

# Executive Director Report



WASHINGTON  
**Medical  
Commission**  
Licensing. Accountability. Leadership.

## You Spoke, We Listened.

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Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare workers faced higher rates of burnout, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and suicide. Now more than ever we need to support the well-being of our healthcare workforce. The Dr. Lorna Breen Foundation published the following data, and it is sobering:

Practitioners seeking mental health care should not fear career setbacks for getting help. The WMC has joined with 18 other medical boards to remove or change stigmatizing language around mental health in our licensure applications. We urge you to get any mental and physical health care you need without fear that it will impact your livelihood.

Licensing application questions were originally developed with the intent to protect the public, but there is no data demonstrating that these questions protect the public. On the contrary, it is well documented that these questions often lead to clinicians not seeking the care that they need, which can ultimately lead to poor patient care. Ensuring that clinicians, like yourself, can access necessary mental health, substance use and physical health care not only benefits your well-being, but it also benefits your patients and your community.

Be your own best patient and get any help you need. Healthcare practitioners have always carried an enormous burden and it has only increased since the COVID pandemic.

The WMC encourages other medical boards and credentialing committees to take a closer look at their licensing application questions and remove any questions that stigmatize mental health and substance use or abuse and that may actually violate Title II of the American with Disabilities Act.

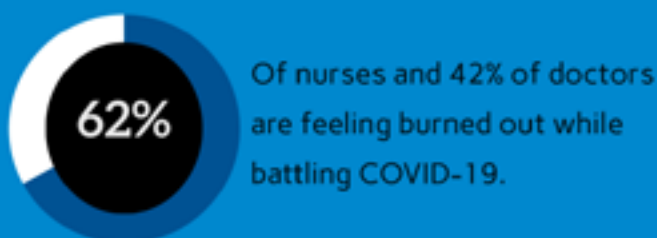
On March 21, 2023 the WMC held a Coffee with the Commission alongside WPHP to discuss These changes and answer your questions. The recording can be viewed [here](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to our [licensing unit](#) or at 360-236-2750 option #1.

**400**  
Physicians die by  
**suicide** each year.

**2X** Physicians and  
nurses die by  
suicide at 2x the  
rate of the general  
population.

**↑ 200%**

Burnout has been shown to  
cause a 200% increased risk in  
medical errors.



## Speak Up!

If you have a suggestion for  
content of this newsletter or a  
general comment, let us know!

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