

PHYSICIAN SUPPORT LINE:

Confidential Peer-to-Peer Physician Self Care and Prevention of
Burnout: One Grassroots Solution for Stressors of COVID and Beyond

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Disclosures:

- ▶ No institutional or financial disclosures



Infographic

Physician Support Line

Free Confidential Peer Support Line by
Volunteer Psychiatrists Helping our US Physician Colleagues
Navigate the Many Intersections of Our Personal and
Professional Lives

1-888-409-0141

**7 days a week
8am - 1am ET**

www.physiciansupportline.com

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Who we are:

- ▶ A support line for physicians run by a community of volunteer psychiatrists
- ▶ Provide peer to peer emotional support to physician colleagues and med students
- ▶ National grass-roots movement started on social media
- ▶ A Call to action for support during covid19
- ▶ Has since evolved to provide emotional support to physicians and medical students navigating any personal or professional intersections



Why is this only for physicians? How about other HCW?

- ▶ Physicians have double the rate of suicide of the general population
- ▶ We have a systemic double bind that discourages help seeking.
- ▶ Peer to peer models of support have shown to have consistent and sustainable outcomes.
- ▶ We direct non-physicians to other similar resources.



What is offered?

- ▶ Anonymity
- ▶ No fear of reporting/professional repercussions
- ▶ Safe emotional space/holding space
- ▶ Live psychological crisis intervention using de-escalation, grounding techniques.
- ▶ Further resources: list of mind-body workshops, list of therapists and psychiatrists, local resources, smartphone applications, articles, videos, further reading
- ▶ protocols for safety of self and others if applicable



What is not offered?

- ▶ Recommendation on medications or supplements
- ▶ Doctor-patient relationship
- ▶ Therapist- client relationship
- ▶ Psych consultation on patients



Legal

- ▶ A reputed law firm is giving pro-bono services
- ▶ Policies and procedures have been created
- ▶ Laws referenced:- CARES act, Good Samaritan HCW
- ▶ “Standardization” of protocol is important
- ▶ Malpractice coverage is not required for the volunteers
- ▶ Active state licensing is required



Technology platform

- ▶ Telzio: Hipaa Compliant cloud-based phone system
- ▶ G Suite: for internal communications
- ▶ Website: developed by pro-bono work



How this works:

- ▶ Caller calls the hotline number and dials a number prompt to be directly connected with a volunteer psychiatrist.
- ▶ On the volunteer end- a volunteer logs into Telzio app and the call is routed to them.
- ▶ Volunteer shifts are 1 hour each: from 8 am to 1 am EST
- ▶ A live google document “sign-up” sheet is shared with volunteers for shifts to be picked up.
- ▶ As of 4.16.2021 volunteer count is 800+



What are calls like?

- ▶ Completely Anonymous. No required disclosure of identifying information.
- ▶ Caller ID is protected and not disclosed to volunteer on call.
- ▶ Work through an immediate stressor on any subject.
- ▶ No time limit
- ▶ No appointment necessary
- ▶ Can call multiple times but not request specific psychiatrists (no continuity of care)



Educational activities for volunteers:

- ▶ Weekly educational seminars on the following topics:
 - ▶ Disaster Psychiatry
 - ▶ CBT (specifically in situations like pandemic)
 - ▶ Red Cross/Wuhan China experiences
 - ▶ Racial Injustices in Medicine
 - ▶ Physician Litigation Stress
 - ▶ Psychological First Aid
 - ▶ Motivational interviewing over a support line
 - ▶ Moral Injury, and many more
- ▶ Debriefing:
 - ▶ Once a week within volunteers. Moderated by steering committee.



Data:

- ▶ Log in an average of ~8,000 minutes of support time per month. That is average of ~4 hours a day.
- ▶ Have supported over 2,000 physician callers since onset
- ▶ Spend an average of 20-60 minutes per call
- ▶ Additionally
 - ▶ Partnered and Collaborated with: AMWA, APA, AMSA, Vibrant Emotional Health, AFSP and Health4theWorld



What's next?

- ▶ Sustainability of our service past the covid19 crisis
 - ▶ Collaboration with Vibrant Emotional Health – Owners/Operators of National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
 - ▶ Ongoing education and mental health advocacy initiatives and programming for national physician organizations, medical schools, and hospital systems
 - ▶ Humans Before Heroes – Partnering with AMWA on changing mental health disclosure requirements on state medical licensing applications to encourage and normalize mental health seeking in physicians.
 - ▶ <https://www.amwa-doc.org/our-work/initiatives/physician-mental-health/>



Steering Committee:

- ▶ Mona Masood MD - Founder & Chief Organizer
- ▶ Pu Cheng, MD - Co-Founder & Educational coordinator
- ▶ Smita Gautam, MD - Co-Founder & Volunteer Coordinator
- ▶ Allison Cotton, MD - Co-founder & Advertising/ PR coordinator
- ▶ Suzan Song, MD - Co-founder & Legal/Ethical coordinator



Steering committee..



Contact us:

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Twitter:

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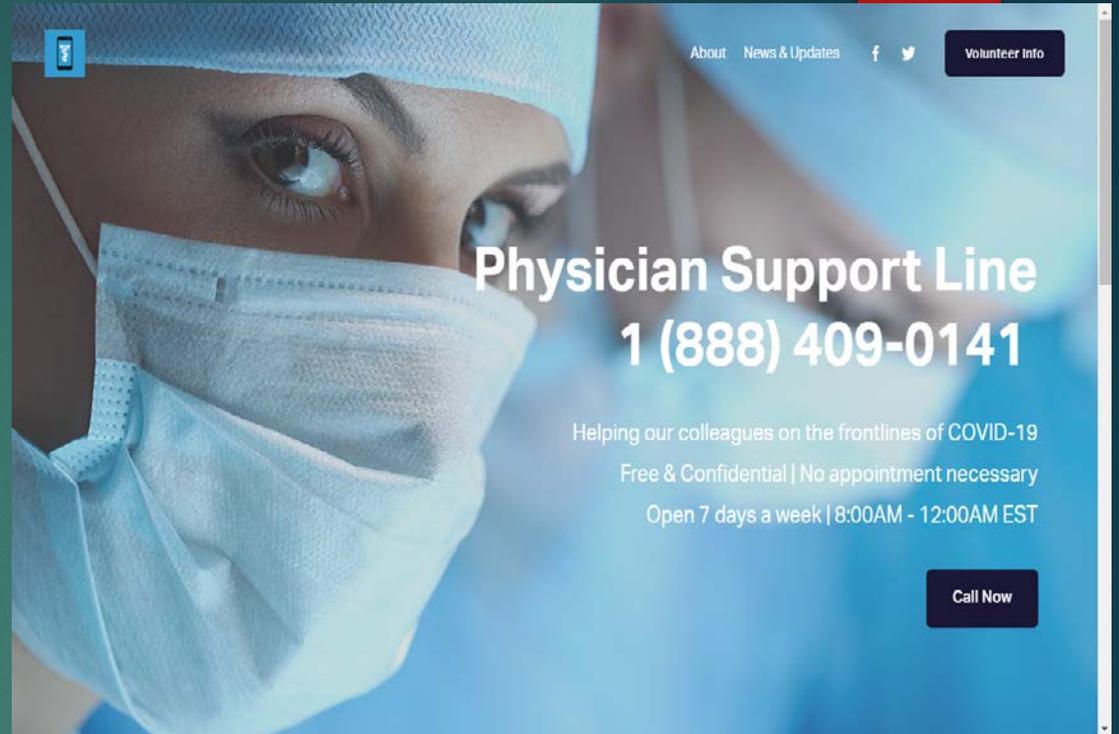
Visit:

▶ www.physiciansupportline.com

▶ <https://www.amwa-doc.org/our-work/initiatives/physician-mental-health/>



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1 (888) 409-0141

Helping our colleagues on the frontlines of COVID-19
Free & Confidential | No appointment necessary
Open 7 days a week | 8:00AM - 12:00AM EST

Call Now



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Thank you....

