

# Valley Preferred



## Physicians-for-Physicians (P4P) Peer Support Program

Colleagues can relate to situations, stressors and concerns encountered in the workplace by their peers. For this reason, LVHN developed a Physicians-for-Physicians (P4P) Peer Support Program. The program assists clinicians who are experiencing stresses, especially those brought on by their professional roles.

Learn more in this Q&A with LVHN Wellness Committee members Carmine Pellosie, DO, Executive Director of HealthWorks, and Carolyn Lamparella, Director of Preferred EAP.

### Why was the P4P program created?

Adverse outcomes, whether anticipated or unanticipated, can be the result of errors or a natural consequence of providing medical care. Clinicians report increased stress, sleep problems and loss of confidence after an adverse event, particularly if it is preventable. The P4P Peer Support Program was developed to help physicians, medical students, pharmacists and advanced practice clinicians (APCs) cope with the impact of adverse events and work-related stress. The program offers providers the opportunity to have one-on-one confidential conversations with a fellow clinician (P4P Peer Support Mentor) who understands the demands of the health care profession.

### What types of events or issues are typically discussed?

P4P Mentors provide support for any issue causing the provider distress, such as the death of a patient, feelings of being overwhelmed or burned out at work or home, or stress or fear related to current or pending litigation.

### What is the goal of the program, and what are the intended outcomes?

The goal is to create a rapid-response infrastructure to help providers after an adverse or stressful event, and provide a “safe zone” where they can confidentially discuss the situation to mitigate the impact of the event. Anticipated outcomes include emotional healing, enhanced well-being and an improved culture of safety.

### Who provides the support, and how are they matched with those seeking help?

P4P Peer Support Mentors are volunteers, either physicians, APCs, or other experienced clinical professionals. All mentors participate in a four-hour training session to prepare for their role, and meet quarterly to discuss the effectiveness of the program and work on improving their support skills. Strict confidentiality for the participants is maintained at all times. A provider seeking support may choose a P4P Peer Support Mentor on their own [from a list of mentors](#). To receive a list of Peer Support Mentors:

- Go to <http://www.preferredpeap.org/contact-us> and fill out the form.
- Call for assistance (Carmine Pellosie, DO, 610-969-2970, or Carolyn Lamparella, 610-433-8550).

### **How does the program work? Is there follow-up?**

The process begins with a conversation between the provider seeking support and the P4P Peer Support Mentor. That may be all a provider needs. However, the mentor will be available for additional conversations if desired. If the provider is experiencing significant ongoing concerns, the mentor may facilitate a referral to another resource. All mentors have access to a list of resources both within the health network and the community. Mentors will then follow up with the provider to ensure they receive the help they are seeking.

### **Are conversations confidential?**

Confidentiality is a requirement for any conversation entrusted to a P4P Peer Support Mentor. Mentors will not discuss conversations with department leadership, human resources or their peers. Nothing is written down or recorded. Even the occurrence of the conversation is not shared with anyone. Only de-identified information will be discussed during quarterly P4P meetings for the purpose of program improvement and mentors' skill development.

### **What is the process when a legal issue is involved?**

Because certain incidents are best handled with legal resources in addition to a P4P Peer Support Mentor (i.e., when situations involving litigation are anticipated or known), the mentor will advise that the provider contact legal services for assistance in addition to any other support. Under certain special circumstances, the mentor may have a regulatory obligation to report what is shared with law enforcement or other governmental agency (in cases where the clinician is at risk for harming himself/herself or others, child abuse, sexual harassment, or a need to comply with state/federal requirements). LVHN risk management and legal counsel are supportive of the P4P Peer Support Mentor program. Questions about confidentiality should be discussed with the P4P Mentor or with the LVHN legal department.

### **How does a provider take part in the program?**

Providers can reach out to a P4P Peer Support Mentor on their own or initiate a conversation by calling Preferred EAP at 610-433-8550. A P4P Peer Support Mentor may also reach out after an adverse event has occurred.

For information, contact Carmine Pellosie, DO, at 610-969-2970 or [Carmine.Pellosie@lvhn.org](mailto:Carmine.Pellosie@lvhn.org), or Carolyn Lamparella at 610-433-8550 or [Carolyn.Lamparella@lvhn.org](mailto:Carolyn.Lamparella@lvhn.org).