



Federation of State Physician Health Programs

FSPHP Insights

February 20, 2026



I. Michael Kaufmann, MD



John Kelly, PhD

**REGISTER BY 2/28
TO SAVE \$100!**



Spotlight On: FSPHP 2026 General Session Speakers

Don't miss these **FSPHP 2026 Education Conference and Annual Membership Meeting General Sessions** that will spark conversation and drive forward-thinking solutions across the Physician and Health Professional Program community.

I. Michael Kaufmann, MD

Ontario Medical Association

[Drugs, Lies & Docs: A Doctor's Memoir of Addiction, Recovery, along with the Risks and Safety of Storytelling in Physician Health](#)

Thursday, April 30; 9am

John Kelly, PhD

Founder and Director, MGH Recovery Research Institute;
Founder and Director, National Center on Youth Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery; President, American Board of Addiction Psychology

[Facilitating Enduring Recovery: Evidence-Based Decisions on Monitoring, Milestones, Mutual Help, and Recovery Capital](#)

Wednesday, April 29; 2:15pm

👉 [View the full lineup of sessions and speakers.](#)

👉 [Full conference details & registration](#)

Reserve Your Exhibit Space!



Maximize Exhibitor Benefits - Register Now to be an FSPHP Exhibitor!

The [FSPHP 2026 Education Conference and Annual Membership Meeting - *Navigating Change: Challenges, Solutions, and Success*](#) is your exclusive opportunity to connect with over **300 healthcare professionals**, including Physician and Professional Health Program (PHP) staff and experts dedicated to the well-being of health professionals across all specialties.

As an exhibitor, you'll gain direct access to decision-makers and leaders in physician health, elevate your brand, and showcase your solutions to a highly engaged audience.

Register now to take advantage of all exhibitor benefits.

[FSPHP 2026 Exhibitor Brochure](#)
Questions? Email jhernandez@fsphp.org.

Final Days to Contribute – Articles & Sponsorships Needed

Help Shape the Next Issue of *Physician Health News* - Be Featured in Our Spring Edition

 **Content Submission Due March 2nd.**
[Learn more and submit your article](#)

 **Sponsorships Due March 16.**
[Learn more and reserve your newsletter sponsorship](#)

The Spring 2026 issue of *Physician Health News* will be emailed to all state programs and state licensing boards, posted on the FSPHP website, and **distributed onsite at the FSPHP 2026 Education Conference in Baltimore** this April.

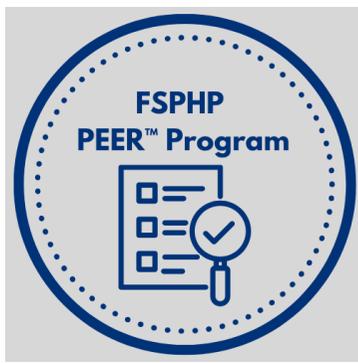
Submit your news, stories, and sponsorships today—help us highlight the great work happening across our community.

Email ssavage@fsphp.org with questions.

Success Spotlight: PEER™ Program Completions

[The Performance Enhancement and Effectiveness Review™ \(PEER™\) Program](#) is a structured review process designed to empower Physician Health Programs (PHPs) and other safety-sensitive professional health programs to use the [FSPHP PHP Guidelines](#) as a practical tool for identifying opportunities to optimize performance and effectiveness in alignment with best practices among PHPs.

 **PEER™ Program Completions** 



[Community Bridges, Inc., Professionals Medical Monitoring Program \(Arizona\)](#)
August 2 & 5, 2024

[Utah Professionals Health Program](#)
August 5, 2024

[Pennsylvania Physicians' Health Program \(PA PHP\)](#)
August 9, 2024

[Colorado Physician Health Program](#)
December 9, 2025

[Hawaii Program for Healthcare Professionals: Pu'ulu Lapa'au](#)
February 3, 2026

Discounts Available!

Thanks to a generous grant from [The Physicians Foundation](#), 15 PHPs can now join the FSPHP Performance Enhancement and Effectiveness Review™ (PEER™) Program at a discounted rate:

- \$2,500 off – First 5 applicants
- \$1,500 off – Next 5 applicants
- \$1,000 off – Final 5 applicants

[Discounts awarded](#) on a first-come, first-served basis upon submission of the PEER™ application.

 [Learn more and apply now!](#)



Championing Physician Health: Robin McCown Thanks Georgia Lawmakers for Physician Health Program Funding to Save Doctors' Lives



Robin F. McCown, Executive Director of the [Georgia Professional Health Program](#) (Georgia PHP), recently addressed the Georgia General Assembly's House Appropriations Subcommittee for Health with a powerful message of gratitude and advocacy.

In her remarks, Robin expressed deep appreciation to lawmakers for their continued commitment to funding the Georgia PHP—funding that directly supports confidential, life-saving services for physicians and other healthcare

professionals facing mental health challenges or substance use disorders. The funding prompted a 40% increase in individuals seeking support.

Her testimony underscored the critical value these programs bring to the state: saving lives, preserving medical careers, strengthening the healthcare workforce, and protecting patients.

The Georgia General Assembly appropriated \$500,000 to support the Georgia PHP beginning in July 2025—an ongoing annual investment that Robin emphasized is making a meaningful difference.

 [Watch video!](#)



Member Info Session Slides Available

Slides from the February 18th **FSPHP Member Information Session** are now available and packed with valuable FSPHP resources, helpful links, and important organizational updates.

This reference provides easy access to information and links designed to support members and the FSPHP community in staying connected and informed.

 [Download the slides.](#)



A Must-Read: WMA Statement Underscores the Role of PHPs

The **World Medical Association's (WMA) *Statement on Physicians' Well-Being*** is a valuable resource that underscores the global importance of supporting physician health. Notably, the statement highlights key challenges that often keep physicians from seeking help—such as concerns about **confidentiality** and **professional repercussions**—issues directly addressed by **Physician Health Programs (PHPs)**. By recognizing these barriers, the policy reinforces **the essential role PHPs play** in ensuring physicians can safely access care without stigma or fear of punitive consequences. This makes the document an important reference point for understanding the broader policy landscape surrounding physician well-being and the critical function of PHPs within it.

 [Read the policy statement.](#)

ARC Issue Brief: Campaign to support medical student, resident and physician health and wellbeing
(January 2022 update)

Removing stigmatizing language about treatment for mental illness and substance use from licensing and credentialing applications directly supports medical students, residents and practicing physicians. Removing such language encourages treatment, reduces stigma and supports patient safety. The AMA strongly urges all licensing boards, hospitals, health systems, medical schools and training programs, credentialing bodies, and professional liability insurance carriers to follow the recommendations in this issue brief to support medical students, residents and practicing physicians.

Identifying whether an applicant has a current impairment—whether physical, psychological or behavioral—is of paramount importance to ensure patient safety. Inquiries about past diagnosis or treatment, however, have little or no bearing on current fitness to practice medicine. The key inquiry on all credentialing, licensing, peer reference forms and other applications should be whether the impairment represents a current concern for patient safety and the physician's ability to provide safe, competent, professional care. The AMA supports the following language:

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)

This question was first recommended by the [Federation of State Medical Boards \(FSMB\)](#) and subsequently adopted as policy by the AMA. It also is supported by the [Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes Foundation \(LBHF\)](#), the [Anti-Corruption Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#), nearly all hospitals in the [Commitment of Massachusetts](#), and the [National Physician Health Programs](#). (See detailed descriptions below.)

Working closely with the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes Foundation, there now are 43 medical boards and more than 2,500 hospitals, health systems and other health care facilities that have updated their licensing, credentialing and peer reference forms to be [fair, non-punitive, and non-stigmatizing](#) about mental illness and substance use disorders. There are an additional 21 state, pharmacy and nursing boards that have made these important updates. The process of removing stigmatizing language from credentialing applications is also a criterion in [AMA's Top 10 Medicine™ Health System Accreditation Criteria](#). There are many reasons to act, including:

- Inquiries about past treatment and diagnosis of mental health care and substance use disorder treatment jeopardize rights and are among the [top reasons](#) why medical doctors and physicians do not work care.
- Inquiries about past diagnosis of mental health care and substance use disorder treatment are not a reliable indicator of current fitness to practice medicine.
- [Bias in care, stigma, and medical errors](#) are needed to help support physicians and trainees.
- More than 40 percent of medical students, residents and practicing physicians say that [lack of disclosure](#) of past mental health care or SUD treatment is a key reason [why they do not seek treatment](#).
- [Discrimination and legal consequences](#) deter or strongly deter health care workers experience barriers that prevent them from discussing mental health care.
- Treating mental health or substance use conditions early [helps prevent](#) more acute and chronic diseases.
- Inquiries about past diagnosis or treatment [discourage](#) the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The information and policies provided in this document is believed to be correct and accurate to the best of our knowledge, but it is intended to be used as a guide and not a substitute for legal advice. Physicians and other health care professionals should consult their professional liability and legal advisors regarding any legal questions, including implementation of state law and regulatory. Assistance and legal counsel are not provided as endorsement or warranty by the AMA, and AMA disclaims any express and implied warranties of any kind.

FSPHP and PHPs: Partnering in the AMA Campaign to Support Medical Student, Resident, and Physician Health and Wellbeing

Physician Health Programs are highlighted in this American Medical Association (AMA) Advocacy Resource Center issue brief as confidential, evidence-based partners that enable physicians to seek help early, protect patient safety, and support regulatory efforts to remove stigmatizing barriers to care.

“Physician Health Programs are a critical, trusted resource in this national movement to remove stigmatizing licensing and credentialing barriers so that physicians can seek confidential care, recover, and safely return to practice in service to their patients.”

— Michael Baron, MD, MPH, DFASAM, FAPA, FSPHP President

In this brief, Physician Health Programs are featured as key partners in removing stigmatizing questions from licensing and credentialing, advancing safe-haven protections in state laws, and delivering confidential, evidence-based care that safely returns physicians to practice (pp. 4, 6, 8–9).

- State medical boards’ attestation language (e.g., Mississippi, North Carolina, Washington) directly encourages use of state Physician Health Programs as confidential, advocacy-focused resources for potentially impairing conditions (p. 6).
- The brief describes safe-haven laws and wellness programs that operate alongside or in coordination with PHPs to protect confidentiality while maintaining public safety (p. 8).
- A dedicated section, “Physician Health Programs can provide evidence-based, confidential care,” details PHPs’ scope, their confidential, therapeutically oriented model, successful return-to-practice outcomes, and the recommendation that PHP participants not be subject to punitive sanctions when in compliance (pp. 8–9).
- Legislative and regulatory examples (e.g., Indiana, Massachusetts, Washington, Tennessee, Georgia, New York, Maine) illustrate how states define, fund, and protect PHPs to ensure sustainable, confidential services that support both physician wellbeing and patient safety (pp. 9–10).

These sections underscore why PHPs are central to the brief’s recommendations: they operationalize the shift from punitive, diagnosis-based questions to a current-impairment, treatment-supportive model that benefits physicians, patients, and regulators alike.

“Our Physician Health Programs, through long-standing, collaborative relationships with medical boards and healthcare organizations, have helped reshape health questions and policies so they focus on current impairment and safe practice—not past treatment. As we modernize applications and expand safe, confidential pathways to care, more physicians, residents,

and medical students can seek help without putting their careers at risk. This collective work is transforming systems so that doing the right thing for one's own health is finally aligned with doing the right thing for patients.”

– Chris Bundy, MD, MPH, FAPA, FASAM, FSPHP Chief Medical Officer

Issue brief: <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/issue-brief-physician-health-wellness.pdf>



Get Your Tickets by March 20th! FSPHP 2026 Social Event at Camden Yards Orioles Game & All-Inclusive Picnic Perch

Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2026

Time: 6:35 PM

Baltimore Orioles vs. Houston Astros

Enjoy **all-inclusive ballpark favorites**—hot dogs, nachos, ice cream, and Pepsi beverages—along with **Club Level seating** that offers fantastic views and access to exclusive bistro tables.

Tickets: \$65

Purchase by: March 20, 2026

[Learn more and buy your tickets!](#)

COMING UP!

Public Policy Committee Toxicology Group

Tuesday, February 24 at 11am Eastern

Open Forum Leadership Series

Tuesday, February 24 at 1pm Eastern

[Register](#)

Funding Development Committee

Wednesday, February 25 at 1pm Eastern

Task Force to Support Safe Haven

Friday, February 27 at 12:30pm Eastern

FSPHP New Member Meeting

Tuesday, March 31 at 12:00pm Eastern

[Register](#)

February 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 ● Membership Committee	3	4 ● Program Planning Committee	5 ● Finance Committee Meeting	6	7
8	9 ● FSPHP-ETAC Subcommittee (ETAC)	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 ● Membership Information Session...	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 ● Funding Development Committee...	26 ● FSPHP-ETAC Subcommittee (ETAC)	27 ● Task Force to Support Safe Haven...	28

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