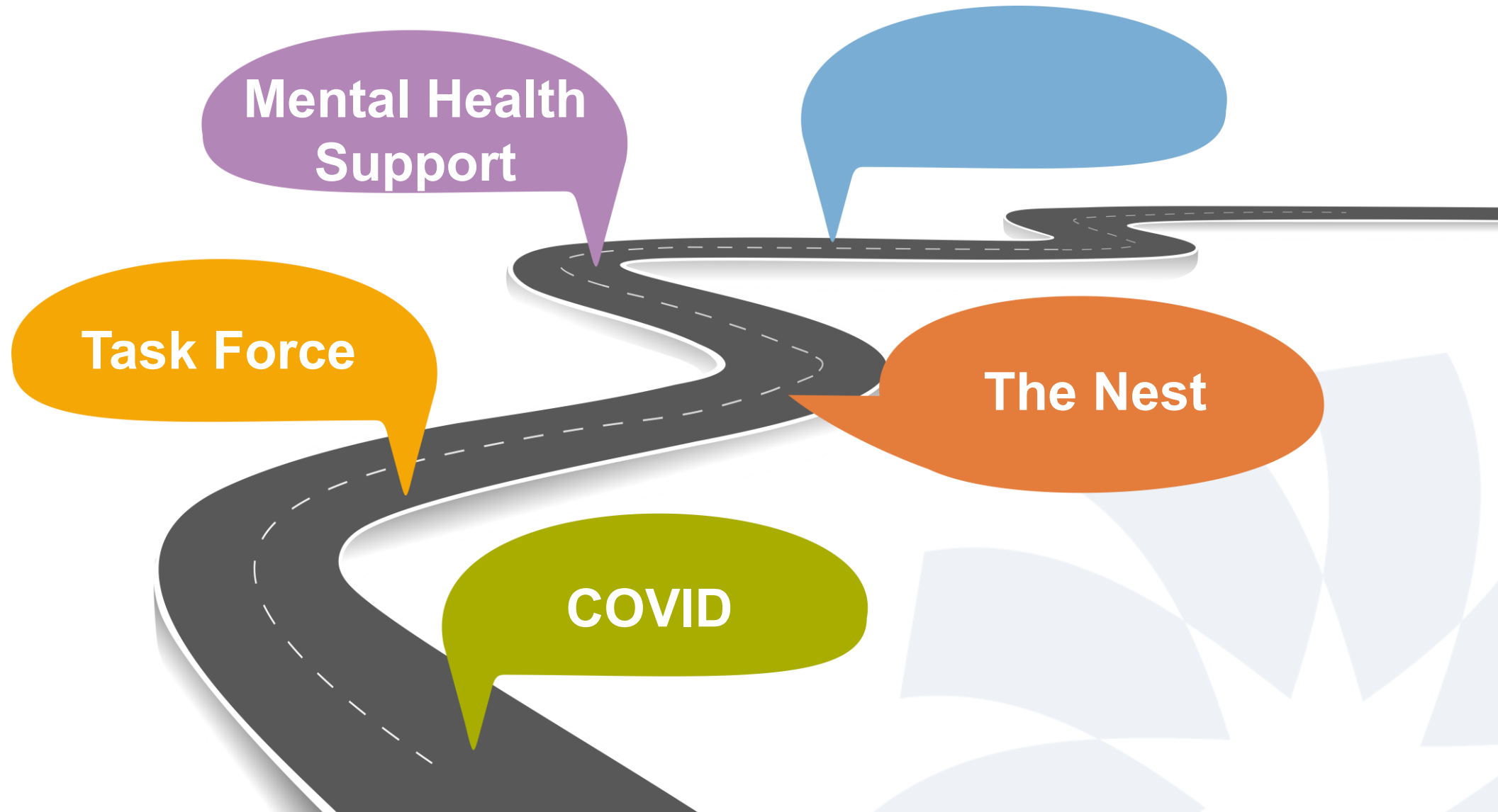
## Resources

- Partnership with Employee Health & Wellbeing for peer support training and administrative programming support.
- Staff support clinicians are employed through Employee Health to maintain confidentiality standards for providers.
- Medical affairs and legal have been instrumental in ensuring DCH credential process is mental health stigma free.

## Metrics

- Anonymous, self-identified utilization of peer support use
- De-identified, utilization of staff support clinicians

# our wellbeing journey



# staff support clinicians (SSC)

- Master's prepared clinicians that provides mental health care to employees
- Within Employee Health and Wellness, allowing for confidentiality



## Role Responsibilities

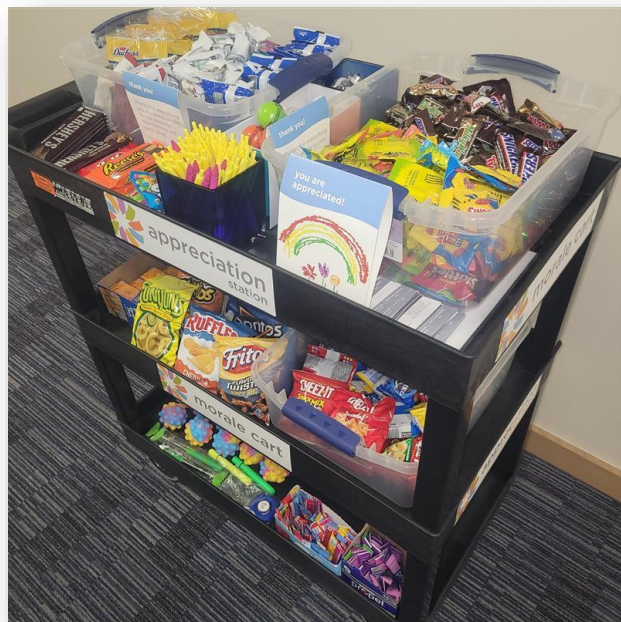


- Provide in moment support across all shifts 6 days per week
- Lead department specific mental health education groups
- Round with staff to assess need for emotional support to include checks-ins after an adverse event
  - Debrief with teams/staff after adverse events
- Meet with staff 1:1 for individual needs
  - No diagnosis, no treatment plan, no cost
  - Make referrals for counseling as needed

# providing in the moment support

## Morale Cart

Used to acknowledge staff for going above and beyond during high census times or during a particularly challenging shift



## Lavender Cart

Creating an intentional moment and space for employees to recognize that they just experienced something hard



# individual/personal support

## Zen Den

An opportunity to step away from the heart of a unit. Take a quiet moment to center and reset. Cut down on the noise of a unit, the stimuli in the environment.



# communication of resources

## provider mental health resources

Dayton Children's strives to create a confidential, stigma-free environment for emotional support of providers experiencing burnout, compassion fatigue, moral injury, cognitive dissonance and other forms of distress.

### Dayton Children's Resources

- **Employee Health and Wellness**
  - Daytime hours: Call x4570 or walk-in
  - After hours: call the hospital operator and ask for employee health on call
- **Mental health support clinician - CONFIDENTIAL** solution focused support to individual employees and departments for stress management, wellbeing, emotional processing, crisis intervention, debriefing, grief support, and conflict resolution.
  - Contact Megan Grady (days), Shannon Clarke (evenings) or Paul Hart (evenings) at [staffsupportclinicians@childrensdayton.org](mailto:staffsupportclinicians@childrensdayton.org) or via Vocera by calling "staff support clinician", x4570, or schedule directly.
- **Peer support** - peers trained in workplace support
  - look for the peer support pin or check the Nest for a full list!
- **Surest insurance**
  - Calm Health
  - Dr. on Demand
  - Community individual counseling (psychiatry and therapy)
- **The Hartford Empathy Services**
  - Counseling services
  - Bereavement services
  - Funeral Planning
  - Travel assistance
  - Will preparation
- **Chaplain services** - Call x8980



Questions? Email: [providerwellbeing@childrensdayton.org](mailto:providerwellbeing@childrensdayton.org)



## Additional information



Scan the QR code to visit the Nest, Dayton Children's one-stop-shop for wellbeing programs, or email [thenest@childrensdayton.org](mailto:thenest@childrensdayton.org)

### Will my clinical privileges be affected if I previously sought help?

Dayton Children's is recognized as a Wellbeing First Champion by ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare! This distinction means that our credentialing applications are free from intrusive and stigmatizing language around mental health care and treatment.

A generic question is asked: "are you unable to safely and competently exercise the clinical privileges requested?" A provider does not need to report a diagnosis unless it would impede their ability to provide safe patient care.

We have taken this step to ensure that our workforce can seek needed care without fear of losing their license or job.

### Will my medical license be affected if I previously sought help?

As of October 3, 2023, the State Medical Board of Ohio (SMBO) issued new questions on the both the initial and renewal licensure applications that removes language about a licensee's history due to mental health, physical illness or substance use disorders. Questions: "Are you currently suffering from any condition for which you are not being appropriately treated that impairs your judgement or that would otherwise adversely affect your ability to practice in a competent, ethical and professional manner:"

• Condition means both physical and mental conditions, including substance use disorder.

• You may answer "no" to this question if you are currently in compliance with a monitoring agreement with Ohio Professional Health Program. You must answer "yes" if you are not in compliance with a monitoring agreement with Ohio Professional Health Program.

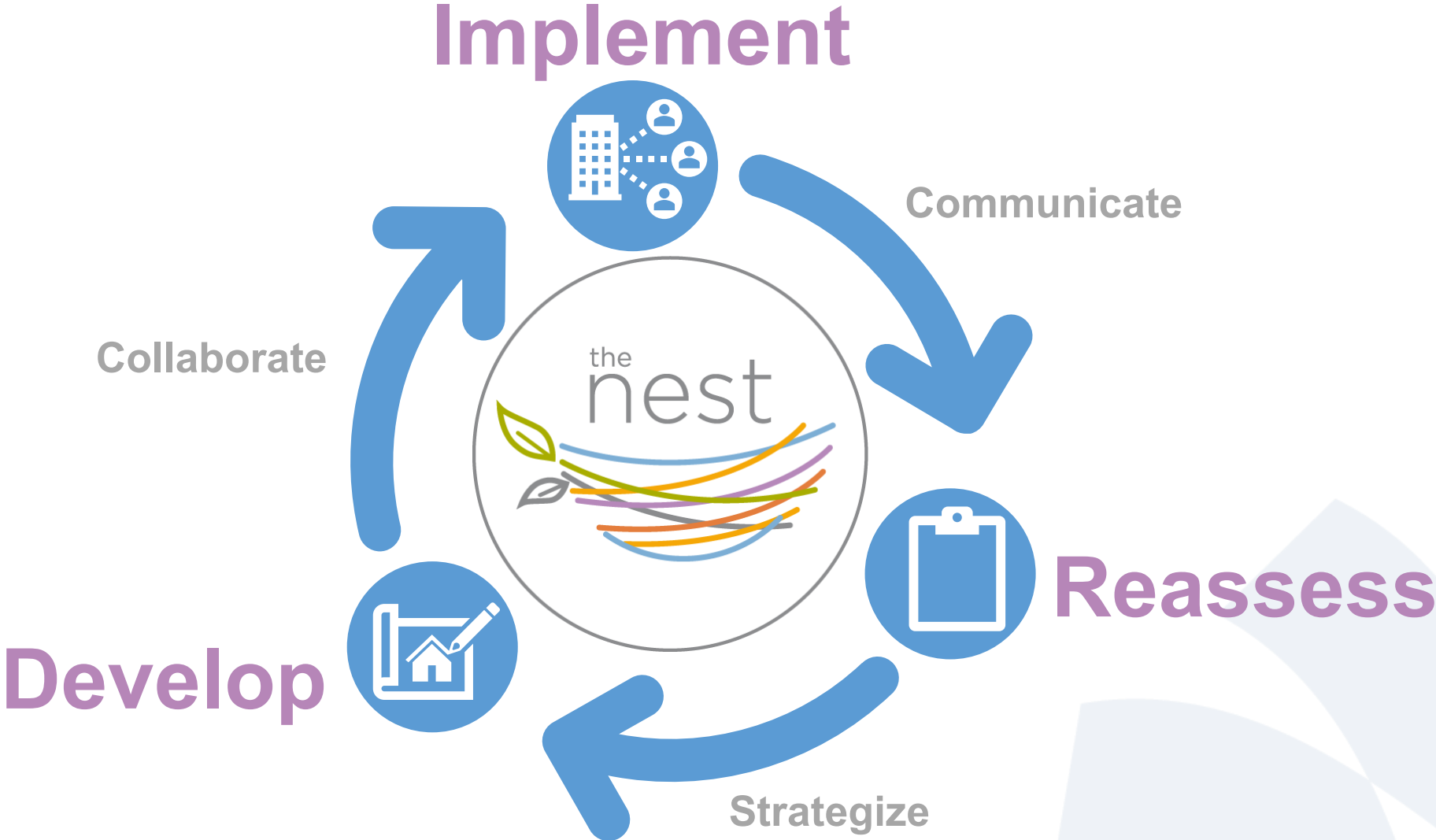
### Does the one-bite program still exist?

As of October 3, 2023, the State Medical Board of Ohio (SMBO) has replaced the one-bite program with a more comprehensive confidential monitoring program that will allow more practitioners to receive confidential, non-disciplinary support. The newly expanded confidential monitoring program is available to all licenses and applicants of the State Medical Board of Ohio who may have issues impacting their health and wellbeing, including substance use disorders, mental health disorder, physical conditions and other potentially impairing illnesses. For more information, visit [www.ohiophp.org](http://www.ohiophp.org)



Questions? Email: [providerwellbeing@childrensdayton.org](mailto:providerwellbeing@childrensdayton.org)





“[the SSC] quickly responded to provide compassionate, confidential services to our providers who had a difficult patient outcome at location and time convenient for them.”  
–Divisional Chief

“Since talking with her, I have been able to recognize patterns that were contributing to my burnout. I have slowly redefined my wellness by focusing on those things that I do control. Residency is tough and is full of challenges, but it has become a lot more manageable after talking with [the SSC].” – Resident Physician



# metrics



## Decreasing Mental Health Stigma

### Physicians

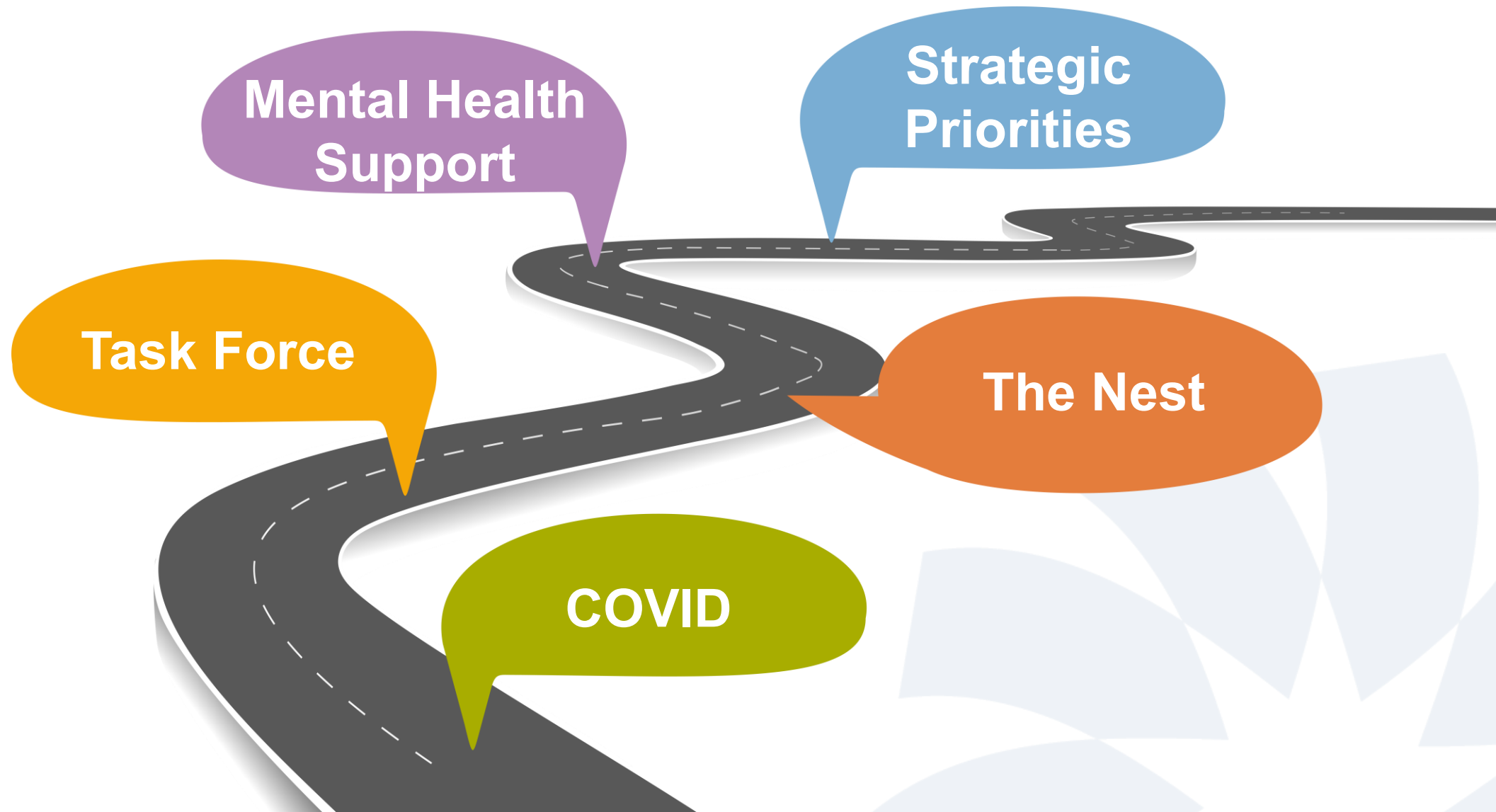
What may prevent you from seeking mental health services or support? (select all that apply)	February 2023 (N=124)	October 2024 (N=108)	Change from prior surveys (highest compared to most recent)
I am concerned about what others would think if they knew I sought help	15.3%	16.7%	↑ 1.4
I am concerned about confidentiality	29.8%	24.1%	↓ 5.7%
Such services are not accessible or convenient	22.6%	9.3%	↓ 13.3%
I am concerned this would impact on my professional licensure	17.7%	16.7%	↓ 1.0%
I am concerned this would impact my employment (e.g., loss of hospital privileges)	10.5%	11.1%	↑ 0.6%

### APPs (NP, PA, CRNA, Psychologists)

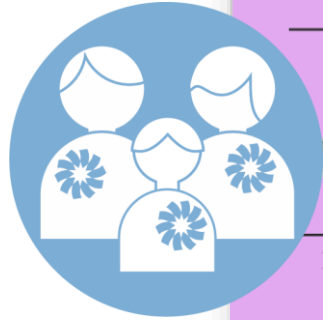
What may prevent you from seeking mental health services or support? (select all that apply)	February 2023 (N=87)	October 2024 (N=82)	Change from prior surveys (highest compared to most recent)
I am concerned about what others would think if they knew I sought help	11.5%	13.4%	↑ 1.9%
I am concerned about confidentiality	14.9%	17.1%	↑ 2.2%
Such services are not accessible or convenient	10.3%	15.9%	↑ 5.6%
I am concerned this would impact on my professional licensure	4.6%	3.7%	↓ 0.9%
I am concerned this would impact my employment (e.g., loss of hospital privileges)	4.6%	11.0%	↑ 6.4%

\*data source - AMA Organizational Biopsy Data February 2026, October 2024, February 2023

# our wellbeing journey



# ease of access/availability



CONNECT WITH  
A DCH  
STAFF SUPPORT  
CLINICIAN

SCHEDULE  
HERE



YOU MAY ALSO EMAIL US AT  
[STAFFSUPPORTCLINICIANS@CHILDRENSDAYTON.ORG](mailto:STAFFSUPPORTCLINICIANS@CHILDRENSDAYTON.ORG)

**REASONS STAFF MAY NEED SUPPORT:**

- Self-Care Support
- Difficult patient care situation
- Co-worker conflict
- Stress management
- Grief Support
- Work/Life balance
- Department Changes
- Support with personal life (outside of work)
- Group support with your whole team

# confidentiality concerns

- The ALL-IN Wellbeing First Champion Challenge
- A generic question is now asked: “are you unable to safely and competently exercise the clinical privileges requested?”



## Ohio

### Hospitals, Freestanding Emergency Departments, & Freestanding Surgery Centers


1. Akron Children's Hospital (2025)
2. Crystal Clinic Orthopaedic Hospital (2024-2025)
3. Crystal Clinic Surgery Center (2024-2025)
4. Dayton Children's Hospital (2025)
5. Fulton County Health Center (2024-2025)
6. Mount Carmel Dublin Hospital (2025)
7. Mount Carmel Health (2025)
8. Mount Carmel New Albany Surgical Hospital (2025)
9. Mount Carmel St. Ann's (2025)
10. The Christ Hospital (2024-2025)
11. Wooster Community Hospital (2024-2025)

### Urgent Care Centers and Independent Primary Care Clinics

- Central Ohio Primary Care [75 locations] (2025)

# existing provider information

- Multi-channel communication strategy
  - individually emailed
  - pinned as a important resource on intranet
  - discussed at all provider virtual meetings
- Staff Support Clinician Meet & Greet in provider lounge



dayton children's

### provider mental health resources - updated!

Sean, Dayton Children's is committed to providing a confidential, stigma-free environment that offers emotional and mental health support to providers experiencing *burnout, compassion fatigue, moral injury, cognitive dissonance, or other forms of occupational and emotional distress.*

The Nest regularly update our mental health resources—see our offerings below—and encourage you to save this email for yourself or a colleague who may benefit.


**National Suicide Lifeline**  
dial - 988  
call - 833-580-2255 or 800-273-8255  
text - 4HOPE to 74174  
988lifeline.org

**Dayton Children's Hospital Resources:**


- **Employee health and wellness**
  - Daytime hours: Call 937-641-4570 or walk-in
  - After hours: call the hospital operator and ask for employee health on call
- **Mental health support clinician:** *CONFIDENTIAL*, solution focused support to individual employees and departments for stress management, wellbeing, emotional processing, crisis intervention, debriefing, grief support and conflict resolution
  - Contact Megan Grady (days), Shannon Clarke (evenings), or Paul Hart (evenings) by emailing [staffsupportclinicians@childrensdayton.org](mailto:staffsupportclinicians@childrensdayton.org), via Vocera by calling "staff support clinician", x4570 or schedule directly:

CONNECT WITH  
A DCH  
STAFF SUPPORT  
CLINICIAN

SCHEDULE  
HERE



- **Peer support:** peers trained in workplace support - [click here](#) for a list of trained supporters
- **Surest Insurance:**
  - **Calm Health:** connect programs and tools to help support your mental health and wellbeing - at your own pace - [click here for more info](#)



Get started with Calm Health.  
Scan this QR code.

# new provider information

- Staff Support Clinician meets with every new provider during employee health visit to review services available
- Chief Medical Wellness and Engagement Officer provides information during new provider orientation



# Schwartz Center Rounds

- Evidence based, interdisciplinary program that focuses on compassionate care
- Focus on shared experiences and feelings about thought provoking topics or patient cases
- Provide an opportunity to discuss challenging social and emotional aspects of patient care in an effort to gain better perspectives of coworkers
- Facilitated by our Staff Support Clinicians and Chaplain



the schwartz center

FOR COMPASSIONATE HEALTHCARE

## Previous topics

- The patient I'll never forget
- When everything you've got is not enough
- Remembering my why
- Noticing moments of compassion
- When work hurts

# pause plus

- focuses on how staff is doing after a traumatic event
- provides an opportunity to share emotions immediately after the event
- acknowledges the human side of our work

## Pause Plus - supportive debrief

Often done by chaplain, physician, nurse, family support person, or peer supporter, but can be led by any staff member that feels comfortable.

### **criteria for supportive de-brief**

- Code
- Death
- Alpha Trauma

### **directions**

*For deaths, do Pause Plus immediately after death pronouncement. If parents at the bedside, partner with the Family Support person to make sure the parents/family know what we're doing and include them, if they wish to be included.*

*For codes that survive and alpha traumas, do Pause Plus after patient transferred to PICU or Periop by Initiating Vocera page and saying "Pause Plus Debrief to \_\_\_\_" (choose empty space)*

### **say and do**

#### **honor team**

"Let's take a pause and honor the work we did to care for \_\_\_\_" (say pt's name)

"Would anyone like to recognize our team for anything we did well?"

#### **honor patient**

"Let's take a moment to honor \_\_\_\_" (say pt's name)

"Is there anything about this patient that anyone would like to share?"

*Allow time of silence for 30-45 seconds*

#### **acknowledge emotions**

"Codes, deaths and alpha traumas are tough and there's no right way to feel."

*Offer opportunity for staff to express feelings in a word or phrase*

*Affirm that naming emotions out loud helps us better acknowledge the human side of our work*

*(continued on reverse)*



# pivot from reactive to proactive support

- Formalizes a process for referral and notification of mental health support needs
- Allows for proactive and targeted support for all providers
- Normalizes seeking support and decreases stigma and barriers for work-related and personal concerns

Guiding Principles for Provider  
Mental Health Support



# case study # 1 – group support



## case study # 2 – individual support



# metrics



**3000+ interactions**  
**1000+ individual sessions**



# metrics



## Decreasing Mental Health Stigma

### Physicians

What may prevent you from seeking mental health services or support? (select all that apply)	February 2023 (N=124)	October 2024 (N=108)	February 2026 (N=119)	Change from prior surveys (highest compared to most recent)
I am concerned about what others would think if they knew I sought help	15.3%	16.7%	8.3%	↓ 8.4%
I am concerned about confidentiality	29.8%	24.1%	16.7%	↓ 13.1%
Such services are not accessible or convenient	22.6%	9.3%	8.3%	↓ 14.3%
I am concerned this would impact on my professional licensure	17.7%	16.7%	10.0%	↓ 7.7%
I am concerned this would impact my employment (e.g., loss of hospital privileges)	10.5%	11.1%	7.5%	↓ 3.6%

### APPs (NP, PA, CRNA, Psychologists)

What may prevent you from seeking mental health services or support? (select all that apply)	February 2023 (N=87)	October 2024 (N=82)	February 2026 (N=71)	Change from prior surveys (highest compared to most recent)
I am concerned about what others would think if they knew I sought help	11.5%	13.4%	6.9%	↓ 6.5%
I am concerned about confidentiality	14.9%	17.1%	6.9%	↓ 10.2%
Such services are not accessible or convenient	10.3%	15.9%	9.7%	↓ 6.2%
I am concerned this would impact on my professional licensure	4.6%	3.7%	1.4%	↓ 3.2%
I am concerned this would impact my employment (e.g., loss of hospital privileges)	4.6%	11.0%	0%	↓ 11%

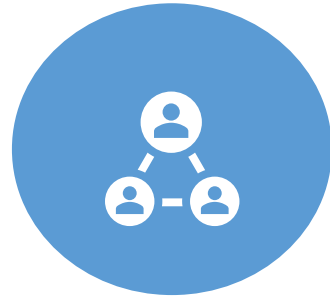


# wellness of mind (current state)



Staff Support  
Clinicians

Peer Support



Schwartz Rounds



Morale Cart  
Lavendar Cart  
Staff Respite



Mental Health  
Insurance Benefits

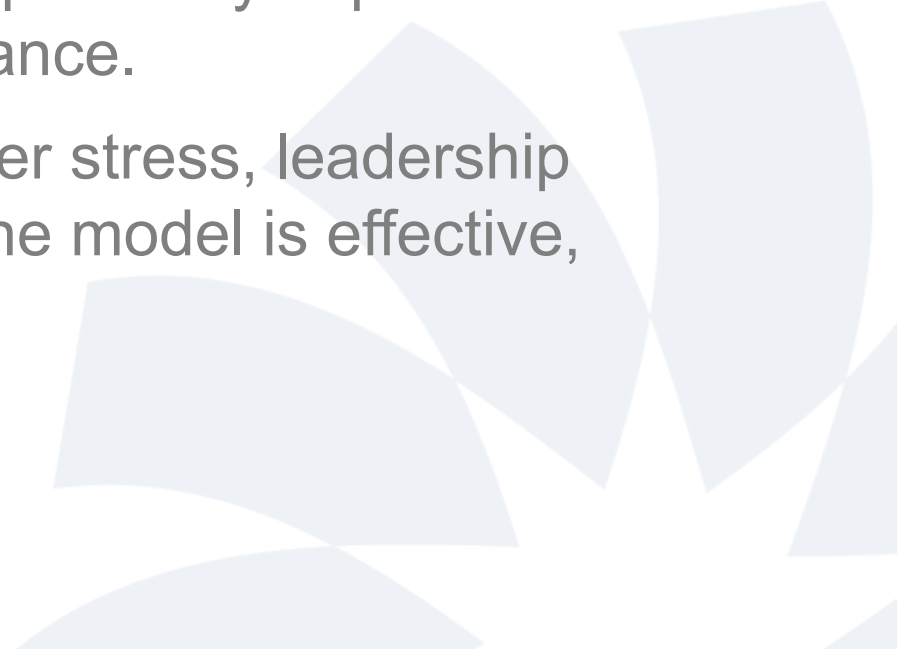
Calm App

FMLA

nationally recognized



# Conclusions

1. Embedded mental health clinicians provide timely, role-specific interventions that reduce burnout, moral distress, and secondary trauma, meeting needs that traditional programs often miss.
  2. On-site support increases mental health service utilization through accessibility, strengthens peer connections, and positively impacts team dynamics, retention, and overall clinical performance.
  3. Strategic placement, clinician expertise in provider stress, leadership endorsement, and ongoing evaluation ensures the model is effective, adaptable, and lasting.
- 



# Questions

## Contact Info:

**Megan Grady, LISW-S,** Senior Staff Support Clinician via [GradyM1@childrensdayton.org](mailto:GradyM1@childrensdayton.org)

**Tina Schmitt, MSN, RN,** Director of Employee Health and Wellness via [SchmittT@childrensdayton.org](mailto:SchmittT@childrensdayton.org)

**Sean Antosh, MD,** Chief Medical Wellness & Engagement Officer via [AntoshS@childrensdayton.org](mailto:AntoshS@childrensdayton.org)