

# Caring for Wisconsin's Caregivers





# Well-being First Champion Challenge for Credentialing Kickoff

Wednesday, January 14, 2026  
12:00 pm CST





# 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

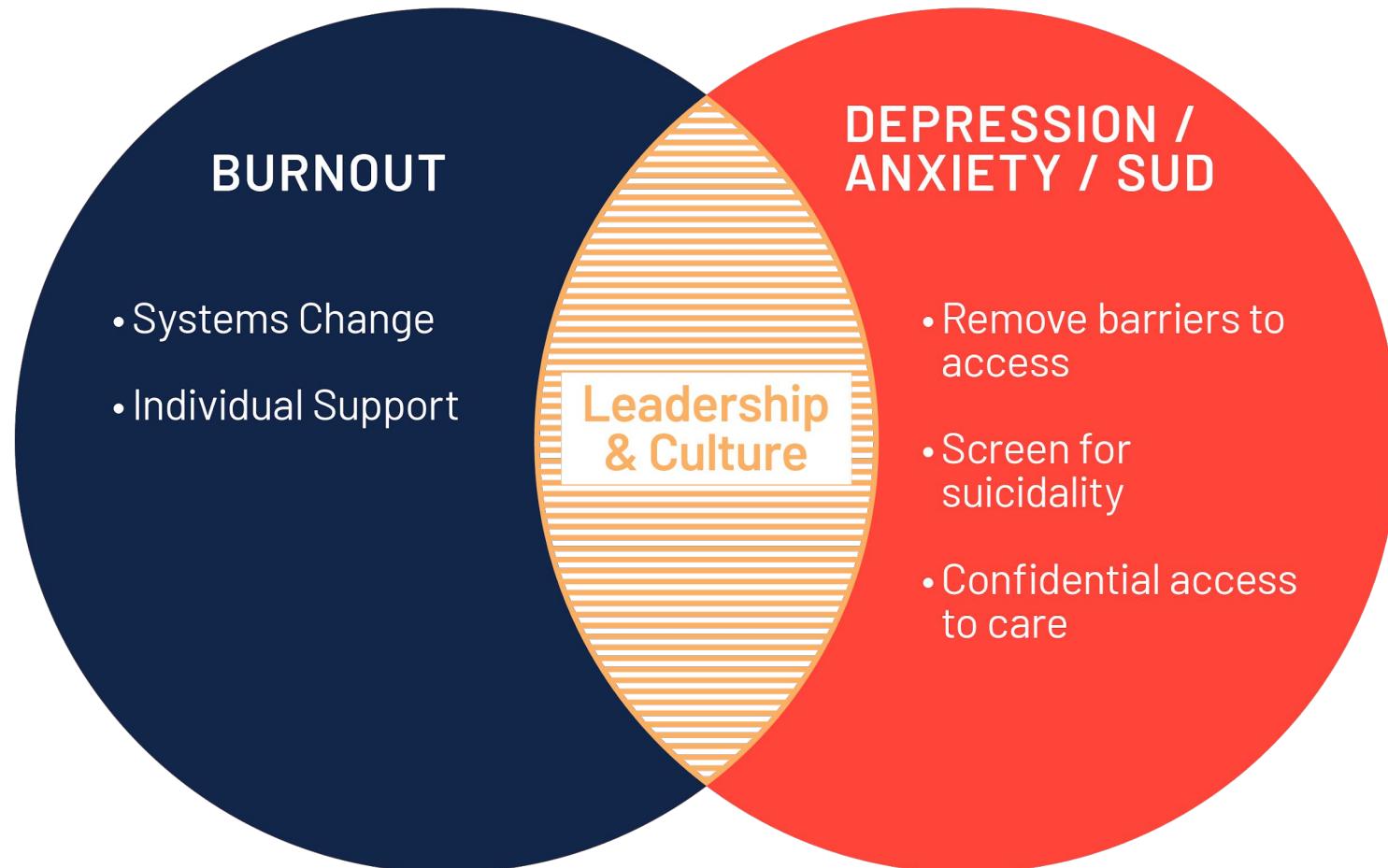
The Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation envisions a world where seeking mental health care is universally viewed as **a sign of strength** for health workers.

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

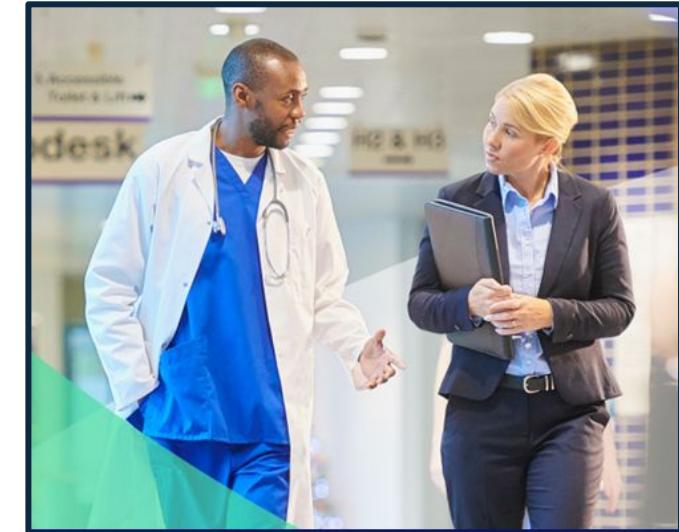




# Caring for Wisconsin's Caregivers

**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](http://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





# 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**

A photograph of three healthcare professionals in a clinical setting. In the foreground, a female nurse with dark hair tied back, wearing a white lab coat and a blue stethoscope, is smiling. Behind her, a male doctor in blue scrubs and glasses is also smiling. To the right, another healthcare professional is partially visible, also in scrubs. The background is a blurred hospital hallway.

**Together, We Can  
Change This!**

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

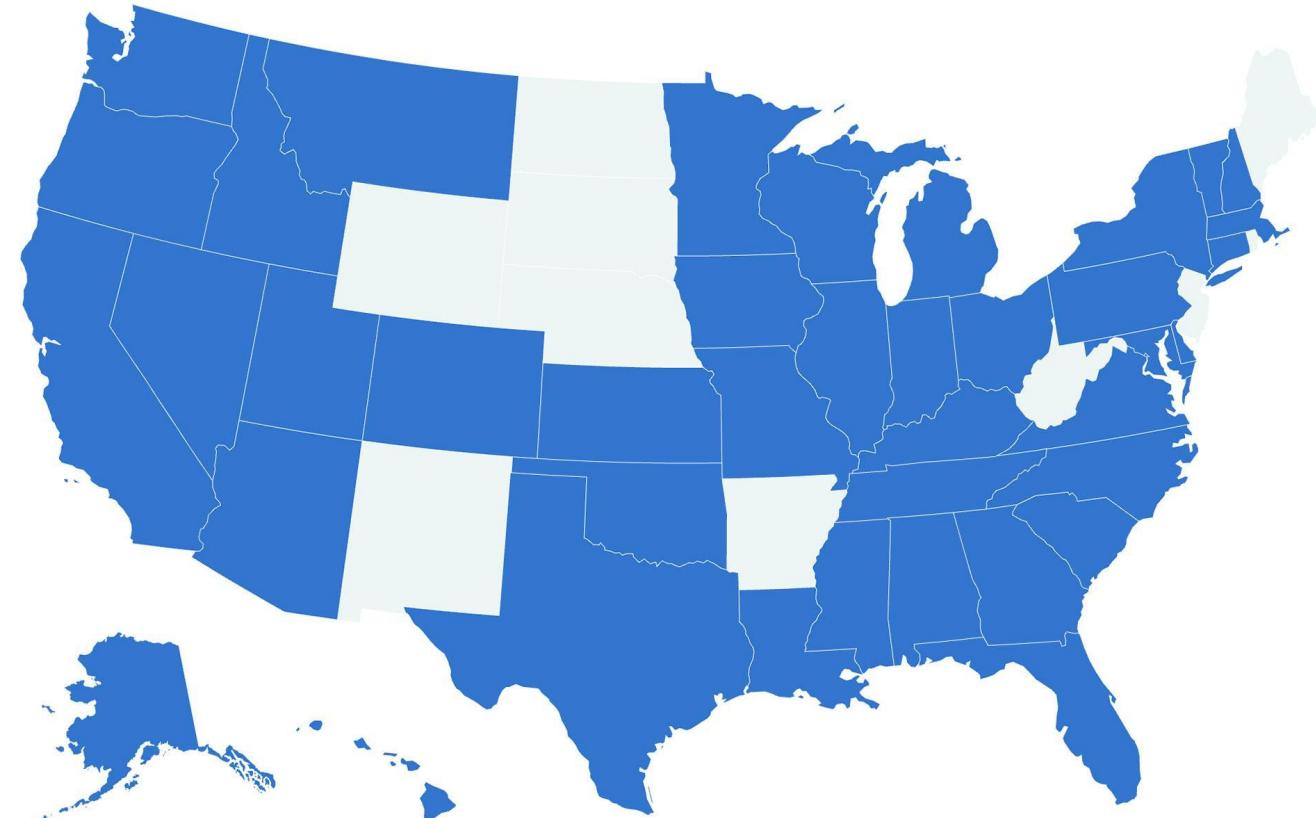


**ALL IN**  
Wellbeing First for Healthcare  
a coalition led by



# Our Impact

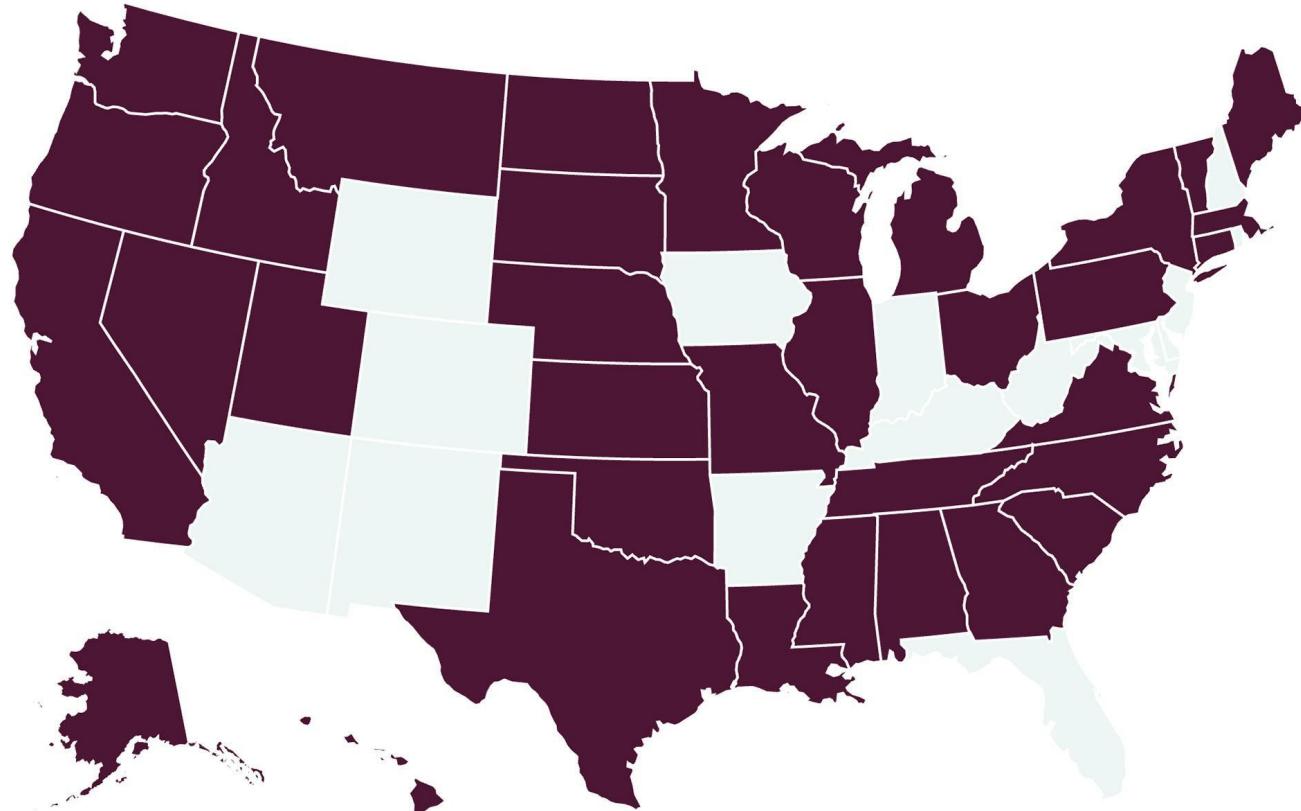
## Wellbeing First Champions for Credentialing



- 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

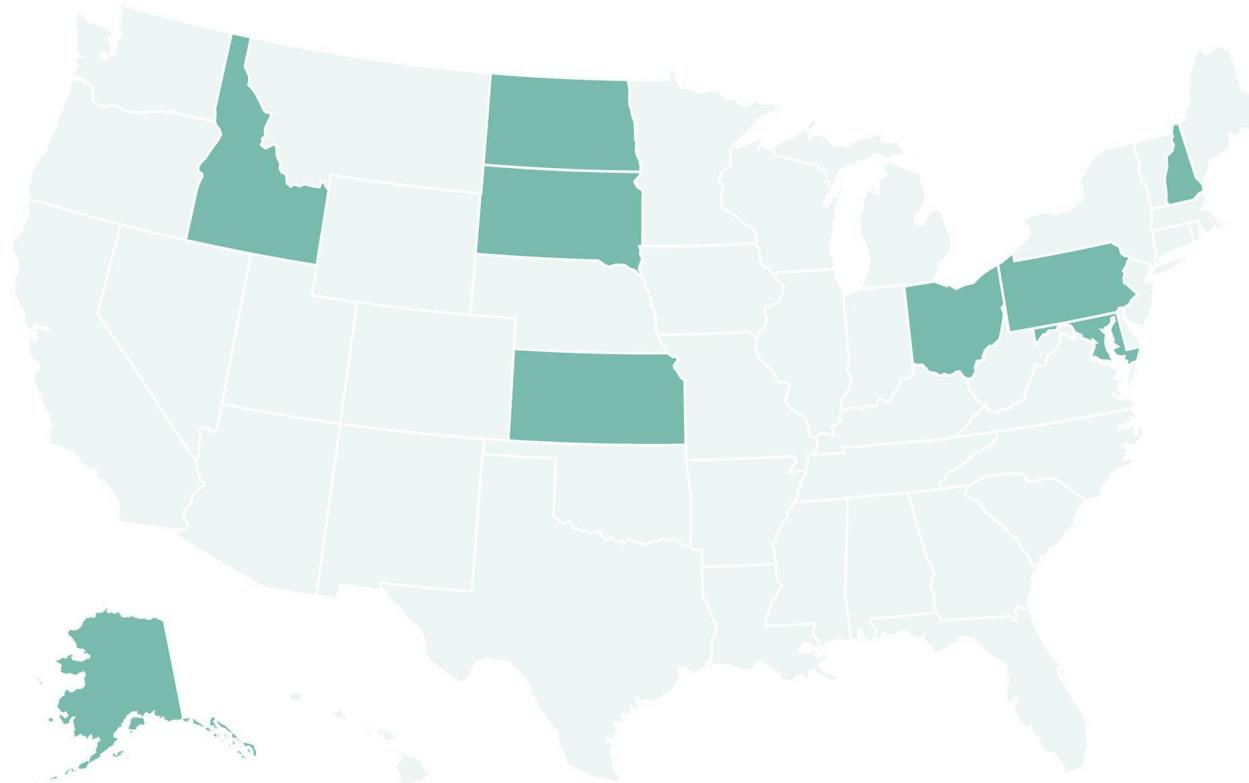
## Wellbeing First Champions for Medical Licensing



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

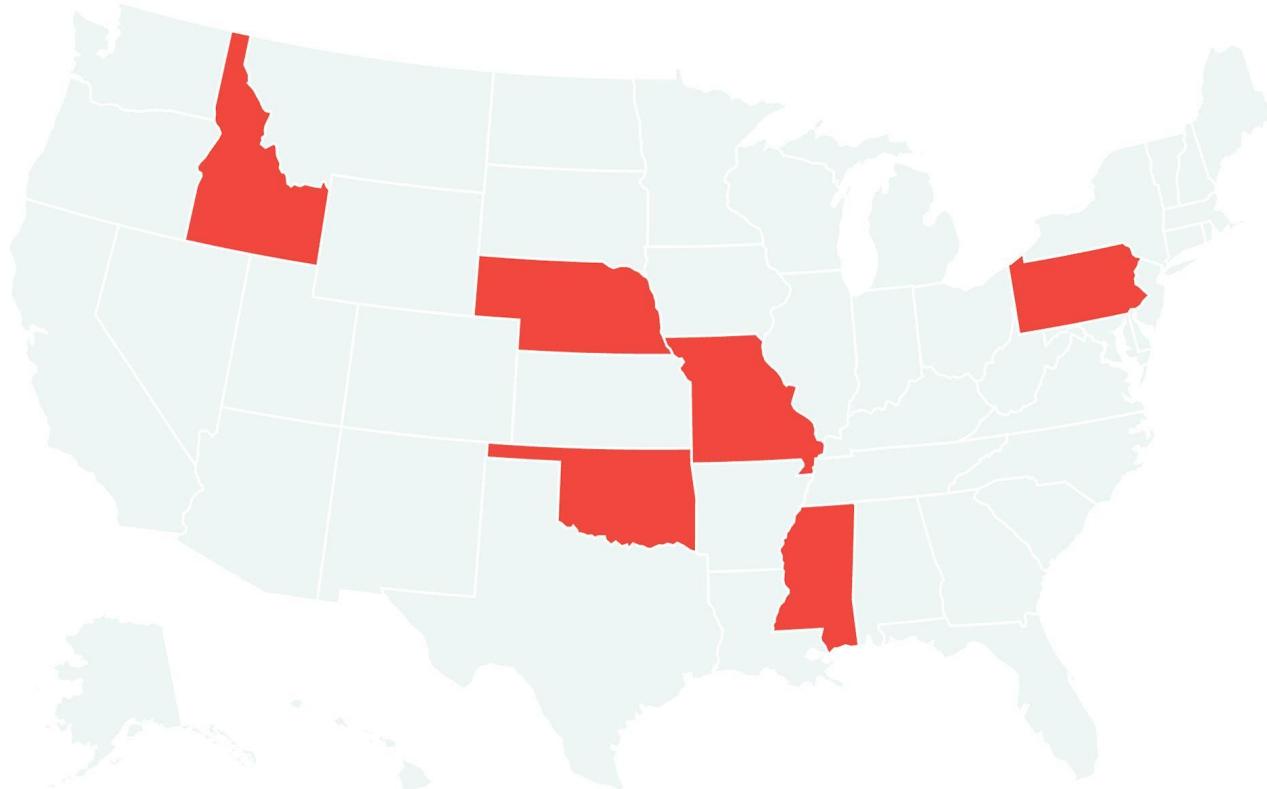
## Wellbeing First Champions for Pharmacy Licensing



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

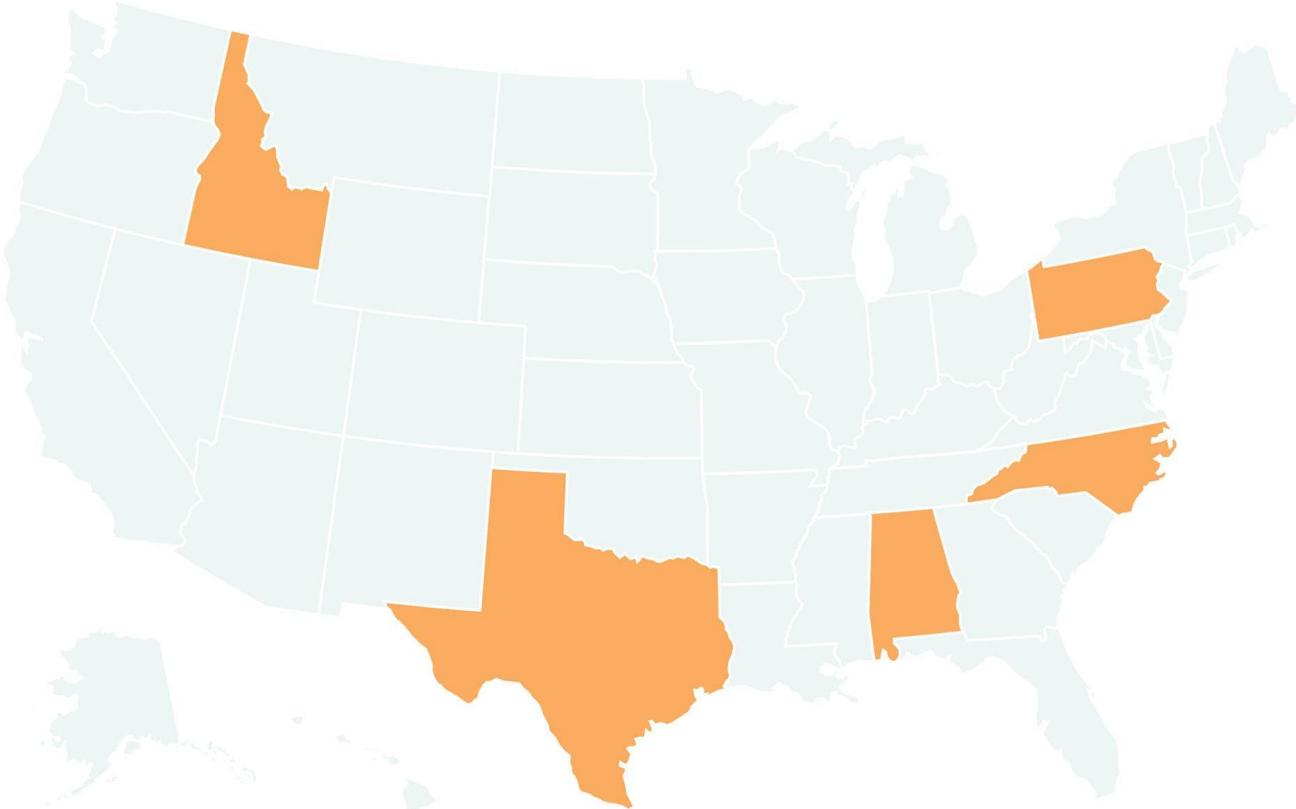
## Wellbeing First Champions for Nurse Licensing



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

A background photograph of three healthcare professionals: a woman in blue scrubs smiling, a man in a white lab coat, and the back of another person's head. The woman and man are in sharp focus, while the person in the foreground is blurred.

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



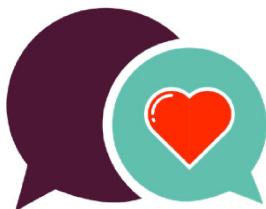
1. Audit



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	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?	<b>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)</b>
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?	<b>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)</b>  <b>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.</b>

# What Questions Should Look Like



Not Consistent	Consistent
<p>Have you ever or are you currently using illegal drugs, including non-prescribed prescription medication?</p>	<p><b>Are you currently engaged in the illegal use of drugs?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>“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.</b></li><li>• <b>“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.</b></li></ul>

# What Questions Should Look Like



Not Consistent	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?	<b>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?</b>
Have you been treated for or do you have a diagnosis for any mental health condition?	<b>Do you currently have a physical, mental, or emotional condition that adversely affects your practice?</b>



1

Collaborate

2

Advocate

3

Accelerate

Best  
Practices  
to Make  
Change  
Happen



**1. Audit**



**2. Revise**



**3. Verify**

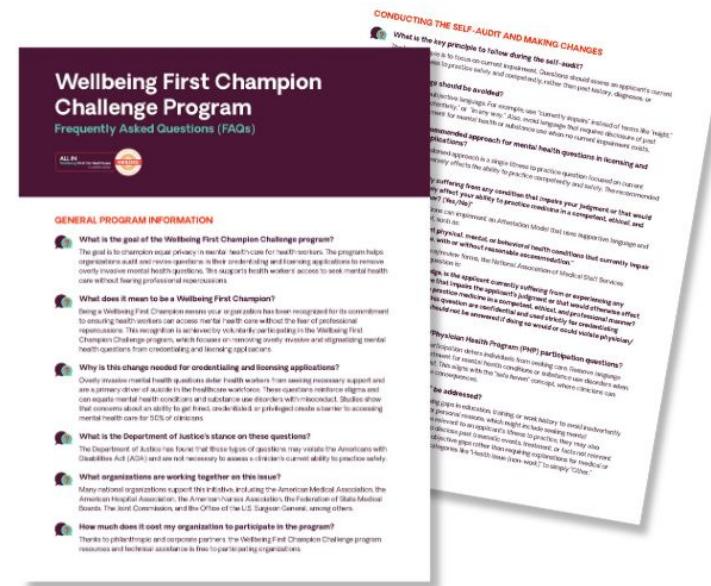
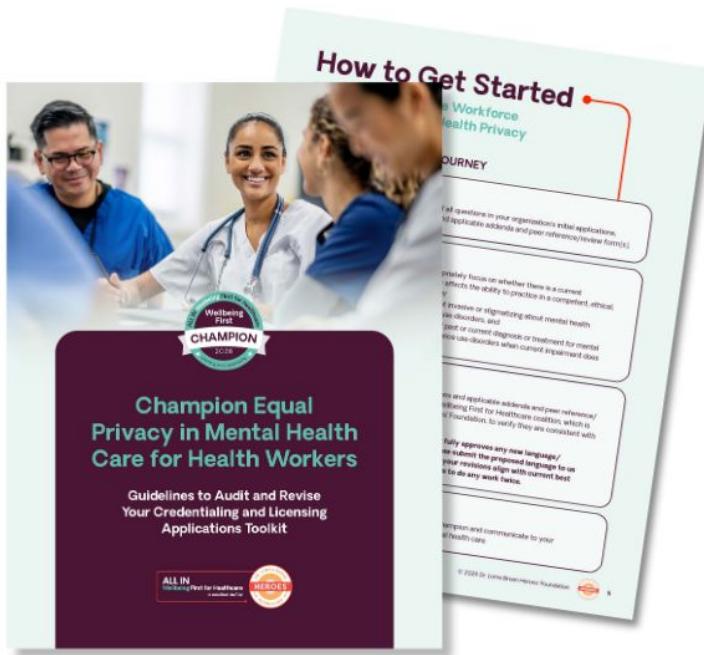


**4. Communicate**

**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?



ALL IN Wellbeing First for Healthcare  
Wellbeing First  
**CHAMPION**  
2026  
Licensing and Credentialing

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](mailto: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.