

# **PHYSICIAN HEALTH PROGRAM Medical Society Of The District Of Columbia**



## **A Caring Approach Based on the Medical Profession's Tradition of Healing**

The mission of the Physicians' Health Program is to promote quality medical care by providing confidential assistance to physicians, resident physicians and medical students suffering from substance use disorders, psychiatric disorders, and other behavioral problems. The Program refers for evaluation, monitors the treatment and clinical practice of its participants and provides advocacy and support as well as outreach activities, including prevention and education.

### **Have you ever:**

Noticed while at work that a physician colleague smelled of alcohol?

Been concerned by a physician who was so upset and angry with colleagues, nurses or staff that it interfered with patient care?

Been plagued with worry or concern because a colleague just doesn't seem right?

### **Do you know where to turn if:**

You thought a physician friend might have a drinking problem?

A colleague was self-prescribing pain-killers or other controlled medications?

A colleague seemed depressed, was experiencing mood instability, or was overly anxious to the point that their performance was being affected?

These are some examples of the types of problems that may interfere with the safe practice of medicine or the effective operation of your practice or institution, and have the potential to result in legal and disciplinary actions, which may even affect licensure status. Most importantly these types of conditions can be addressed through proper assessment and treatment.

During these increasing difficult times for physicians, it is even more essential to have a place to turn to for professional assistance with potentially career-ending problems. The MSDC PHP is a private, confidential, non-disciplinary program that works to advocate for the health and well-being of all physicians in the metropolitan Washington, DC, and to safeguard the public. The Program is HIPAA compliant and protects the confidentiality of participant records as set forth under DC and Federal law. The program is administered by the Medical Society of DC and is separate from the DC Board of Medicine.

Utilization of the Program can be used to satisfy the Joint Commission requirements to be able to identify and assist physicians with health and behavior problems and to have a process to identify and manage matters of individual physician health that is separate from the medical staff disciplinary function.

- **Private**
- **Confidential**
- **Non-disciplinary**
- **Help**

**The Medical Society of  
the District of Columbia  
Physician Health  
Program helps with:**

**Alcohol/Chemical  
dependency  
Mental or emotional health  
Stress  
Physical or cognitive  
impairment  
Disruptive behavior  
Boundary violations**

**You can call anonymously  
and ask for advice.**

**This is not an emergency  
service. For emergencies  
please call 911.**

**Services**

- Interventions
- Initial consultation, assessment and referral
- Monitoring
- Support and Advocacy

**Treatment works.**

**Presentations**

The PHP can help hospitals meet Joint Commission requirements by providing information on physician impairment at medical staff meetings or grand rounds. An overview of the services or a CME lecture on physician impairment may be scheduled by contacting Steve Carreras at [medicalsocietyphp@msdc.org](mailto:medicalsocietyphp@msdc.org)

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**For a confidential  
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We need your support. Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to the Medical Society & Alliance Foundation for the Physician Health Program. For more information about the Physician Health Program, call **202-466-1800 x102** or email [medicalsocietyphp@msdc.org](mailto:medicalsocietyphp@msdc.org)

If you are not a member of MSDC, please join us today; call 202-466-1800 x103. The PHP is just one of many services of the Medical Society for the physicians and the community.