

## **ALL IN: Caring for New Jersey's Caregivers Initiative Launches to Improve Healthcare Workers' Mental Health and Wellbeing**

*Leading New Jersey Healthcare Organizations Collaborate to Make New Jersey the Best State for Our Healthcare Workforce's Mental Health and Wellbeing*

**Princeton, NJ (May 15, 2025)** – In recognition of Mental Health Action Day, the Medical Society of New Jersey, New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute, New Jersey Hospital Association, New Jersey State Nurses Association, and Johnson & Johnson announced a new statewide initiative with the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation to address stigmatizing policies and practices that discourage health workers from seeking mental health care. The ALL IN: Caring for New Jersey's Caregivers initiative seeks to make New Jersey the best state in the country for our healthcare workforce's mental health and wellbeing.

"We're honored to collaborate with New Jersey's leading healthcare organizations to build a system that prioritizes mental health for those who care for us day-in and day-out," said Corey Feist, co-founder and CEO of the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation. "Together, we can make New Jersey the best state for our healthcare workforce's wellbeing, and, ultimately, ensure quality, safe patient care for every New Jerseyan."

New Jersey's health workers deserve the right to pursue mental health care privately. However, overly invasive mental health questions in licensing and credentialing applications prevent health workers from seeking support and [increase](#) the risk of suicide. Together these leading organizations are working with the State of New Jersey Legislature to change this for all current and future licensed healthcare workers with the introduction of S.4286/A.5594.

"New Jersey's healthcare professionals provide essential care, often under emergent, highly-charged circumstances. Their mental wellbeing must be a top priority," said Cathy Bennett, President and CEO of the New Jersey Hospital Association. "Removing unnecessary and stigmatizing mental health questions from state licensing applications is a commonsense step toward creating a culture where healthcare workers feel safe seeking care. By supporting this legislation, we can build a stronger, more resilient healthcare workforce for the future."

"Reforming mental health-related licensing questions is not just a policy update—it's a moral imperative. Nurses deserve the same privacy and protection around mental health

care as the patients they serve. We fully support legislation that upholds that principle," said Judy Schmidt, DHA, MSN, RN, CEO of the New Jersey State Nurses Association.

Additionally, health systems, hospitals, and medical groups are being encouraged to use the Foundation's [free resources](#) to audit and change their credentialing applications and peer reference forms to be free of intrusive mental health questions and stigmatizing language. By then verifying the applications, they can be recognized as Wellbeing First Champions and showcase how their organization is committed to protecting their health workers' mental health.

"A culture that punishes vulnerability has no place in modern medicine," said Larry Downs, CEO of the Medical Society of New Jersey. "By reforming outdated policies, we're not only protecting the mental health of our physicians, we're building a system where strength and resilience include the courage to ask for help."

"At the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute, we know that the wellbeing of our health care workforce is vital to high-quality care. Outdated and stigmatizing credentialing practices discourage healthcare workers from seeking the mental health support they deserve in their often high-pressure, demanding professions," said Tyla Minniear, Chief Operating Officer of the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute. "The ALL IN initiative represents a critical step toward creating a culture of safety and support – one where healthcare professionals can prioritize their mental health."

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### **About the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation**

The Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation's vision is a world where seeking mental health care is universally viewed as a sign of strength for health workers. We believe every health worker should have access to the mental health care and professional wellbeing support that they may need, at every moment in their career. We carry out this mission by accelerating solutions, advancing policies, and making connections that put our healthcare workforce's wellbeing first. For more information, visit [drlornabreen.org](http://drlornabreen.org).

### **About the Medical Society of New Jersey**

Founded in 1766, the Medical Society of New Jersey (MSNJ) is the oldest professional society in the United States. MSNJ has a mission to promote the betterment of the public health and the science and the art of medicine, to enlighten public opinion in regard to the problems of medicine, and to safeguard the rights of the practitioners of medicine. MSNJ represents all medical disciplines and serves as an advocate for patient and physician

rights. Its members are dedicated to ensuring delivery of the highest quality medical care throughout New Jersey. For more information, visit [www.msnj.org](http://www.msnj.org).

### **About the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute**

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute's (Quality Institute) mission is to improve the safety, quality, and affordability of health care for everyone. Our membership comes from all stakeholders in health care. Together with our 100 plus members, we are working towards a world where all people receive safe, equitable, and affordable health care and live their healthiest lives.

### **About the New Jersey Hospital Association**

The New Jersey Hospital Association is a not-for-profit trade association committed to improving the health of New Jerseyans. It works with its nearly 400 members to deliver quality, accessible and affordable healthcare to patients and communities.

### **About the New Jersey State Nurses Association**

The New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA) represents the interests of 125,000 registered nurses and advanced practice nurses as an advocate for the nursing profession. NJSNA, which was established in 1901, is a constituent member of the American Nurses Association. NJSNA's lobbying arm continues to protect the nursing profession through legislative victories. Its nonprofit foundation, Institute for Nursing, helps nurses further their careers by providing continuing education, scholarships and research grants in addition to invaluable networking opportunities. For more information, nurses can visit [www.njsna.org](http://www.njsna.org) or contact NJSNA at [njsna@njsna.org](mailto:njsna@njsna.org) or (609) 883-5335.