

RESOLUTION

Subject: Advancing Physician Wellness Through Credentialing Reform

Submitted by: Greater Louisville Medical Society

Referred to: Reference Committee

WHEREAS, physicians' mental health and well-being are critical to providing safe, high-quality patient care, and physician burnout and mental health challenges remain at high levels nationally and in Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, stigma and fear of professional repercussions, including intrusive mental health questions on credentialing, licensure, and peer review forms, are major barriers preventing physicians and other health professionals from seeking timely mental health care; and

WHEREAS, residents and early-career physicians face unique stressors and may be disproportionately affected by stigmatizing credentialing practices, thereby undermining their well-being and the future strength of Kentucky's medical workforce; and

WHEREAS, the Lorna Breen Foundation¹, American Medical Association², and Federation of State Medical Boards³ recommend removing or revising intrusive mental health questions from credentialing and licensure applications to reduce stigma and promote physician well-being, and states of Virginia⁴, Minnesota⁵, Illinois⁶, and others have enacted such reforms; and

WHEREAS, the World Federation for Medical Education's 2025 Declaration on Institutions' Responsibility to Support Medical Students, Physicians in Postgraduate Education and Physicians in Practice⁷ calls on academic and health institutions worldwide to prioritize medical student and physician wellbeing in regulation, licensing, policymaking and accreditation as a shared institutional responsibility; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky has an opportunity to be a leader in supporting physician mental health by adopting the best practices in credentialing and institutional wellness, thereby improving recruitment, retention, and the overall health of the medical workforce; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that KMA support the removal of intrusive or stigmatizing mental health questions from all physician credentialing, re-credentialing, and peer review forms in Kentucky, and advocate for the adoption of model language that only inquiries about current conditions that are not being appropriately treated and that are likely to impair the ability to practice medicine safely and competently; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA encourage all Kentucky health systems and credentialing bodies to audit and revise their applications and forms using available toolkits (such as those from the Lorna Breen

Foundation) to ensure compliance with best practices for mental health privacy and stigma reduction; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA encourages all Kentucky health systems to provide confidential mental health resources and support for physicians, in addition to revising credentialing forms; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA request health systems to report annually to the KMA on their progress in auditing and revising credentialing forms and in providing confidential mental health support.

References:

1. Improving Licensure & Credentialing Applications. Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes Foundation. Accessed June 19, 2025. <https://drlornabreen.org/removebarriers/>
2. AMA Physician Well-Being Program. American Medical Association. April 7, 2025. Accessed June 22, 2025. <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/physician-health/ama-physician-well-being-program>
3. FSMB - Policy on Physician Illness and Impairment: Towards a Model that Optimizes Patient Safety and Physician Health. <https://www.fsmb.org/siteassets/advocacy/policies/policy-on-physician-impairment.pdf>
4. Simmons S, Feist JC, Segres A. Changing Licensing and Credentialing Applications to Promote Health Workers' Mental Health, Virginia, December 2022–September 2023. *Am J Public Health*. 2024;114(Suppl 2):152-155. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2023.307506
5. When Hospital Medical Staff Applications Seek Mental Health History of Practitioners. Procopio. Accessed June 22, 2025. <https://www.procopio.com/resource/hospital-staff-query-practitioner-mental-health/>
6. Lehmann C. Mental health questions cut from MD licensing applications in 21 states | MDedge. Accessed June 22, 2025. <https://mdedge.com/internalmedicine/article/264043/business-medicine/mental-health-questions-cut-md-licensing>
7. WFME Declaration on institutions' responsibility to support medical students, physicians in postgraduate education and physicians in practice - The World Federation for Medical Education. <https://wfme.org/download/wfme-declaration-on-institutions-responsibility-to-support-medical-students-physicians-in-postgraduate-education-and-physicians-in-practice/>