

President's Letter

July 21, 2020



Charlene Fitzgerald
CCFP, FCFP, FRRMS
President

New CMA Wellness Support Line Now Available

Dear Colleagues,

Recognizing the growing need to support the well-being of physicians due to increased workloads and stress, the NLMA is pleased to participate in the Canadian Medical Association's (CMA) new [Wellness Support Line](#). This is a new 24/7 mental health support and counselling service which has been specifically tailored for physicians, learners and their families to help them manage the stressors they're facing.

The Wellness Support Line is a confidential fully bilingual service, with ongoing support in multiple languages. The service is offered through Morneau Shepell, and all calls are fielded by counsellors trained to address the specific needs of medical professionals. There is no cost to use this service and no requirement to be a member of the CMA.

Existing *inConfidence* Clients

The Wellness Support Line replaces the NLMA's *inConfidence* Employee and Family Assistance Program (also offered through Morneau Shepell). *inConfidence* will continue to be available until the end of July 2020 for new clients or inquiries. For NLMA members who may be actively using the *inConfidence* program, the services and counselling will continue to be available until the individualized program is complete.

Highlights of the new Wellness Support Line:

- Short-term, solution focused support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- All calls are handled by a dedicated team of fully certified counsellors with a minimum of Masters level training, specifically trained to address the unique needs and challenges faced by medical learners and physicians.
- The team is capable of providing immediate crisis counselling, conducting risk assessments and matching callers to appropriate service(s).
- Fully bilingual services are offered in English and French, and ongoing support is available in multiple languages and modalities to match diverse cultural, linguistic and geographic needs.
- Callers will be provided with linkages to provincial health programs to augment support, and referrals to other services will be made where appropriate.
- Eligible users include: medical students; resident doctors; fellows; practising physicians; retired physicians; spouses, domestic or common-law partners; and, children under the age of 25 who live home or attend school full time while living away.

According to the 2017 CMA National Physician Health Survey, 30% of physicians reported high levels of burnout, and 1 in 3 physicians screened positive for depression. Despite these statistics, medical culture made it hard to reach out for help. During these unprecedented times, now more than ever you or a family member may feel the need for support. We all share in these challenges and sometimes we all need some help to get through.

For more information on the **Wellness Support Line** visit <https://www.cma.ca/supportline/> or to use the services of the program please call **1-844-675-9222**.

Sincerely,

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