HEALTH WORKERS HAVE THE RIGHT TOO

PATIENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO ACCESS MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND SUPPORT.

Support Health Workers' Access to Mental Health Care

A Toolkit for Action

During The Pitt

ALL IN
Wellbeing First for Healthcare
a coalition led by

DR. LORNA BREEN HEROES' FOUNDATION

ALLINforMentalHealth.org

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THANK YOU

Thank you for your commitment to supporting health workers' access to mental health care. Your decision to take action is a powerful response to the realities we see every day—and the stories that are finally being told on our screens.

Many, like you, have found a renewed sense of urgency after watching *The Pitt*. The show's raw and unfiltered portrayal of a "real-time" shift captures the relentless pressure and systemic failures that health workers face.

As Noah Wyle and the creative team have so poignantly shown, the crisis in healthcare isn't about a lack of individual resilience; it's about a system that is fundamentally unwell.

As *The Pitt* reminds us, every hour in healthcare is a battle for both the patient's life and the health worker's wellbeing. Your efforts ensure that those who care for us are finally being cared for in return. You are helping ensure no health worker has to suffer in silence.

Thank you for your voice, your time, and for being ALL IN. We are honored to have you with us as we build a future where our healthcare workforce's mental health and wellbeing is a national priority.

> THE STRENGTH OF OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IS PROPORTIONAL TO THE MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR PRACTITIONERS AND THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE SUPPORT THEM.
>
> Noah Wyle
> *Actor, Writer, Producer, & Director*

LEARN

Be ALL IN for Mental Health

A healthy workforce is essential for safe, compassionate patient care. Yet health workers are experiencing a mental health crisis, with unprecedented rates of burnout and mental health conditions contributing to workforce shortages and impacting patient access to timely, quality care. Health workers navigate unique physical, emotional, and ethical challenges daily, including:

- Long, irregular hours and unsafe, difficult work environments
- Routine exposure to suffering and emotionally difficult situations
- Resource shortages and high clinical demands
- Payment models and technologies that complicate patient care delivery
- Policies increasing administrative burden and interfering with clinical decision-making with patients

In addition to the operational practices and processes driving health worker burnout, stigmatizing policies and practices often discourage health workers from seeking mental health care, based on the misplaced belief that this protects patient safety.

But the reality is starkly different: when health workers fear seeking help, the quality of care declines, mental health conditions and burnout intensify, workforce shortages grow, and lives are lost.

This must change. Patients have the right to access mental health care and support. Health workers have the right, too.

By working together, we can build a system that prioritizes mental health for those who care for us, ensuring health workers can access mental health care without fear of repercussions.

The first step is to learn the six actions on how to better support health workers access to mental health care.

LEARN

Be ALL IN for Mental Health

Accessible and Affordable Mental Health Care
Ensure accessible and affordable mental health care for health workers, with care available off-hours, unpenalized time off, and affordable treatment options.

Confidential Professional/Physician Health Program Support
Strengthen health workers' access to confidential Professional or Physician Health Programs (PHPs), advancing best practices in accountability, consistency, and excellence in supporting the health of the healthcare community.

Equal Privacy in Mental Health Care
Commit to equal privacy in mental health care for health workers, ensuring confidentiality of diagnoses and treatments, protection during litigation, and access to external care options.

Confidential Peer Support
Guarantee confidential peer support for health workers, ensuring access to safe, private programs to address work-related stress and trauma while protecting their privacy.

Education and Training on Mental Health and Wellbeing
Encourage education and training on mental health and wellbeing for health workers, including evidence-based continuing education, best-practice resources, and preparation to manage the unique stressors of patient care.

Supportive Pathway for Re-Entry
Advance a supportive pathway for re-entry for health workers, ensuring a transparent, structured, and reasonable process to return to practice.

**Learn More and Explore Resources at
ALLINforMentalHealth.org**

ACT & COMMUNICATE
During The Pitt Season 2

Watch gatherings and screenings of *The Pitt* serve as more than just entertainment; they act as a vital catalyst for open dialogue and community-building for our healthcare workforce's mental health and wellbeing. Here are four ways to get started:

1

Beyond the 15th Hour: Processing the Realities of Healthcare

Reflecting on episodes of *The Pitt* can be a powerful way to process and learn more about the experiences of health workers, while navigating to pathways for action including available mental health resources.

See pages 6-11 for a discussion guide and facilitation tips.

2

Pen for Presence: Letting Health Workers Know They're Seen

Writing handwritten notes is a powerful way to remind a health worker that they are seen, valued, and appreciated as a human being. By taking a moment to say "thank you," you're letting them know that even on the hardest days, their individual care and kindness is making a real difference.

See pages 12-13 for a tip sheet and printable thank you note template.

3

Connecting on The Feed: Putting Resources in Reach

Sharing mental health resources specific for health workers on social media turns the awareness sparked by *The Pitt* into real-world support, ensuring that helpful tools are just one click away for the health workers in our lives.

See pages 14-15 for example social media content to share resources.

4

Going ALL IN: Scaling the Movement for Mental Health

Fundraising for the ALL IN for Mental Health initiative empowers a unified front to transform our healthcare system into a place where health workers can access mental health care without fear of professional repercussions.

See page 16 for a tip sheet to inspire donations.

A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE PITT

This discussion guide is designed to help you lead and participate in a discussion after viewing *The Pitt* - a powerful way to process and learn more about the experiences of health workers, while navigating to pathways for action, including accessing available mental health resources.

Tips for Facilitating Safe, Supportive Discussions

- **Set intention:** Welcome everyone and communicate the goal for the conversation (not a debate or a lesson), acknowledge the "weight" of *The Pitt* to resembling real-life experiences, and show appreciation that everyone in the room has good intentions and individual experiences.
- **Encourage best practices:**
  - Speak for yourself ("I feel..." "I think..."), not on behalf of others ("we/they feel...")
  - Don't be afraid to ask questions. Try not to make assumptions and listen to what people say instead.
  - Be open to feeling uncomfortable - remember all growth comes with some discomfort.
  - Stay engaged. If you feel frustrated or misunderstood, take a moment, but don't drop out.
  - Don't dominate the conversation. Everyone gets a chance to speak and be heard.
- **Maintain Balance:** If your community is mixed (health workers and non-workers), be mindful of the language that's being used; clarify terms and ask questions to ensure people understand what's being said. If the conversation escalates inappropriately, quiet the group and ask everyone to spend two minutes silently writing down their thoughts. Use your judgement to move on to a different topic or share what everyone wrote.

Approach and Questions for Sparking Conversation

Check-In

Given the nature of the show - and the personal experiences of everyone watching - we encourage starting conversations with a few grounding questions that help build trust and provide a sense of safety.

Some examples include:
- How are you doing today as you come into this conversation?
- How are you feeling after watching the show?
- Has the show brought up anything about your own experiences that you like to share?
- What do you want viewers of the show to know about the experience and needs of health workers?

A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE PITT

Reflect

From there, explore how themes in the show might resonate on an individual or systemic level.

Some examples include:
- Do you identify with a particular character in the show? If so, who and why?
- Do you identify with a particular experience depicted in the show? If so, which and why?
- *For Health Workers:* What is something that you would change about your day-to-day experience at work that would support your mental health and wellbeing?
- *For Non-Health Workers:* What is something you would change about how you interact with your healthcare team that would support their mental health and wellbeing?
- What gaps in the healthcare system highlighted in this show have you witnessed and/or experienced yourself?

Care

Finally, discuss if and how individuals have supported their own mental health and wellbeing, and how they can contribute to caring for health workers and making systemic changes to support health workers' access to mental health care.

Some examples include:
- What actions, tools, or resources have you used to support your own mental health and wellbeing? What resources have been the most helpful?
- What is the most impactful thing that could better support your mental health and wellbeing?
- *For Health Workers:* How might we commit to checking in on one another?
- *For Non-Health Workers:* How might we commit to supporting our health workers?
- How might we build a healthcare system that eliminates systemic and cultural barriers to mental health care for health workers?

A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE PITT

From Discussion to Action

Now that we've started to uncover some of the themes in the show and how they relate to your own experiences, you may be curious about how to start acting on ideas that may have surfaced in the conversation. To help you do that, we've identified the following resources to get you going.

For Health Workers & Their Families

Professional Mental Health Support

- **911 At Ease** – Free, confidential professional trauma-informed counseling services for first responders and their families.
- **The Battle Within** – Free therapy services for health workers experiencing crisis, grief, anxiety, stress, or trauma.
- **The Emotional PPE Project** – Connects health workers with licensed mental health professionals for free therapy services, no insurance required.
- **Physician Support Line** – Free, confidential, and anonymous sessions with psychiatrists for physicians and medical students.
- **Professional/Physician Health Programs (PHPs)** - A state directory of the authorized PHPs who provide confidential services to healthcare professionals in need of support for their health and wellbeing.

24/7 Crisis Support

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** – Immediate, free 24/7 crisis support via phone (988), text (988), or online chat for anyone experiencing emotional distress or suicidal thoughts.
- **Crisis Text Line** – Offers 24/7 crisis counseling support by texting "SCRUBS" or "10-18" to 741741, connecting you with trained crisis counselors.
- **Safe Call Now** – Available 24/7 at 1-206-459-3020 for confidential, comprehensive crisis referral service for public safety and emergency services personnel and their families.

Professional Resources

- **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Resources** – Resources and programs for immediate and ongoing support for healthcare professionals including resources for support after a suicide loss.
- **NAMI Healthcare Professional Resources** – Curated collection of free mental health resources, coping tools, and support services specifically for healthcare professionals.

A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE PITT

For Healthcare Organizations

Access to Mental Health Care

- **Frontline Connect: Mental Health for the Healthcare Workforce** – Comprehensive, free toolkit that provides healthcare organizations with high-impact resources and strategies to improve access to mental health care and support for the healthcare workforce. Built from evidence-based, real-world best practices, it provides a clear roadmap for removing barriers and creating a supportive environment for your workforce.
- **Marvin Behavioral Health** – A clinician-built mental health care platform that provides confidential, specialty-matched support for physicians, nurses, and care teams. Marvin partners with health systems across the country to provide 24/7 access to their healthcare professionals in all states.
- **Strengthening the Health Care Workforce** – Strategies to identify and promote ways health workers can access the full continuum of behavioral health services, remove stigma about behavioral health treatment, and build and sustain a culture of psychological safety.

Peer Support Programs & Resources

- **American Medical Association STEPS Forward®** – A free toolkit providing a complete roadmap for implementing peer support programs in healthcare settings. The resources include step-by-step guidance for building teams, training supporters, and demonstrating program value to organizational leadership.
- **Peer Support by Dr. Jo Shapiro** – Information on how to make the case for peer support, building blocks for peer support programs, and other resources for healthcare organizations to create a culture of trust and wellbeing.
- **RISE Peer Support** – Program to guide hospitals to set up peer-responder programs that deliver psychological first aid and emotional support to healthcare professionals following difficult events. The program prepares employees to provide skilled, nonjudgmental, and confidential support to individuals and groups.
- **Schwartz Rounds® Program** – Program that offers health workers a regularly scheduled time during their fast-paced work lives to discuss the issues openly and honestly they face in caring for patients and families.

A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE PITT

System Change Solutions and Resources

- **Wellbeing First Champion Challenge program** - Free technical assistance and resources for licensure boards, health systems, hospitals, and other care facilities to remove intrusive mental health questions and stigmatizing language from licensing and credentialing applications.
- *Impact Wellbeing™ Guide from NIOSH and the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation* – Actionable, step-by-step guide to drive system-level changes to enhance healthcare worker mental health and wellbeing and strengthen trust between leadership and staff.
- **Suicide Prevention: Evidence-Informed Interventions for the Health Care Workforce from the American Hospital Association** – Free guide to understand the evidence-based and developing approaches for addressing and reducing suicide risk for health workers.

Advancing Best Practices in PHPs

- **FSPHP Performance Enhancement and Effectiveness Review (PEER™) Program** - A structured review process to guide PHPs in identifying opportunities to optimize performance and effectiveness in alignment with best practices.
- **FSPHP Evaluation and Treatment Accreditation™ (FSPHP-ETA™)** - A program to recognize evaluation and treatment providers that are qualified to specialize in providing care to health workers.
- **State Confidentiality Laws** - A model bill for states to use and enact into law to enhance confidential support for health workers while protecting the public.

Tips For Organizing + Leading Conversations

If you're taking on the role of organizing a screening and/or facilitating a conversation within an organization, we've crafted the following tips to help guide you to have a meaningful and successful event.

Event Organizing Tips

Format

- Discussions can take many forms (panel discussion, Q&A, etc.), but we suggest a more intimate group discussion as it fosters a more comfortable space to share personal reactions. Many health workers have reported that it has been cathartic to see and discuss the show together, so the more community you can create, the better.

A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE PITT

- If your event is virtual, consider using break-out rooms and coming back together as a larger group to share. Think about your audience and what format would be most engaging for them.

Audience

- If possible, try to have someone with a mental health care background in the room (be it virtual or in person) to provide additional support to discussion participants. Additionally, the facilitator should ideally have some experience in leading group conversations.
- Identify (and invite) those who should be in the room, considering the appropriate mix of health workers, administrators, and/or support staff that makes the most sense for your context.

Discussion Preparation

- Review the discussion questions and resources ahead of time and prepare a rough outline of what you want to cover. Conversations often evolve organically, so your role is mainly to guide and support.
- When crafting the conversation, reflect on your audience. Who is in the room? What strengths do they bring? How can the conversation you hold inspire action?
- Optional (though encouraged): Begin with a brief icebreaker or breathing exercise to help participants ground themselves and create space to share honestly.

NOTE WRITING

A handwritten note is a powerful way to remind a health worker that they are seen, valued, and appreciated as a human being. By taking a moment to say "thank you," you're letting them know that even on the hardest days, their individual care and kindness is making a real difference. It is a simple gesture that helps our caregivers feel less like a "cog in a machine" and more like the vital, caring members of our community they truly are.

Writing Prompts & Inspiration
If you aren't sure where to start, try one of these "ALL IN" angles:
- "I recently watched a portrayal of the relentless 15-hour shifts health workers face in *The Pitt*, and it opened my eyes to the pressure you are under every day. I want you to know that your dedication doesn't go unnoticed. Thank you for staying 'all in' for your patients, even when the system makes it hard."
- "In the rush of a busy hospital, it's easy to feel like just another face in a white coat. But to the patients you see, you are a lifeline. Thank you for the humanity and heart you bring to your work. Please remember to take care of yourself with the same compassion you show others."
- "We know that healers need healing, too. As a member of this community, I want to thank you for being there for us during our hardest moments. We are standing with you and advocating for a future where your mental health is as much a priority as our own."

Quick Tips for Your Note
- **Keep it Authentic:** You don't need to be a professional writer. Sincerity carries the most weight.
- **Acknowledge the System:** It's okay to mention that you know their job is difficult. It shows you truly understand the reality of their work.
- **Use the "ALL IN" Spirit:** Focus on the idea that they are not alone.
- **Sign-off with Strength:** Use closings like "With deepest respect," "In solidarity," or "Gratefully yours."

Checklist
- **The Cards:** Use the ALL IN branded card **(print the next page on 8 ½ X 11 paper and fold in half)** or simple, high-quality thank you cards.
- **The Environment:** Provide a quiet space after the watch gathering/screening for reflection and writing.
- **The Impact:** Remind participants that they can hand-deliver these to their own care team members or that you will hand-deliver them to a local clinic or ER.

ALLINforMentalHealth.org

You spend your days caring for everyone else, so we wanted to take a moment to care for you. Please know that you are valued and appreciated. We believe that health workers deserve access to confidential mental health care, too, and we're going ALL IN to make sure your wellbeing comes first.

THANK YOU

SOCIAL MEDIA

Quick Tips for Social Media

To make your social media advocacy as effective and supportive as possible, it is important to lead with empathy and provide clear, actionable steps. Here are some tips for sharing ALL IN for Mental Health resources in a way that will resonate with the healthcare community:

Focus on the "System," Not the "Struggle"

When sharing, shift the narrative away from individual "resilience" (which can feel like a burden to workers) and toward systemic support. For example, instead of saying "Health workers need to be more mindful," say "We believe health workers deserve a system that prioritizes their mental health."

Pair High-Stress Themes with High-Hope Solutions

If you are posting a clip or a reaction to a heavy moment from *The Pitt*, always include a "bridge" to a resource. For example, follow a screenshot of a tough scene with: "The 15th hour shouldn't have to be this lonely. Here is where health workers can find confidential support: [Link]."

Use Inclusive, Jargon-Free Language

Keep captions short, punchy, and supportive. Use "We" and "Us" to create a sense of community.

Prioritize "Safe" Links

A major barrier for health workers is the fear that seeking help will affect their ability to practice. Highlight that the resources you are sharing are focused on confidentiality. This builds trust.

Humanize the "Ask"

People engage more with personal calls to action than corporate-sounding ones. Use a "call to action" that feels like a conversation. For example, "If you know a health worker, tag them below to let them know you've got their back, or share this post so these resources end up in the right hands."

Expand Impact

Don't forget to tag the ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare coalition and the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation and use hashtags like #ThePitt and #ALLINforMentalHealth.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media Content

The following is suggested social media copy and images to share mental health resources for health workers during reflection of *The Pitt*. It is recommended to customize the suggested copy to align with your voice and the channel you're sharing on.

Watching #ThePitt reminds me that 15 hours is more than just a shift—it's a marathon for the heart and mind. 🩺 Let's make sure our health workers aren't running it alone. I'm going ALL IN for health worker mental health because healers need healing, too. Explore here for confidential resources and support: bit.ly/ALLINforMentalHealth🧡

#ALLINforMentalHealth [tag] Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation [tag] ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare Coalition

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We all know a doctor, nurse, or first responder who is always there for us. Watching #ThePitt really opened my eyes to the heavy weight they carry after the shift ends. 🧡 I'm sharing these resources from the #ALLINforMentalHealth initiative to help make sure our local healers know they are seen and supported: bit.ly/ALLINforMentalHealth

Please share this post—you never know which healthcare worker in your life might need to see this today. [tag] Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation [tag] ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare Coalition

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The intensity of the 15-hour shift portrayed in #ThePitt highlights a critical truth: our healthcare system is only as strong as the people who power it. I'm proud to support the #ALLINforMentalHealth initiative as they work to move beyond awareness and into structural transformation. Let's prioritize #WellbeingFirst to ensure every health worker can seek mental health care without fear. 🏥💼bit.ly/ALLINforMentalHealth

[tag] Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation [tag] ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare Coalition

Download social media images here.

FUNDRAISING

Integrating into Watch Gatherings/Screenings

Health workers commit their lives to caring for others. Through the **Commit 2 Our Caregivers: The 22 Million Momentum campaign** you can help power to change the system, so that those who care for us can finally be cared for themselves.

During your screenings, ask attendees to make a donation (instead of bringing food/refreshments) to scale our collective impact and ensure health workers can access mental health care without fear of repercussions.

You can collect funds and make one group donation online or have individuals donate directly at https://bit.ly/LornaBreenGiving.

Key Messages

Here are some key messages to help you make the ask to your attendees:

The Why

- We ask so much of our healthcare workforce, and they pour their heart and souls into caring for us. Yet, they are vulnerable human beings carrying the crushing weight of burnout, trauma, and silent mental health battles.

Our Progress + Need

- We've made great progress, improving access to mental health care for 2 million U.S. health workers. But our momentum is only beginning to ensure all 22 million have confidential access to the mental health support they may need.

The Ask

- We know the road to systemic change is long, but our progress proves it is possible. Instead of bringing food/refreshments for a gathering, please make a donation that continues our momentum to support mental health care access for all 22 million health workers.
  - **Stigma Stopper:** $22 helps power advocacy campaigns that break the silence and let health workers know they are not alone.
  - **Champion of Confidentiality:** $220 supports resources for healthcare leaders to create a culture that prioritizes supportive and private access to mental health care.
  - **Systems Changer:** $2,200 provides critical investment for our national technical assistance center, helping implement programs that prioritize health worker wellbeing. **16**

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