

36TH ANNUAL **AHA RURAL** | LEADERSHIP  
**HEALTH CARE** | CONFERENCE

**FEBRUARY 19-22, 2023** | **SAN ANTONIO, TX**

JW MARRIOTT SAN ANTONIO HILL COUNTRY

# Workforce Mental Well-Being and Suicide Prevention: Engaging Trustees

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# The Unfortunate Reality

- Health care workers are at an increased risk for suicide for reasons such as
  - long work hours, rotating and irregular shifts,
  - emotionally difficult situations with patients and family members,
  - risk of exposure to diseases, and other hazards ([CDC, 2021](#)).
- A [study](#) by Mental Health America from June – Sep. 2020 showed that
  - **93%** of health care workers were experiencing stress,
  - **86%** reported experiencing anxiety,
  - **77%** reported frustration,
  - **76%** reported exhaustion and burnout, and
  - **39%** of health care workers said that they did not feel like they had adequate emotional support.



# Suicide Prevention Resources

🏠 / Care Delivery / Behavioral Health Care Delivery / Suicide Prevention

[aha.org/suicideprevention](https://aha.org/suicideprevention)



Hope, help and support are here.

**National  
Physician  
Suicide  
Awareness Day:  
September 17**

**Take Action**

- [AHA Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Digital Toolkit](#)
- [2022 Healthcare Workforce Rescue Package](#)

# Workforce and Behavioral Health



Building on the inventory of well-being efforts from the previous chapter, identify how your organization's clinical and non-clinical teams (and their families) can access behavioral health treatment.

- The inventory should review access to the full range of the behavioral health service continuum. The inventory also should include access to integrated physical and behavioral health services, as 70% of adults with a behavioral health disorder also have a physical health condition, **and costs** are 75% higher. The continuum also should be able to meet the unique needs of children, adolescents, adults and geriatric patients.
- Next, inventory the adequacy of your existing network of **behavioral health providers**. Key questions include:
  - Are there sufficient clinicians who take the insurance coverage of your employees?
  - Are providers taking new patients?
  - Are providers physically accessible?
  - What are the providers or staff linguistic capabilities?
  - Is there access to subspecialty care as noted above: child & adolescent, geriatric?
  - What is the wait time to access a therapist for your health plan, employee assistance program (EAP)?
  - Are there options for hospital staff to see a behavioral health provider not affiliated with your organization and remain covered by your health plan?
  - Is there access to behavioral health via telehealth or other digital treatment platforms?



# New AHA Stress Meter (TM) hub compiles vetted resources for managing stress

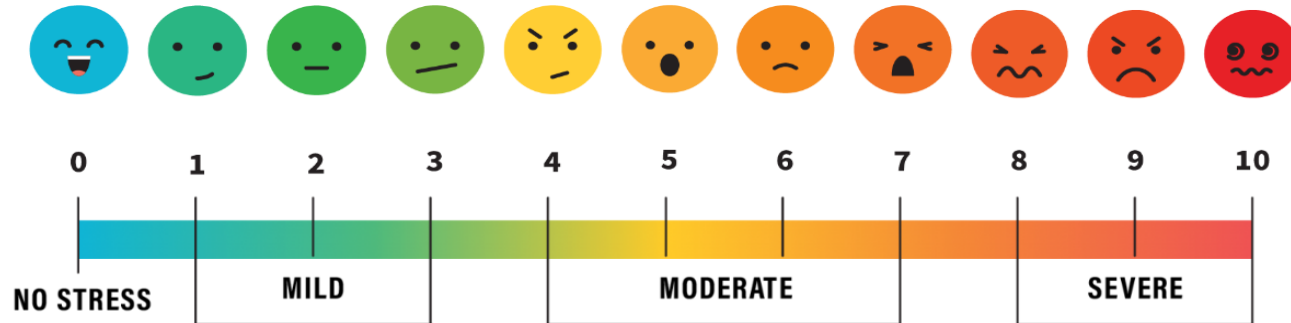
🕒 Aug 22, 2022 - 02:25 PM

LOCATE A  
MENTAL HEALTH  
PROVIDER

## Stress Meter™

### Check In on Your Mental Wellbeing

Everyone has good days and bad days, and sometimes on the bad days we all need a little extra support. How have you been feeling lately? Connect with resources to support your mental well-being by clicking on the face that best represents your current or recent frame of mind.



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[American Psychiatric Association - Find a Psychiatrist](#)

[American Psychological Association - Find a Psychologist](#)

[Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator \(SAMHSA\)](#)

[National Alliance for Mental Illness - Finding a Mental Health Professional](#)

[Psychology Today - Therapist Finder](#)



Advancing Health in America

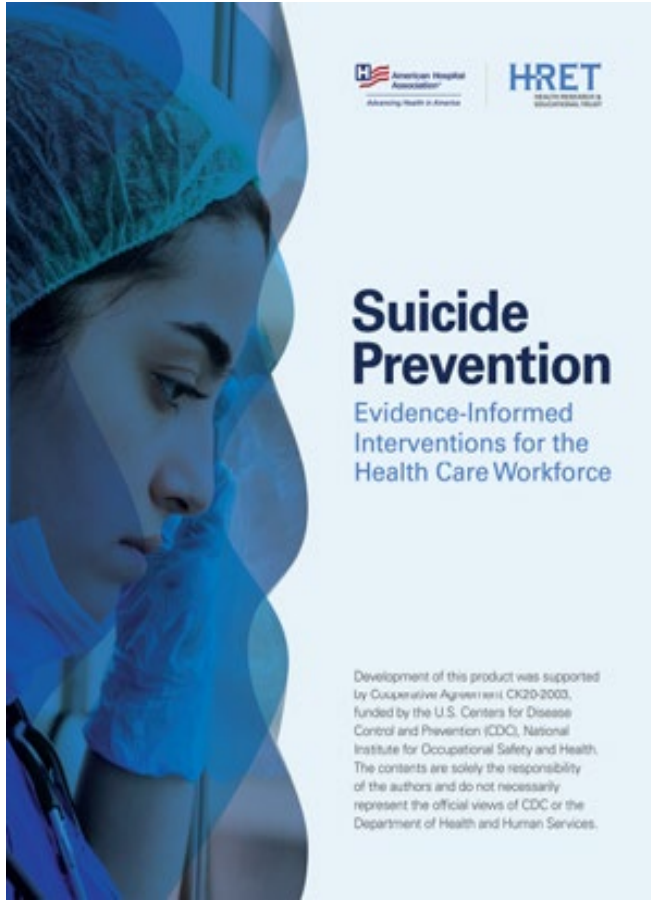
## Resources for Team-Based Stress and Resilience Interventions

Reducing stress and improving mental health is something teams can and should work on together. Use these resources to guide system-, hospital-, and team-based interventions for reducing stress and building resilience.

[View Team Resources](#)



# *New AHA Resource Interventions to Prevent Health Care Worker Suicide*



## *Suicide Prevention: Evidence-Informed Interventions for the Health Care Workforce*

- Report describes key drivers of suicide in the health care workforce
- Provides 12 evidence-informed intervention strategies and metrics
- [New AHA webpage](#) features leaders of AHA member hospitals, sharing stories about the reality of suicide risks among health care workers and how hospital and health system leaders are [creating hope through action](#).

Next Steps

\$500,000 CDC Grant Sep. 30, 2022 – Sep. 29, 2023



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# Trustee Resources on Behavioral Health

🏠 / Resources / Bibliography/Link Page

<https://www.aha.org/behavioralhealth/trustee-resources>



These AHA Trustee Services resources are designed to help hospital and health system boards navigate behavioral health issues including employee burnout, behavioral health integration, acute care, and opioid use disorder.

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## TOPICS

- Burnout
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Workforce Mental Health





## SUICIDE PREVENTION

### How Boards Can Support Suicide Prevention Initiatives

By Sue Ellen Wagner

This interview with Marissa Sicley-Rogers and Jennifer Ferrand highlights Hartford HealthCare's Zero Suicide Initiative and how hospital boards play an important role in making this an organizational priority.

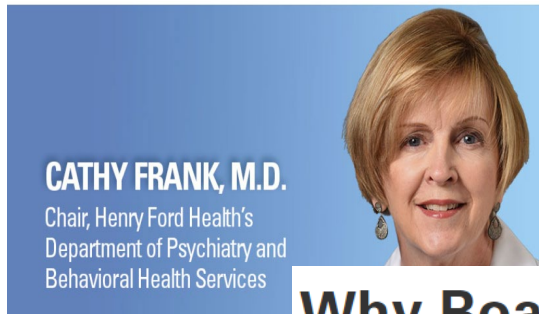


## SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Health Systems Making Suicide Prevention a Priority

By Sue Ellen Wagner

Leaders from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (ASFP) — Christine Moutier, M.D., chief medical officer, and Maggie Mortali, vice president, programs and workplace initiatives — discuss some of the steps hospitals and health systems can take to increase care for front-line health professionals.



### Why Boards Should Focus on Suicide Prevention

Addressing challenges and priorities through the trustee role

BY SUE ELLEN WAGNER

## September 2022

### SUICIDE PREVENTION

**How Boards Can Support Suicide Prevention Initiatives**  
**Hartford HealthCare's Marissa Sicley-Rogers and Jennifer Ferrand discuss their Zero Suicide Initiative**

### SUICIDE PREVENTION

**Health Systems Making Suicide Prevention a Priority**  
**AFSP's Christine Moutier and Maggie Mortali discuss programs and tools that support health care workers**

# Boardroom Briefs

Concise, shareable resources on topics relevant to boards



## Boardroom Brief

Behavioral Health

### How Boards Can Support Workforce Behavioral Health

**P**eople working in health care face incredible challenges that take a toll on their physical and mental health every day. A number of health care professionals experience burnout, depression and other forms of distress, and are at increased risk for suicide. These challenges, exacerbated by the pandemic, have heightened the importance of making the behavioral health of health care workers a priority and providing easy access to awareness, prevention and treatment resources.

This document, developed by AHA Trustee Services and AHA's behavioral health team, intends to educate and raise awareness for trustees about suicide prevention and the role that hospital and health system boards can play in this very important public health issue. This document also provides useful resources for boards to create a conversation around reducing the risks of and preventing suicides in the health care workforce.

Governing boards are responsible for setting the strategy for their hospitals and/or health systems. This includes strategies to recruit, retain, and sustain a culture of psychological safety for the organization's health care workforce. A culture of psychological safety is important because it can ease stigma and reduce concerns that health care professionals may have about seeking treatment. And, without such a culture, the risks of worker burnout, suicide and unintended patient harm may increase.

Boards should be engaged in discussion about suicide prevention to ensure there is an organizational strategy in place to keep their hospital and health system health care workforce healthy. When there is awareness of the importance of this issue and commitment at the highest level of the organization from the board, that commitment can be turned into actionable steps that can be meaningfully undertaken by all parts of the organization.



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# Discussion Questions

- 1. What is your health system leadership doing to engage Trustees in suicide prevention as an organizational strategy?***
- 2. What are some of the barriers—logistical, legal or perceived—to implementing steps to support the reduce the risks of suicide and support the mental well-being of the workforce?***
- 3. What would Trustees find helpful to initiate Board conversations and provide guidance on steps their organization should consider to have a workforce environment built on psychological safety, reduce suicide risks and strengthen a culture of support for the workforce's mental well-being?***