

Caring for Wisconsin's Caregivers





Well-being First Champion Challenge for Credentialing Kickoff

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

12:00 pm CST



ADVANCING A HEALTHIER
WISCONSIN ENDOWMENT





Agenda

Health Workforce Well-being Landmark Initiative Sponsor and Webinar Facilitator - Nadine Allen, MBA, CPHQ, WHA Chief Quality Officer

Health Workforce Well-being Landmark Initiative (AHW) Champion - Mike Stadler, MD - Champion,

Presenters:

Philosophical Background & Grounding

- **Stefanie (Stef) Simmons, MD, FACEP, Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation**
- **Corey Feist, JD, MBA, Chief Executive Officer & Co-Founder, Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation**

Well-Being First Champion Challenge for Licensing: WI DSPS perspective

- **Jennifer Garrett, J.D., Deputy Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS)**
- **Gregory Schmeling, M.D., Professor and Vice Chairman Academic Practice, Division of Orthopaedic Trauma, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Medical College of Wisconsin, Chair, Wisconsin Medical Examining Board, Green Bay Packers Team Orthopaedic Trauma Surgeon**
- **Renee Parton, Assistant Deputy Chief Legal Counsel, Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services.**

Well-Being First Champion Challenge for Credentialing: A CWOs Perspective

- **Alicia Pilarski, DO, Professor of Emergency Medicine & Chief Well-Being Officer (Froedtert & MCW)**

Global Resource Overview & Implementation Approach

- **Dr. Stef Simmons**



Wellbeing First for Healthcare



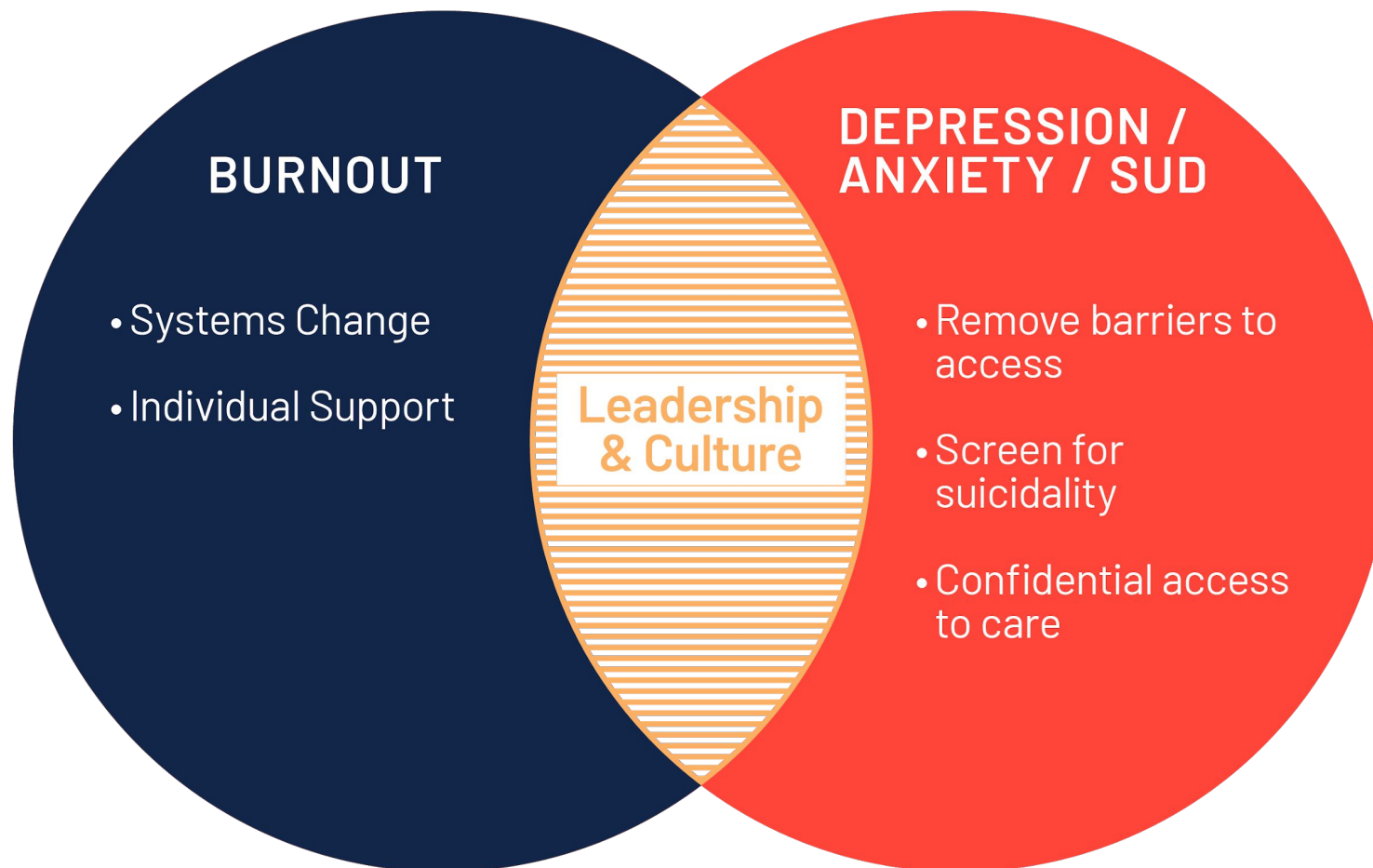
The Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation envisions a world where seeking mental health care is universally viewed as **a sign of strength** for health workers.

We believe every health worker should have **access to mental health care and professional wellbeing support** that they may need, at every moment in their career.

We are dedicated to addressing the operational practices and processes driving health worker burnout, while changing how the healthcare industry supports health workers' mental health.



Our Workforce is Asking for Comprehensive Solutions

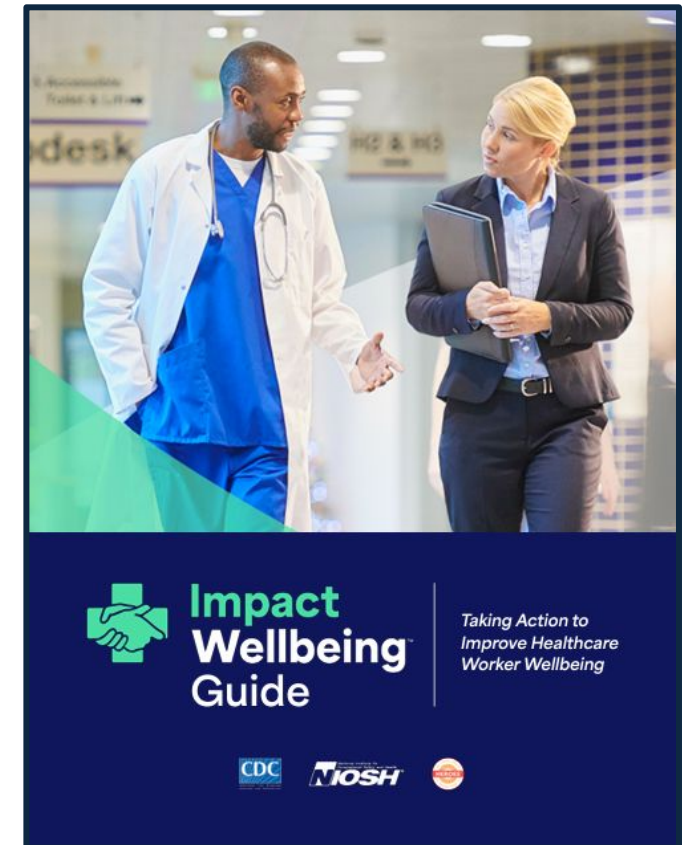




Caring for Wisconsin's Caregivers

Caring for Wisconsin's Caregivers builds a learning community to assist hospitals and medical groups in improving workplace policies and practices that reduce burnout, normalize help-seeking, and strengthen professional wellbeing—**accelerating impact to improve health workers' wellbeing and mental health.**

Guided by experts, hospitals and medical groups participate in three phases of our national technical assistance program to **implement the evidence-informed strategies in the *Impact Wellbeing™ Guide***



www.cdc.gov/niosh/healthcare/impactwellbeingguide/index.html



Caring for Caregivers

1

**Break Down Barriers
for Help-Seeking**

2

**Assess Organizational
Readiness**

3

**Integrate Wellbeing into
Operational Improvement**

**Our Three
Phase
Approach**



Break Down Barriers to Help-Seeking

1



- Intrusive, stigmatizing questions on credentialing and licensing applications **prevent many health workers from seeking mental health care** for fear of losing their jobs.
- **Auditing and updating applications removes barriers to care**, and communicating about this change sends a clear message of support for health workers' mental health and wellbeing.
- **Coordinated, state-level advocacy accelerates** change for both credentialing and licensing applications.



Champion

1

- Engage in the Wellbeing First Champion Challenge program to
 1. **Audit** all credentialing applications, addendums, and peer review forms.
 2. **Revise** any invasive or stigmatizing language around mental health.
 3. **Submit** applications to verify they are free from intrusive questions
 4. **Communicate** as a Wellbeing First Champion that it is safe to seek mental health care

Wellbeing First Champion Challenge





Program Timeline

2025-2030



Now, Let's Break Down Barriers to Help-Seeking!

Phase 1 Launch



ADVANCING A HEALTHIER
WISCONSIN ENDOWMENT





Champion Equal Privacy in Mental Health Care for Health Workers



“THE TOP BARRIER BY FAR IS EXTERNAL STIGMA IN THE FORM OF STATE LICENSURE, MALPRACTICE INSURANCE AND HOSPITAL CREDENTIALING REQUIRING ANSWERS TO INVASIVE QUESTIONS REGARDING MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS OR TREATMENT EVEN FOR USUALLY SIMPLE AND VERY PREVALENT MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS SUCH AS ANXIETY OR DEPRESSION.”

**– HOSPITAL MEDICINE
PHYSICIAN**



**Together, We Can
Change This!**

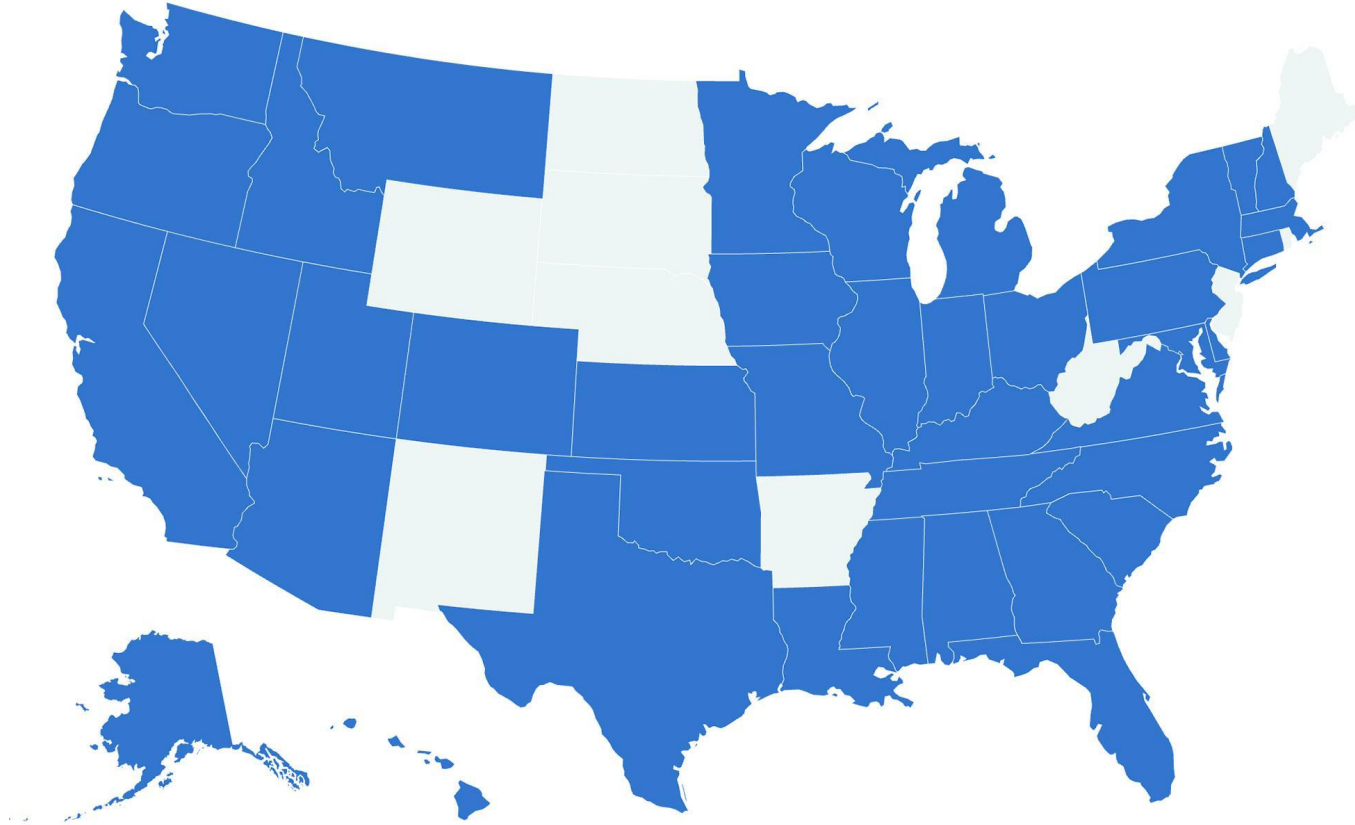


2 Million Health Workers Can Access Mental Health Support Without Fear of Professional Repercussions



Our Impact

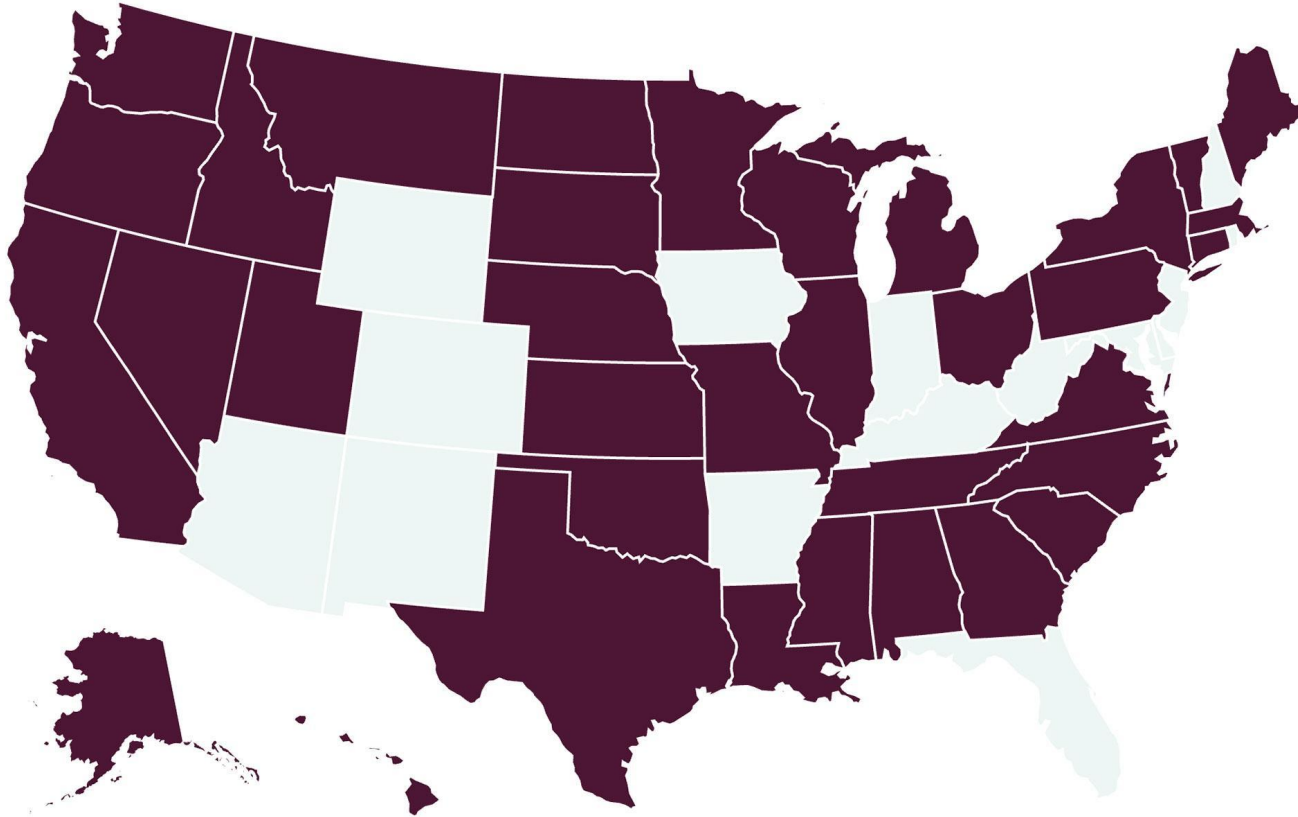
Wellbeing First Champions for Credentialing



- As of Sept. 19, 2025, **1,850 hospitals, medical centers, clinics, & other care facilities** verified their credentialing applications do not include intrusive mental health questions—benefiting nearly **357,000 credentialed health workers**.
- Also, 2 insurance companies (PacificSource Health Plans and Providence Health Plan) verified their credentialing applications—benefiting 52,000+ health workers.
- Additionally, Jackson and Coker Locum Tenens, Envision Healthcare, Vituity, and LocumTenens.com verified their internal applications and forms—benefiting 38,000 health workers.

Our Impact

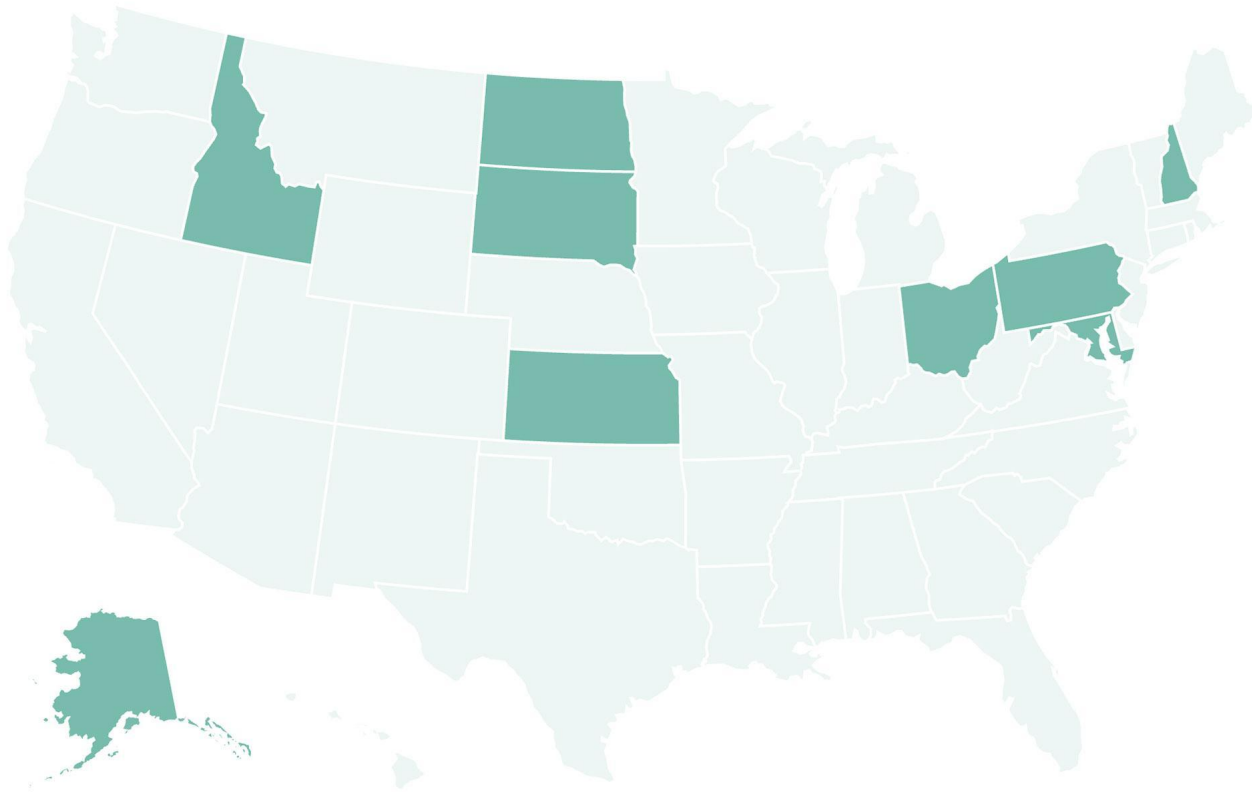
Wellbeing First Champions for Medical Licensing



As of Sept. 19, 2025,
40 medical licensure boards verified their
licensure applications do
not include intrusive mental
health
questions—**benefiting more
than 1 million physicians.**

Our Impact

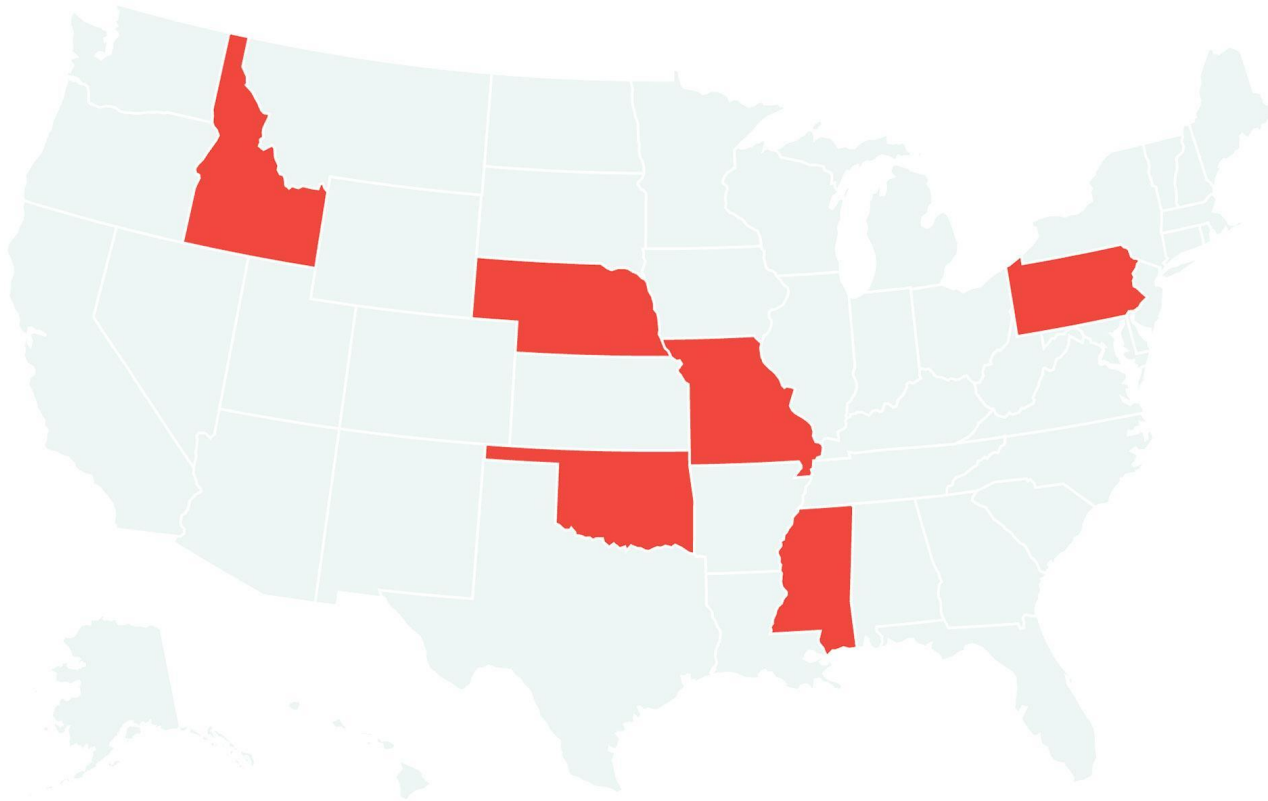
Wellbeing First Champions for Pharmacy Licensing



As of Sept. 19, 2025,
9 pharmacy licensure boards verified their
licensure applications do
not include intrusive mental
health
questions—**benefiting
155,000+ pharmacy
professionals.**

Our Impact

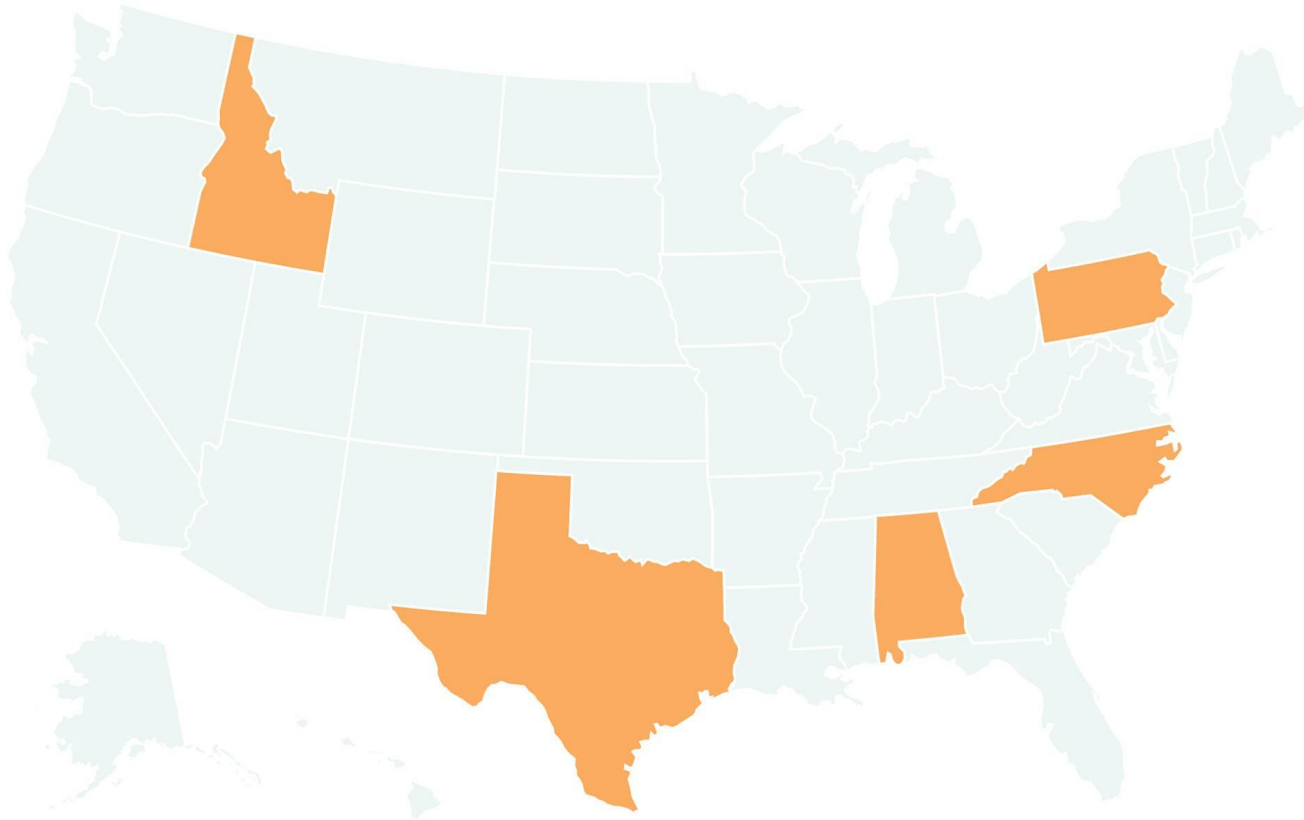
Wellbeing First Champions for Nurse Licensing



As of Sept. 19, 2025,
6 nursing licensure boards
verified their licensure
applications do not include
intrusive mental health
questions—**benefiting**
nearly 580,000 nurses.

Our Impact

Wellbeing First Champions for Dental Licensing



As of Sept. 19, 2025,
5 dental licensure boards
verified their licensure
applications do not include
intrusive mental health
questions—benefiting nearly
**65,000 dental
professionals.**

Our Impact So Far...

Wisconsin's Champions



- **47 Wisconsin hospital and care facilities** verified their credentialing applications do not include intrusive mental health questions—benefiting nearly **15,000 credentialed health workers**
 - Advocate Health/Aurora Health Care
 - Allina Health /River Falls Area Hospital
 - Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin
 - SSM Health Wisconsin
- Additionally, the **Wisconsin Medical Examining Board** verified their licensing applications—benefiting **34,000 physicians**

Our Impact So Far...

Wisconsin's Health Systems & Boards Underway



- Health Systems
 - St. Mary's Superior (Essentia Health)
 - Westfields Hospital (HealthPartners)
 - Marshfield Clinic Health System
 - University of Wisconsin Health
- Licensure Boards
 - Wisconsin Dentistry Examining Board
 - Wisconsin Pharmacy Examining Board
 - Wisconsin Board of Nursing

Well-Being First Champion Challenge for Licensing:

Wisconsin DSPS/Medical Examining Board Perspectives





Provider Wellness

- **Agency & Administration
Policy History and Work**
Up to Spring of 2025
- **Renewed Interest**
Unique framing to Board in Spring of 2025
- **September Board Meeting**
Provider well-being focus
- **Implementation of Work and
Continued Interest**



Well-Being First Champion Challenge for Credentialing: A CWOs Perspective

Alicia Pilarski, DO, Professor of Emergency Medicine & Chief Well-Being Officer (Froedtert & MCW)

- Key insights and lessons learned from implementing the Well-Being First Champion Challenge



**Let's Make an Even Bigger
Impact, Together!**



1. Audit



2. Revise



3. Verify



4. Communicate

How to Get Started

4 Step Journey

6 Key Principles



- 1 Focus on Current Impairment
- 2 Avoid Broad/Highly Subjective Language
- 3 Use Clear and Defined Terms
- 4 Combine Mental and Physical Health
- 5 Use Supportive Medical Terminology
- 6 Be Supportive and Transparent

How to Conduct Your Self-Audit

5 Areas of Focus



- 1 Fitness to Practice/Ability to Perform Essential Functions
- 2 Past Diagnosis/Treatment for Mental Health Conditions
- 3 Professional/Physician Health Program (PHP) Participation
- 4 Use of Illegal Substances
- 5 Gaps in Service

One Single Fitness to Practice Question

“Are you currently suffering from any condition that impairs your judgment or that would otherwise adversely affect your ability to practice medicine in a competent, ethical, and professional manner? (Yes/No)”

What Questions Should Look Like



Not Consistent

During the last x years, have you suffered from any physical, psychiatric, or substance use disorder that could impair your ability to practice safely?

Have you ever been informed of any physical, mental, emotional, behavioral issues, or drug and/or alcohol dependencies the applicant has or had that may/could/might affect his/her ability to practice medicine?

Consistent

Are you currently suffering from any condition that impairs your judgment or that would otherwise adversely affect your ability to practice medicine in a competent, ethical, and professional manner? (Yes/No)

To your actual knowledge, is the applicant currently suffering from or experiencing any condition or health issue that impairs the applicant's judgment or that would otherwise affect the applicant's ability to practice medicine in a competent, ethical, and professional manner? (Yes/No)

Responses to this question are confidential and used strictly for credentialing purposes. This question should not be answered if doing so would or could violate physician/patient obligations.

What Questions Should Look Like



Not Consistent

Have you ever or are you currently using illegal drugs, including non-prescribed prescription medication?

Consistent

Are you currently engaged in the illegal use of drugs?

- **“Currently” means sufficiently recent to justify a reasonable belief that the use of the drug may have an ongoing impact on one’s ability to practice medicine. It is not limited to the day of, or within a matter of days or weeks before the date of application, rather that it has occurred recently enough to indicate the individual is actively engaged in such conduct.**
- **“Illegal use of drugs” refers to drugs whose possession or distribution is unlawful under the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. § 812.22. It does not include the use of a drug taken under supervision by a licensed health care professional, or other uses authorized by the Controlled Substances Act or other provision of Federal law. The term does include, however, the unlawful use of prescription controlled substances.**

What Questions Should Look Like



Not Consistent

Have you ever been hospitalized for a mental illness or substance use disorder that resulted in the inability to practice medicine for more than 30 days?

Have you been treated for or do you have a diagnosis for any mental health condition?

Consistent

Are you currently suffering from any condition that impairs your judgment or that would otherwise adversely affect your ability to practice medicine in a competent, ethical, and professional manner?

Do you currently have a physical, mental, or emotional condition that adversely affects your practice?



1 Collaborate

2 Advocate

3 Accelerate

**Best
Practices
to Make
Change
Happen**



1. Audit



2. Revise



3. Verify



4. Communicate

**Our Verification &
Recognition
Approach**

**4 Step
Journey**

Resources Available to Help You in the Self-Audit, Revision, and Verification Process



Create a Free Account & Log In To Get Started!

Let's Get Started!

Download our toolkit, FAQs, and checklist to help guide your organization in the self-audit, revision, and verification process.



Wellbeing First Champion Challenge 2026
Audit and Revise Toolkit



Wellbeing First Champion Challenge 2026
FAQs



Wellbeing First Champion Challenge 2026
Verification Checklist

Ready for Verification and Recognition?



Complete our verification form to begin the review process and verify your applications are consistent with current national best practices.

In the form, we'll ask how many health workers (e.g., licensees or credentialed medical staff) the applications impact. Organizations must also upload the complete versions of their initial application(s), renewal application(s), and applicable addenda and peer reference/review form(s). These will be used for verification purposes only and kept confidential.

Additionally, for health systems, medical groups, etc., we will need a list of all facilities' names (by state) where the credentialing applications are utilized.

Submit for Verification

Resources to be ALL IN for Health Workers' Mental Health



- January 29, 10-11 am CT
- February 12, 12-1 pm CT
- March 12, 9 - 10 am CT
- April 9, 3-4 pm CT
- May 12, 4-5 pm CT
- June 11, 8-9 am CT
- July 15, 12-1 pm CT

STAY TUNED
Join us for
Office Hours for
Additional
Technical
Assistance!



Champion Equal Privacy in Mental Health Care for Health Workers

Melissa@drbreenheroes.org



Visit WHA's Health Workforce Well-Being webpage for resources and updates

Scan the QR code!



Thank you for participating in the Well-being First Champion Challenge for Credentialing Kickoff presented live on January 14, 2026.

Please take a few moments to complete this [webinar evaluation](#).

Your feedback helps us improve our offerings and better meet your learning needs.