



New Resource Helps Physicians Prepare Before a Mental Health Crisis Arises

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The Physicians Foundation Releases a Personal Crisis Management Plan for Physicians to Help Prevent Physician Suicide

The Physicians Foundation today launched [A Personal Crisis Management Plan](#) to help physicians navigate their mental health needs. As part of the Foundation's [Vital Signs](#) initiative, the plan was created to help physicians, their colleagues and their loved ones access and have available the coping strategies and resources needed when navigating a moment of crisis.

This resource was inspired by Angela Chen, MD, Loice Swisher, MD, FAAEM, and Mary Jane Brown, MD, who introduced a personal crisis management tool for residents, like safety plans used by psychiatrists in suicidal patients. They [found](#) nearly 60% of participating residents agreed that the tool would help them manage a crisis. Nearly a third of the participating residents (31.8%) indicated that they had used their personal plan within the first three months of their internship.

"Whether it's stress, feelings of burnout or another challenge, physicians, just like anyone else, should feel comfortable seeking help," said Gary Price, MD, president of The Physicians Foundation. "Our own research found that 58% of physicians reported experiencing feelings of burnout during the pandemic; however, when asked about mental health support, only 13% of physicians reported seeking medical attention."

The Physicians Foundation's [2020 Survey of America's Physicians: COVID-19's Impact on Physician Wellbeing](#) also found nearly 1 in 4 physicians know a physician who committed or considered suicide. While physician suicide has been a crisis long before COVID-19, the pandemic has created a sense of urgency to better support physicians' mental health and wellbeing. This personal crisis management tool offers physicians and their loved ones a personalized, step-by-step plan to set themselves up for success in the event of a mental health crisis.

"We continuously hear from the loved ones of physicians who died by suicide that it could have been avoided," said Robert Seligson, CEO of The Physicians Foundation. "We hope this tool gets us one step closer in breaking the culture of silence around physician mental health issues—helping physicians not be in fear of being judged or losing their right to practice."

To explore Vital Signs, visit www.physiciansfoundation.org/vitalsigns. The website is intended for educational purposes only. If you need further guidance or are in a crisis, call the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273 TALK (8255) for free 24/7 support.

DOWNLOAD THE PLAN

About The Physicians Foundation

The Physicians Foundation is a nonprofit seeking to advance the work of practicing physicians and help them facilitate the delivery of high-quality health care to patients. As the health care system in America continues to evolve, The Physicians Foundation is steadfast in its determination to strengthen the physician-patient relationship and assist physicians in sustaining their medical practices in today's practice environment. It pursues its mission through a variety of activities including grant-making, research, white papers and policy studies. Since 2005, the Foundation has awarded numerous multi-year grants totaling more than \$50 million. In addition, the Foundation focuses on the following core areas: physician leadership, physician wellness, physician practice trends, social determinants of health and the impact of health care reform on physicians and patients. For more information, visit www.physiciansfoundation.org.