



Federation of State Physician
Health Programs

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Wisconsin Medical Society

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Applauding WisMed's Leadership Toward the Development of a Wisconsin Healthcare Professional Services Program (WIHPSP)

The Federation of State Physician Health Programs (FSPHP) proudly applauds the dedicated and visionary leadership of the Wisconsin Medical Society (WisMed) for its unwavering commitment to establish a Physician Health Program (PHP) that is intended to include all health care professionals in Wisconsin that meets national standards.

A properly structured and funded PHP is essential to protect the healthcare workforce from the growing toll of burnout, mental health challenges, and substance use disorders—issues that, when left unaddressed, threaten not only the lives of licensed healthcare professionals but also patient safety across the state. These programs provide a trusted, confidential pathway for healthcare professionals to seek before they reach a crisis point—preventing impairment, avoiding medical errors, and preserving careers. In short, PHPs protect those who care for all of us.

Under the guidance of Jim Lorence, Chief Value and Engagement Officer, who became a member of FSPHP to initiate this important work, WisMed has led a thoughtful and determined effort grounded in research, stakeholder collaboration, and best practices. Their goal: to bring Wisconsin in line with the [FSPHP PHP Model Guidelines](#), including an [FSPHP Performance Enhancement and Effectiveness \(PEER™\) Review](#)—a model successfully implemented in 48 states.

WisMed is proud to announce that they are in receipt of a planning grant from the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment (AHW) to design this program. This \$2.4M grant will span 2.5 years. WisMed will have collaborating partners including the Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Dental Association, Wisconsin Nurses Association, the Wisconsin Academy of Physician Assistants, and other professional organizations across the state. In addition, WisMed is honored to have the FSPHP and its members as collaborating partners in the planning and design. Implementation of the WIHPSP will commence as sustainable funding is secured.

"We could not have accomplished what we have thus far, nor what we will accomplish without the incredible guidance, partnership, and collaboration of the FSPHP," Lorence stated.

Through FSPHP membership, WisMed has drawn on a national network of experts who continue to mentor, guide, and support the development of this vital program. The value of FSPHP membership lies in exactly this kind of collaboration—helping states build programs that protect both public safety and healthcare professional well-being through early intervention, confidentiality protections, and alternatives to punitive disciplinary action.

Wisconsin is currently one of only three states—alongside California and Nebraska—without a PHP that is authorized to receive referrals independently of the medical board and offer full confidentiality protections. WisMed’s work represents a significant and commendable effort to change that.

This initiative is transformational. It reflects the core principles embraced by national leaders such as the American Medical Association, Federation of State Medical Boards, and FSPHP: physician health policies that are rooted in quality, accountability, confidentiality, and compassion.

As the challenges of burnout and mental health needs grow, Wisconsin’s development of an FSPHP-aligned PHP stands as a beacon of progress. We celebrate WisMed’s leadership and look forward, with optimism and enthusiasm, to the day when Wisconsin launches a strong, sustainable Health Professional Program that serves physicians and protects the public.

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About the Wisconsin Medical Society

With more than 10,000 members dedicated to the best interests of their patients, the [Wisconsin Medical Society](#) is the largest association of medical doctors in the state and a trusted source for health policy leadership since 1841.

About the Federation of State Physician Health Programs (FSPHP)

FSPHP, a non-profit 501(c)(3) membership association, now has its largest membership to date—305 members, including Physician Health Programs (PHPs) in 50 states. In addition to physicians, most PHPs are available to healthcare professionals and were established over 50 years ago through efforts by the American Medical Association, the Federation of State Medical Boards, and state medical societies.

PHPs are confidential resources dedicated to education, outreach, and health monitoring for at-risk health professionals. Operating under protective legislation in nearly every state, PHPs offer an alternative to medical board referral, specializing in supporting safety-sensitive professionals, including those facing mental health conditions, such as depression or anxiety, and substance use disorders. Research shows PHP participants have higher recovery rates and lower malpractice risk than the general population.

Learn more at www.fsphp.org.