



Physicians'  
HEALTH  
Program

A Peer Assistance Monitoring Program of the  
Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society

# PA PHP UPDATE

FALL  
2025

— NEWS FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA PHYSICIANS' HEALTH PROGRAM —

## Connection and Commitment to Pharmacist Recovery

By Edwin Kim, MD, MRO, *Medical Director, PHP & NHP*



On July 15–16, 2025, I had the privilege of attending the inaugural **Pharmacy Professional Recovery Program (PRP) Forum**, hosted by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) in Mount Prospect, Illinois. This groundbreaking event convened representatives

from NABP and 25 states, including Pennsylvania, to collaboratively explore and advance the role of professional recovery programs in supporting pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

The forum marked a significant milestone in the profession's commitment to wellness, accountability, and safe practice. Over two days, participants engaged in dynamic discussions on the structure, challenges, and successes of PRPs across the country. Topics included program funding, confidentiality protections, monitoring protocols, and approaches to non-psychiatric medical, mental health, and substance use concerns. The diversity of perspectives—from states with long-established programs to those in early development—fostered a rich exchange of ideas and best practices.

One of the most impactful sessions focused on the **human side of recovery**, featuring a personal account from a pharmacist who had successfully navigated their recovery with the support of

their state's PRP. **Their story underscored the importance of compassionate, structured support systems that prioritize both public safety and professional rehabilitation.** Another highlight was the collaborative breakout groups, where attendees worked together to identify common barriers and propose innovative, jurisdiction-specific solutions.

On the second day, I appreciated the small workgroup discussions tackling the matter of tailoring support, resources, and programming to the unique needs of pharmacists. Participants highlighted **the need for effective strategies to facilitate return-to-work pathways, accommodate diverse practice settings, and support continued engagement in the profession.**

As a representative of The Foundation's Peer Assistance Monitoring Program, I left the forum inspired by the collective dedication to **fostering a culture of recovery and resilience within the pharmacy field.** While our Pharmacy Health Program (PharmHP) is relatively new compared to those in other states, I am confident that our work reflects widely accepted approaches to pharmacist health. That said, there is much work to be done in establishing a national network of programs to synergize efforts to expand this work. In this regard, I look forward to working with the cohort as NABP continues to support this collaborative effort. ■



## Physicians' Health Program

A Peer Assistance Monitoring Program at the Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society

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### PA PHP Update

Physicians' Health Program  
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— FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR —

# Increasing Health Care Professional Specific Resources in the Commonwealth



As we move into the fall season, I've been reflecting on the evolving needs of our healthcare workforce—and how the PHP continues to grow in response.

At the heart of our work is a simple but powerful belief: healthcare professionals deserve care that's as thoughtful and specialized as the care they provide others. We've seen firsthand how peer support creates safe, understanding environments where professionals can speak openly about

their challenges, feel heard, and begin to heal. These spaces normalize help-seeking and foster resilience.

We also know that one size doesn't fit all. That's why we prioritize choice when connecting participants with evaluation and treatment providers. Everyone's journey is different, and having options allows individuals to find the right fit for their needs. To support this, we continue to vet and recruit providers and facilities that align with our mission and values.

This year, we've made meaningful strides in expanding access. By developing virtual and hybrid resources, **we're removing geographic and travel barriers**, making it easier for professionals across the Commonwealth to get the support they need, wherever they are. We're also building new evaluation pathways and increasing the number of providers trained to deliver health care-professional-specific services.

Our goal remains clear: **to ensure that every health care professional in the Commonwealth has access to compassionate, effective care.** When we support those who care for others, we strengthen the entire health care system. ■

Tiffany M. Booher, MA, LPC, CAADC, CIP, CCSM  
Director, Peer Assistance Monitoring Programs

### PA PHP MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to promote early identification and facilitate rehabilitation of physicians and other eligible health care professionals and trainees with concerns relating to substance use disorders, mental health disorders, and/or behavioral concerns. Our goal is to coordinate assessment and treatment as well as provide monitoring and advocacy to ensure the safe practice of their profession, and the safety of the public.

— FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR —

## Advancing the Health and Wellbeing of the Broader Health Care Team in 2025



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This year marks a very special milestone for The Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society—**our 70th anniversary.**

For seven decades, The Foundation has worked to support medical students, physicians, and

their families, and nowhere is that support more visible than in the growth and impact of our Peer Assistance Monitoring Programs, beginning with the first program, the Physicians' Health Program (PHP).

When The Foundation was established in 1955, the health care landscape looked very different. Yet one truth has remained constant: physicians need care, too. In the 1970s, the PHP began as a small but vital effort to address substance use and mental health challenges among physicians. In 1989, the State Boards of Medicine and Osteopathic Medicine entered into an agreement with The Foundation to provide peer assistance monitoring for their licensees. Over time, the program has grown into a comprehensive initiative that provides confidential assistance, monitoring, advocacy, and—most importantly—**hope.**

Today, the Physicians' Health Program is recognized across the nation as a leader in supporting physician wellness and recovery. Thousands of physicians and trainees have turned to the PHP for help in times of need, and many have returned to practice healthier and stronger, serving patients and communities with renewed purpose.

Building on its foundational belief in the medical model, **the PHP has expanded its services** to include licensees served by the Boards of Dentistry, Podiatry, Pharmacy, and Nursing. We are proud of the strides we have made—expanding services, increasing outreach, and building trust. Time and again, our work has

shown that caring for the healer protects the patient, the health care system, and the future of medicine itself.

As we celebrate 70 years, we also recognize the unique challenges physicians face today: burnout, stress, mental health struggles, and the ever-increasing demands of modern medicine. **Our staff are trained to meet our participants in their moment,** whether it be a suicide risk assessment during crisis or a moment of reflection when participants meet a sobriety milestone. The Foundation and its Peer Assistance Monitoring Programs remain deeply committed to meeting these challenges head-on. We are investing in prevention, resilience-building, and wellness resources so that we can continue to serve safety-sensitive health care professionals not only in moments of crisis but also throughout their careers.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of our donors, the dedication of our Board of Trustees, and the trust of our health care community. **Your partnership ensures that The Foundation's Peer Assistance Monitoring Programs can continue to grow, adapt, and provide the lifeline so many health care professionals rely on.**

As we celebrate the 70th anniversary of The Foundation and the 36th year of the Physicians' Health Program, I invite you to join us in reflecting on how far we have come—and in shaping the future of health care professional wellness in Pennsylvania. Together, we can continue to protect the health of healers and the patients they serve. ■

Be well,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather A. Wilson".

Heather A. Wilson, MSW, CFRE, CAE

Executive Director

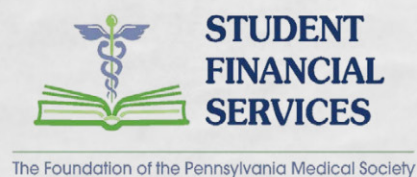
### OUR MISSION

The Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society provides programs and services for individual physicians and others that improve the well-being of Pennsylvanians and sustain the future of medicine.



# KNOW A MEDICAL STUDENT?

## LET US HELP.



### OVER \$100,000 AWARDED EVERY YEAR!

Scholarship Applications are now open until September 30<sup>th</sup> 2025! For the 2025-2026 school year, The Foundation has opened 16 different scholarships (many granted to more than one student) with a wide range of eligibility requirements. Visit our website for more information and to apply!

Whether a student is just beginning or well into their journey, they may qualify for financial awards based on **merit, need, county of residence, specialty interests,** and more!

[foundationpamedsoc.org/scholarships](https://foundationpamedsoc.org/scholarships)



## What We've Been Up To

Our team has been busy representing our Peer Assistance Monitoring Programs across the commonwealth. Here's a look at how our staff have been engaging, educating, and expanding awareness of our mission.

### State Board of Pharmacy Presentation



**Pharmacists' HEALTH Program**

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Executive Director **Heather Wilson**, MSW, CFRE and PAMP Intake Coordinator **Michele Davis**, MS, LPC, CAADC attended a **July State Board of**

**Pharmacy** meeting and presented the board with a comprehensive view of The Foundation's Pharmacy Health Program (PharmHP). Wilson and Davis emphasized the PharmHP's suicide prevention policies and procedures, reinforcing the PharmHP's availability as a resource to pharmacists who need help.

### Nurses' Health Program



**Nurses' HEALTH Program**

A Peer Assistance Monitoring Program of the Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society

The Nurses' Health Program is here to care for those who care for us. Whether you're a Clinical Nurse Specialist, CRNP, Licensed Dietitian-Nutritionist, LPN, RN, or a student nurse, you have access to confidential support and resources to protect your health and career. Because when our nurses are well, everyone benefits.

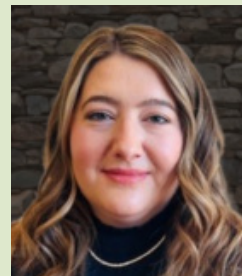
# Congratulations



It was a weekend filled with meaningful connections and collaboration at the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Family Physician Society (POFPS) **50th Annual CME Symposium!**

**Katie Gruber**, Billing, Data, and Training Manager, PAMP, and **Julie Heaney**, Coordinator,

Communications, Education, and Outreach, represented The Foundation and the Physicians' Health Program (PHP), connecting with Family Physicians across Pennsylvania between their enriching educational sessions led by osteopathic leaders from across the commonwealth.



Congratulations to **Shawna Crognale, MS, CAADC** on her new position as *Intake Coordinator, PAMP!*



Congratulations to **Alexis Deimler, MBA** on her new position as *Case Manager, PHP!*

# WELCOME



### Welcome Our New Team Member!

The Foundation is delighted to welcome one new staff member!

**Maria Calle Lecaro**, Assistant Case Manager, PHP, has a B.S. in biology from Penn State and 5+ years of health care experience in an inpatient care, pharmacy setting, and behavioral health support. She is currently pursuing a Masters in Psychology with a concentration in treatment psychology at Carlow University.

# The AOAAM Offers Fellowship and Education

By Jon Lepley DO, FAOAAM



Founded in 1987, the American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine (AOAAM) emerged to address the growing need for education, advocacy, and professional development among osteopathic physicians treating addiction. While this description accurately

conveys its mission, it does not fully capture its significance to me. I describe the AOAAM as a beacon, offering fellowship and education within an isolating landscape.

I started treating addiction twenty years ago. Many of my hospital and clinic colleagues felt unprepared to treat addiction and declined to collaborate. Others were more vocal in espousing a viewpoint that people who use drugs needed moral assistance, and not medical. **The lack of collaborative support was dispiriting and contributed to a narrow perspective on patient care**, sometimes resulting in overlooked treatment options.

For example, I spent much of the 2010s working in a correctional facility that effectively maintained a drug-free environment. I initially questioned the need for addiction medication to prevent overdose after release and was fearful of isolating myself from colleagues. However, ongoing education and collaboration with addiction medicine physicians through the AOAAM led me to change my approach and enhance patient care.

Currently, working in a community health environment that provides medication treatment for patients who use high-risk substances, I find myself unsure which interventions might further improve their health. Through educational content and online networking, AOAAM members working in residential treatment settings provide perspectives on psychosocial interventions such as twelve-

step facilitation. I integrate these insights into my medication management practices, despite differing views regarding the role of medication.

**I have discovered that I can learn the most from providers who work in different treatment settings with philosophies that differ from my own**, and the AOAAM offers a big tent. Our members work in diverse locations that include Opioid Treatment Programs, Pain Management practices, residential treatment settings, and community centers that provide harm reduction services.

The annual Osteopathic Medical Education Conference (OMED) is an excellent venue for meeting other AOAAM members and viewing their lectures. The academy also offers online membership meetings and interactive virtual events, and any health care provider interested in treating addiction can join the AOAAM—membership is not limited to osteopathic physicians.

We are smaller than other addiction medicine-focused professional societies, but **our small size only serves to enhance the fellowship within the organization**. I was honored when asked to serve as President of the Board of Trustees for the 2023-2024 term, a period when we were asked to take positions on complex topics like access to methadone and telemedicine flexibilities. Our executive director often described our board as a “family,” and we often squabbled like one when grappling with these issues. Yet, we never left the table angry despite our differences. I count several past and current AOAAM leaders as friends.

Readers of the PHP Update may consider joining our family and becoming a member of the AOAAM. You could be a beacon for others treating addiction in relative isolation, and I undoubtedly could learn something from you to help my patients. ■





# DONATE & HONOR

## Lynn Lucas-Fehm, MD, JD

*Pennsylvania Medical Society's 175<sup>th</sup> President*



**Contributions benefit The Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society supporting medical education, physician health, and excellence in practice.**

The Foundation invites you to recognize and celebrate **Lynn Lucas-Fehm, MD, JD** as she completes her term of office as PAMED's president.

This House of Delegates, stop by The Foundation's exhibit booth to donate in Dr. Lucas-Fehm's honor. Your contribution will earn you 1 raffle ticket towards one of our generously donated prizes. (Every \$100 donation qualifies you for 2 additional raffle tickets)

### Looking for more ways to win?

Scan the QR code to make an online donation and receive an additional 2 raffle tickets to enter for your chance to win.  
*(Claim your raffle tickets at The Foundation's booth.)*



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[www.foundationpamedsoc.org/donatefordrlucas-fehm](http://www.foundationpamedsoc.org/donatefordrlucas-fehm)

*The mission of the Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society is to provide programs and services for individual physicians and others that improve the well-being of Pennsylvanians and sustain the future of medicine.*

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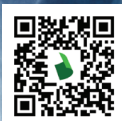
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