When we join together, we can heal healthcare.

It may seem like we’re moving at lightning speed, but that’s because we have no time to waste. The recent CDC report “Vital Signs” identifies that we’re in a mental health crisis for health workers which must be addressed. Every day that we delay healing healthcare is another day that those who care for us are cut off from the support they need, and deserve, to care for themselves.

The Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes’ Foundation partners with stakeholders across the country to connect the why, the what, and the how of creating structural change within the healthcare system. Our common sense, inclusive approach in a complex, siloed industry is greatly appreciated. Thank you for being with us in this work.

Look at what we’ve done together in 2023:

1. Through implementation of our ALL IN: Licensure and Credentialing Toolkit we have removed barriers to mental health care for physicians across the country by helping to change overly invasive and stigmatizing questions about prior mental health diagnosis and treatment. The number of states which are now compliant with our medical licensing recommendations increased by 50%. The majority of states (26) have earned our WellBeing First Champion Badge for Licensing which benefits over 670,000 physicians.

2. On October 31, we launched a national education and awareness campaign with the CDC’s National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) entitled “Impact Wellbeing” which includes a challenge for hospital leaders to use our ALL IN: Licensure and Credentialing Toolkit and obtain the WellBeing First Champion Badge.

3. 70% of Virginia hospitals have already obtained the badge for changing their credentialing questions to remove stigmatizing language about prior mental health. A number of additional large hospital systems have completed the challenge including Northwell Health in New York and Henry Ford Health in Detroit. In total, we have awarded our WellBeing First Champion Badge to 75 hospitals and 59 urgent care centers. Twenty-one additional health systems are in process. This benefits over 127,000 health workers.

4. The Foundation was mentioned in 465+ articles and interviews with a total reach of 2.6 billion viewers. Through our national outreach we’ve sought to raise awareness about barriers in seeking mental health support, share crucial guidance, and amplify efforts to ensure healthcare worker wellbeing. We also authored four publications, garnered extensive social media coverage, and spoke to over 32,000 health workers and leaders across the country at 75 keynotes, panels and events.
Our solutions are bringing hope to healthcare.

With your support, in 2024:

We will work toward our goal of 100% of states in compliance with our medical and nursing licensing recommendations. We will scale our ALL IN: Caring for Caregivers solutions to hundreds of additional hospitals and healthcare systems nationwide. And we will ensure that our workforce understands the positive changes we are making to the healthcare system. To that end, we are working with members of Congress to designate March 18, 2024, Health Worker Wellbeing Day, the same day as the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act was signed into law.

"I had my own fair share of depression for a good seven years leading up to medical school. I’m very happy to see this year that the question of whether you’ve ever had a mental illness or if you’ve ever been treated for mental illness, it’s not on there [on the medical licensing application]. It’s phrased differently in a way that is a lot fairer. The fact that any kind of licensing would penalize someone for recognizing that they had something going on that they needed help with. That should be praised. The Foundation’s mission is saying that it is okay to be a wounded healer and you should be proud of it."

Christopher Thomas Veal, MD
Certified Trauma-Informed Care Physician, Carle Foundation Hospital

"My chief addiction was working. General surgery residency is very good at keeping you busy until you fall asleep. During college, medical school, and surgery residency, I had fluctuations where I had major depressive episodes. Everything was ‘hard enough’ to explain it. No one knew how to talk about it. No one knew what to do about it. The Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes’ Foundation, myself and others are trying to change the conversation so that self-care is a professional responsibility, as big a responsibility as taking care of your patients. We need to advocate for ourselves and our colleagues and we need to approach this on every level from self-care to a cultural shift."

Carrie Cunningham, MD, MPH
Associate Professor of Surgery, Harvard Medical School, Head, Endocrine Surgery Program, Massachusetts General Hospital

"I had my first ever panic attack during my third year of medical school. I can honestly say that the best decision I made was asking for help and seeking care when I needed it. I’ve also experienced the tragic loss of my friend and classmate by suicide. In response, I felt compelled to form a coalition of medical students who advocate for the wellbeing of clinicians in training. We are banding together to enact change across institutions. I’m excited that we are launching a ‘Humans of Medical School’ campaign to address the feelings of loneliness and isolation that many of us feel in medical school and to provide a sense of normalcy in having people share their stories."

Shreya Mendava, Medical Student, University of Virginia
Chair, Medical Student Coalition, Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes’ Foundation

We now know that change is possible in a short period of time with focus and attention. It’s your generous contribution that makes it a reality. Thank you for joining us in this vital mission. Please donate now.
drlornabreen.org