



Wounded healer?

HOW IS MENTAL HEALTH CONTRIBUTING TO HEALTHCARE WORKER BURNOUT?

Many healthcare workers are experiencing depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as the COVID-19 pandemic peaks and wanes in our community. Since the beginning of pandemic, these caregivers have struggled with increased workloads, labor shortages, lack of personal protective equipment, fear of infecting family members, and the uncertainty of an unknown virus.

The CDC states: Many healthcare workers place the well-being of others before self. On the surface, this dedication to patients may seem admirable. However, it can ultimately be harmful if it delays or prevents workers from getting the help that they need for their own health and well-being. Stigma is another factor contributing to mental health concerns among healthcare workers.

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The culture in the workplace plays a key role in breaking stigma for healthcare providers.

“Anyone can experience mental health symptoms, and everyone is deserving of support. Routine protocols of debriefing traumatic events, vicarious trauma, and difficult sessions in the workplace is important,” she said. “Offering opportunities to discuss self-care, sharing support resources to address health and mental health needs, and encouraging supportive language in the workplace to eliminate labels and negativity connected with mental health are all steps that can be taken to reduce stigma and barriers to seeking services. When we work to see and support the person in the profession, and begin to incorporate trauma-informed practices in the workplace, we can work to reduce stigma for healthcare workers.”

said Alicia Wieczorek, LCSW-R, Chief Clinical Officer, New Directions Youth & Family Services.

In addition to nurses, aides, physicians and other medical staff, mental health providers have also experienced significant mental health challenges as the pandemic affected so many aspects of life.

According to Glen W. Briggs, LCSW-R, director of clinical risk management, Endeavor Health Services, mental health providers are also experiencing mental health challenges that can lead to burnout.

“Mental health providers are seeing clients with pre-existing conditions come in with exacerbated symptoms and are also trying to keep up with the need of new individuals seeking mental health support,” he said.

He notes that the entire industry was quickly revamped as services had to be delivered through telehealth.

“Normally being face-to-face with clients, you can read visual clues,” Briggs said. “Suddenly services were over the phone, and we had to use different clues. Children did not respond well nor did substance abuse sufferers and there has been an increase in overdoses.”

Briggs notes that healthcare workers keep doing their jobs and helping others while experiencing increased stress and change.

“Many healthcare workers have the stigma of being a wounded healer yet continue delivering services while experiencing depression and anxiety themselves,” he said. “It takes a toll as they deal with the reality of what’s going on in the world”

Healthcare workers are encouraged to reach out for help if they are experiencing mental health challenges. Many healthcare organizations have enhanced resources to help their employees maintain mental wellness.

The Erie County Department of Mental Health offers COVID-19 information and services visit:

www3.erie.gov/mentalhealth/covid-19-resources

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Support for
Healthcare
Workers

FACEBOOK LIVE
March 16, 2022 / 12:00 - 1:00 PM

FIND OUT MORE

The Anti-Stigma Coalition presents a Facebook Live event on Wednesday, March 16 at noon. titled State of Stigma: State of Stigma: Are Mental Health Concerns Contributing to Healthcare Worker Burnout?

Join us to hear from workers and clinicians to discuss the pandemic and what we can do to support healthcare workers. The event is free and open to the public. The panel discussion is hosted by Karl Shallowhorn, director of youth programs, Mental Health Advocates of WNY. Speakers Include: Shacarah Henry, clinical supervisor, Horizon Health Services, Elizabeth Mauro, CEO, Endeavor Health Services, and Dan Nelson, RN, New Directions Youth and Family Services. Facebook live events bring together experts from the mental health field and broader community to share information and about mental health topics and efforts to reduce stigma.

Independent Health[®]

We are committed to helping our associates, members, and employers recognize the signs, understand what people are dealing with, and respond appropriately to support their mental health. We believe there should be no shame or stigma attached to getting help and mental health should be treated just like any physical health condition.

INDEPENDENT HEALTH



Project Hope is offered through
New York State.

Visit: nyprojecthope.org/New York

Catholic Health System, Kaleida Health and ECMC have all enhanced mental health services for their employees since the start of the pandemic.

Additional resources are located at letstalkstigma.org/the-resources

A Q&A with Independent Health

Independent Health, a not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Buffalo, New York, serves nearly 330,000 members and provides innovative health care products and benefits designed to engage consumers in their health and well-being.

Why did your organization become a member of The Anti-Stigma Coalition?

Independent Health recognizes mental health just like physical health is a critical part of an individual's overall health and wellbeing. As such, we are deeply committed to treating the whole person. We are committed to helping our associates, members, and employers recognize the signs, understand what people are dealing with, and respond appropriately to support their mental health. We believe there should be no shame or stigma attached to getting help and mental health should be treated just like any physical health condition.

Does your company provide mental health support/programming for your employees?

Yes, Independent Health offers many programs and resources for our own associates, including training for our leaders. In fact, Independent Health received the Bell Seal from MHA

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



National in recognition of our workplace mental health programs and resources, including our Mental Health Toolkit, which was created in partnership with Horizon Health Services. And just this year, Independent Health launched the ICU Program, an awareness campaign designed to reduce the stigma and comes from the Center for Workplace Mental Health. We provide some of these same programs to our employer groups and members through our Mental Health toolkit. Many of the resources and educational trainings can be found at www.independenthealth.com/mentalhealth.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 16 / 12PM

Facebook Live: State of Stigma: Are Mental Health Concerns Contributing to Healthcare Worker Burnout?

MARCH 27 / 12PM LIVE & MARCH 28 / 7PM STREAMED

National Federation for Just Communities of WNY:
Community Heroes Award Ceremony

Visit letstalkstigma.org/events for more

NEWEST MEMBERS



Visit letstalkstigma.org/current-members for more information on our current members.

ERIE COUNTY
ANTI-STIGMA
COALITION

ERIE COUNTY ANTI-STIGMA COALITION FOUNDING MEMBERS

BryLin Behavioral Health System • Children's Mental Health Coalition of Western New York, Inc.
Community Partners of Western New York • Compeer • Crisis Services of Erie County
Erie County Department of Mental Health • Erie County Office for People with Disabilities
Fellows Action Network • Fuerst Consulting Corporation • Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County
The Mental Health Advocates of WNY • Millennium Collaborative Care • Patrick P. Lee Foundation
Preventionfocus, Inc. • Telesco Creative Group • The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation