

Volume 11

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Board Office Hours

The Board Office is closed to visitors;
board staff is currently working remotely,
so please email or leave a voicemail.

Monday	8:30–5 pm
Tuesday	8:30–5 pm
Wednesday	8:30–5 pm
Thursday	8:30–5 pm
Friday	8:30–5 pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

Message From the Board Chair

On behalf of the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors (NCBLCMHC), we welcome you to the fall edition of the *Board Insider*. The board has been busy bringing several longtime initiatives closer to reality. The first initiative is implementation of our Impaired Professionals Program. This program will allow counselors who may be impaired and unable to effectively work with clients to receive the help they need to get them back to work safely. The board was given statutory authority to develop and implement this program back in January 2020, and it has taken several years to bring it to fruition. You will hear more details about this program in the coming months.



Dr. Mark Schwarze
LCMHCS, NCC, LCAS, CCS
Board Chair

Additionally, we are moving forward with developing our Supervision Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP will involve discussions and actions by the board and stakeholders to increase supervision capacity, improve supervision quality, and review supervisor and supervisee administrative tasks. Supervision is an integral part of counselor development, and the board hopes to contribute to the conversation of how supervisors and supervisees can be supported.

Finally, the board has a representative on the Counseling Compact Commission, and we remain committed to a process that allows portability for our licensees. Our delegate keeps our board informed of the latest developments with the compact. In that spirit, the board is coming close to implementation of reciprocity agreements with three neighboring states. We have entered into these agreements to provide a bridge while the Compact Commission works toward implementation. More information about these agreements is coming soon.

Please reach out to me or Executive Director Melonie Davis with any concerns or suggestions. We are committed to being an open and transparent board and staff. Thanks for all that you do.

Warmly,
Dr. Mark Schwarze
Board Chair, NCBLCMHC

NCBLCMHC Mission

The mission of the Board under NC GS Article 24 section 90-329 states that it is declared to be the public policy of this State that the activities of persons who render counseling services to the public be regulated to insure the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare.

A Legacy of Service In Memory of Dr. Gwendolyn Keith Newsome



**“May there be comfort in knowing that someone so special will never be forgotten.”
~ Julie Hébert**

Dr. Gwen K. Newsome was a visionary, advocate, therapeutic giant, and keen leader for the profession of counseling. Dr. Newsome spent her entire life devoted to service, but most importantly implementing measures that endorsed mental health and wellness for individuals throughout their life span. Dr. Newsome served many professional capacities. She was a counselor educator, researcher, clinical supervisor, therapist, and agent for social justice. Those who knew her well would say that she strongly believed in the efficacy of the mental health profession. Dr. Newsome’s wealth of knowledge, advocacy, and experience lead to her appointment to the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors (NCBLCMHC). During her appointment, Dr. Newsome served in the capacity of an active board member and Ethics Chair. Post board appointment, Dr. Newsome continued her efforts to strengthen the practice of mental health counseling in the State of North Carolina by serving as an ethics consultant for the NCBLCMHC up until her untimely death on August 12, 2023. Dr. Newsom’s ability to connect, engage, and support individuals of diverse backgrounds and experiences spoke volumes, evidenced by her calm nature, nurturing spirit, and delightful presence. She touched, strengthened, and assisted many toward the path of health and healing. Her legacy and life’s work will continue to live on through all that were blessed to know and experience her. She will be missed, but never forgotten!

Rest in Power, Dr. Newsome.

Dr. Yasmin E. Gay
Vice Chair
Ethics Chair

North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors

Meet the Board

Mark Schwarze
Board Chair
LCMHCS
Congressional District 5

Dr. Yasmin Gay
Vice Chair
LCMHCS
Congressional District 6

Gussie Tate
Secretary/Treasurer
Congressional District 7

Edward “Neal” Carter
Public Member
Congressional District 1

Dr. Levette Scott
LCMHC
Congressional District 2

**It is with much excitement that we welcome our two newest board members,
Dr. Nicole Stargell and Bruce Garris.**

Dr. Nicole Stargell is an associate professor in the Department of Counseling at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. She serves as the department chair, testing coordinator, and chapter faculty co-advisor of the Phi Sigma Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota. She is a member of the UNC-P Institutional Review Board and the editorial board for Teaching and Supervision in Counseling and is the editor of NCCA's Carolina Counselor. Stargell earned her doctoral degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and her master's degree from Youngstown State University in Ohio. Stargell is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor, a Licensed School Counselor, a Board Certified-TeleMental Health Provider, and a National Certified Counselor. Her counseling specialties include telecounseling, diagnosis and treatment, and grief and loss.

"I am honored to have been appointed to serve on the North Carolina Board for Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors because I can advocate for professional counselors at the individual, state, and national level." — Dr. Stargell

Marshall “Bruce” Garris, MAEd, LCMHC-S, began a second career as a therapist after 15 years as a national-level trainer, program director, and executive director with the YMCA in both North Carolina and Houston, Texas. At the same time, he also served part time as a Methodist youth pastor. He has worked in a variety of contexts while in the mental health field including in hospital settings, doing community agency work, leading an ACTT team, and he is now in a private practice with almost 15,000 client sessions to date. He is a Licensed Clinical Supervisor in North Carolina.

Historically a Rotarian and volunteer with many local, state, and professional organizations, he has also served on the Eastpointe LME/MCO Clinical Advisory Committee and worked as a member of the Trillium ACTT Coalition. For the past five years, he has also been an adjunct professor in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Graduate Program at UNC-Pembroke, Wilmington Extension Campus, and has conducted more than 40 workshops regionally and nationally over the years on grief and loss, hope, and the “Skill of Happiness.”

"I'm honored to be appointed; I look forward to learning more about the 'bigger picture' of our profession and hope to find meaningful ways to contribute!" — Bruce Garris



Awareness Months

OCTOBER

October is Depression Mental Health Awareness Month: The goal is to increase understanding, eliminate stigma, and to help educate about how depression and other mental health issues impact the people in our communities.

NOVEMBER

November is Early Childhood mental Health Awareness Month: This focuses on infants and preschoolers learning the skills needed to be emotionally connected to their world.



Supervisor Responsibility Reminders

- As an LCMHCS you are responsible for submitting a Quarterly Supervision Report within the month following each calendar quarter (for example, the Q1 report for January–March should be submitted by the end of April).
- You are also responsible for submitting a Final Supervision Report within 2 weeks of ending supervision with the associate.
- Supervisor and licensee together are jointly responsible for submitting the Supervision Contract, maintaining a supervision log, and meeting together as appropriate throughout the supervision time.
- Both the Quarterly and Final Supervision Reports can be submitted either by mail or through the Counselor Gateway.
- Note: Only LCMHCSs can access reports using the Counselor Gateway. If you are a Qualified Supervisor (QS) you will need to submit reports by mail.

A Note to LCMHCSs

When applying for or renewing LCMHCS license or the Qualified Supervisor (QS) credential, continuing counselor education must be provided by one of the following national organizations, their affiliates, or by a vendor approved by one of the following organizations:

- American Association of State Counseling Boards (aascb.org)
- American Counseling Association (counseling.org);
- Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (crccertification.com); or
- National Board for Certified Counselors (nbcc.org).

Mark Your Calendars 2024

Jan. 26–27

Board meeting

Feb. 17

Deadline: Receipt of application material to be reviewed at April 2024 Board meeting

March 1

Board Hearings

April 18–19

Board meeting

NOTE: In order for an applicant to be licensed at the Board of Directors meeting, all application supporting documents should be in the office prior to the deadline(s) listed above.

Please visit ncblcmhc.org/boardinfo/calendar to view the full board calendar.

NCBLCMHC Holiday Schedule 2024 (January–March)

MLK Jr. Holiday.....	Monday, Jan. 15
Presidents' Day	Monday, Feb. 19
Spring Holiday	Friday, March 29

* Please note that the NCBLCMHC Office will be closed for winter break from Dec. 22–Jan. 2, 2024.

Professional Corporations Renewal Deadline is Dec. 31

SAVE TIME BY RENEWING ONLINE!

The 2024 license renewal window opens on Jan. 1

Licensure renewal procedures apply to LCMHC Associates, LCMHCs, and LCMHC Supervisors. Renewals may be submitted as early as Jan. 1 of the renewal year. All licensees shall complete requirements before renewal can be issued.
Deadline for receipt of renewal is June 20 of the renewal year.

**Click Here to
Renew Now** 

Link to: <https://portal.ncblcmhc.org/>

Tip: Add a recurring event to your phone's calendar to remind you when renewals are due.

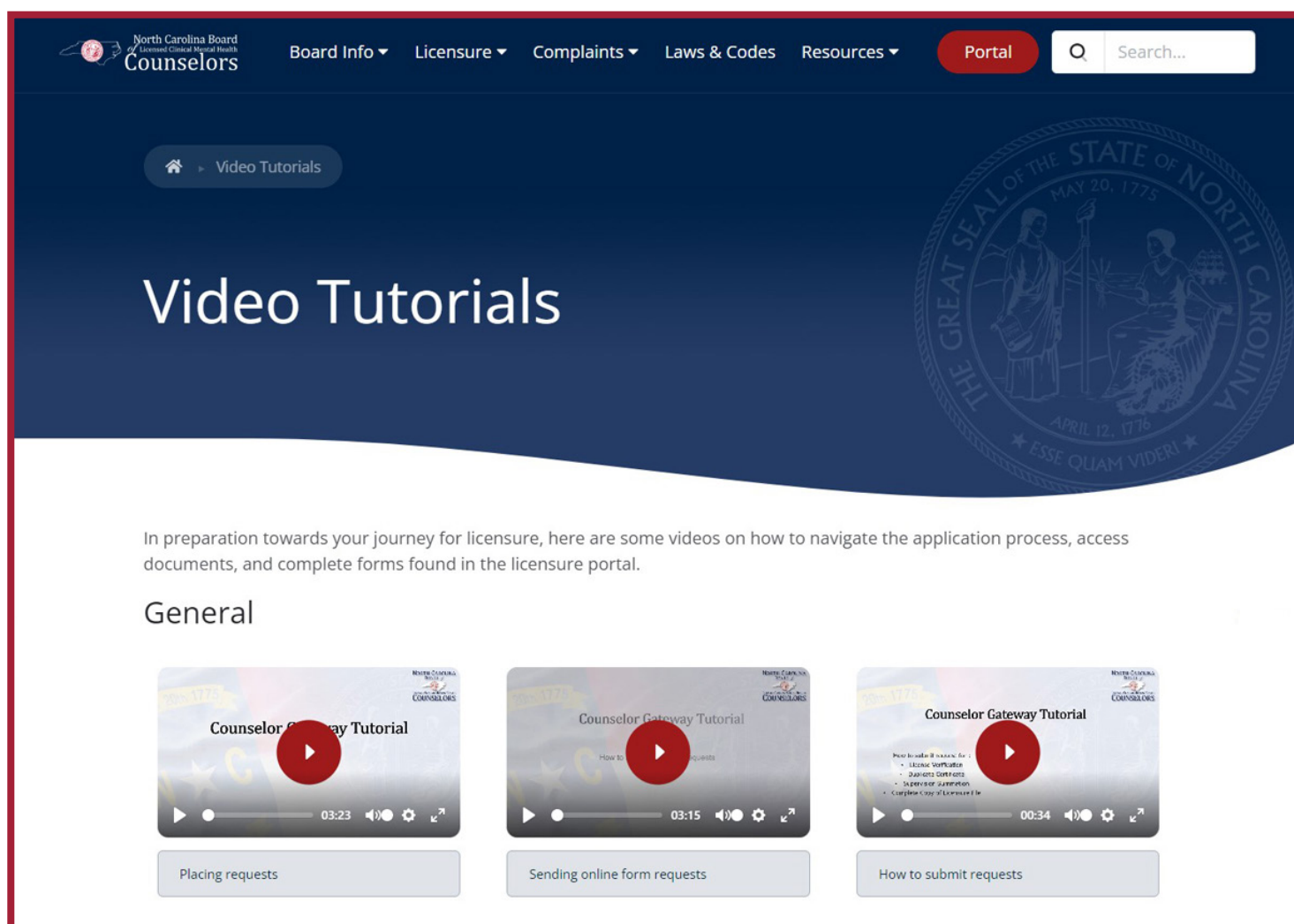
Be sure to keep your contact information updated to avoid missing important emails from the board.

Accessing your Counselor Gateway

Check the status of your renewal, view your supervision documents, and manage your contact information via the Counselor Gateway Online Portal.

<https://portal.ncblcmhc.org/>

To watch video tutorials on how to navigate the application process, access documents, and complete forms, visit www.ncblcmhc.org/Resources/Tutorials



The screenshot shows the website of the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors. The header includes the board's logo and navigation links: Board Info, Licensure, Complaints, Laws & Codes, Resources, and a red Portal button. A search bar is also present. Below the header, a breadcrumb trail shows 'Video Tutorials'. The main heading is 'Video Tutorials'. A paragraph states: 'In preparation towards your journey for licensure, here are some videos on how to navigate the application process, access documents, and complete forms found in the licensure portal.' Under the 'General' category, three video thumbnails are displayed, each with a play button and a duration. Below each video is a caption box.

Video Title	Duration	Caption
Counselor Gateway Tutorial	03:23	Placing requests
Counselor Gateway Tutorial	03:15	Sending online form requests
Counselor Gateway Tutorial	00:34	How to submit requests

Professional Identity: Inspiration, Education, and ... Perspiration?

As a younger person, my perception of what therapists do was influenced by popular culture and comedians. Before I had ever considered going to graduate school, I had heard a lot of jokes about “shrinks.” As I got older, I started noticing counselors and therapists popping up as side characters on TV shows, but what I saw these people doing didn’t seem like anything that I now know counselors do. TV therapists are often playing the role of the wacky best friend, an advice giver, or of someone who themselves is so “crazy” that they provide comic relief, frequently breaking the dramatic tension rather than attending to it.

So how do we know, as therapists, what we are REALLY supposed to do? It’s a strange phenomenon. If you play golf, you can watch the very best golfers in the world play every week. If you bake, are into fashion, or enjoy exercise, you can watch the best in those fields across many media platforms. That’s true for almost any hobby and profession, except ours. I believe therapy is the ONLY profession where you can’t really watch anyone else do it! So how do we learn what great therapy looks like? When I was considering going to school to make this work my profession, I suppose I was under the impression that a good counselor or therapist dispensed wisdom, like some kind of guru on a mountaintop, or maybe Yoda from the “Star Wars” movies. Before you became a professional, what were the thoughts that you had about what you might be doing for a living? Any preconceived notions about therapy and counseling?

Now, I know that even in the counseling world itself, there are differences and distinctions among different roles.

School counseling, for example, has clearly begun to differentiate itself from the clinical mental health side of the profession as it begins to narrow its focus on a very specific and specialized population and set of circumstances. I think that’s a wonderful thing and am glad that profession is focusing more specifically on what it wants to do well, and what it wants to be known for. We would probably describe that as the evolution of that field’s professional identity. In clinical mental health, we also have been looking at our own professional identity more intentionally over the past few years, and that has brought us to a place where big things are starting to happen.

Backing up just a little bit, it’s important to remember where our professional identity as Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors officially begins, and in our case here in North Carolina, that begins with the eight core areas of study as defined by CACREP. They are:

- a. human growth and development*
- b. social and cultural diversity*
- c. counseling and helping relationships*
- d. group counseling and group work*
- e. career development*
- f. assessment and testing*
- g. research and program evaluation, and*
- h. professional counseling orientation and ethical practice*

Anyone wishing to practice as a counselor in North Carolina now must have demonstrated competence in all eight of these areas, and in addition must also agree to practice in an ethical manner according to the ACA Code of Ethics. These are the “hard skills”; the things that technically define our professional identity. In adopting these standards, and requiring a CACREP-accredited graduate degree, we are finding that we have more consistency across our profession in North Carolina. There’s also another benefit: We have found more commonality with counseling professionals in other states as well. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will see more about developments that may potentially allow North Carolina counselors to practice in other states. This commonality of professional identity both within our own state and nationally facilitates commonality in educational programs, continuing education, and professional development, which allows us all to ethically and more consistently serve our clients as a greater community.

Simply put, those eight CACREP core areas define WHAT we do.

Within that technical definition of professional identity, I also think it's wonderful that there is space for variety in counseling styles, techniques, approaches, populations we serve, settings in which we serve, and our own personalities that we bring to the table as we facilitate our clients' growth. In my mind, there are three qualities that define the "softer" side of professional identity: inspiration, education, and perspiration. The personality, temperament, and personal experiences that the clinicians themselves bring to a therapeutic relationship.

This is the heart of HOW we do what we do.

I see inspirational counselors spending time with clients focusing on building hope, value, and acceptance that we all have an inherent worthiness as humans and as members of our communities. They motivate clients and focus on developing self-esteem. Educational counselors are those spending time teaching and developing skills for effective living and cultivating processes for managing difficult situations, thoughts, and emotions, all while building confidence in clients' beliefs that they can be effective in managing their lives. Their focus is on building self-efficacy.

Counselors who work from a "perspiration" perspective relate to clients with informed and authentic empathy, as they may have some personal understanding of what a client may be experiencing.

They've "been there and done that." But rather than competing with a client over who has had more difficult experiences, they accurately validate based on their own lived experiences, which informs how and when they communicate, challenge, and support. Their focus is based on building resilience.

When I think of the counselors I personally admire, they seem to have some of each of these different approaches and apply each as needed in different situations: the ability to build hope, to help clients develop skills for accomplishing goals, and to offer authentic and appropriate validation. When you think of yourself and your own counseling style, which of these seems to best describe you? Maybe some of each based on the clients and circumstances? Yes, I thought so. Add these three words to yourself as you consider your own identity and someone who works in this helping profession. You ARE inspirational! You ARE an educator! And yes, you certainly ARE a living role model of resilience! Yes, therapy is the ONLY profession where you can't really watch anyone else do it. So how do we learn what great therapy looks like? Don't look out the window. Look in the mirror.

— M. Bruce Garriss



“The Therapist’s Prayer”

**Why do we do it, a job down this path? It
doesn’t add up if you just do the math:
Therapist, Counselor, Clinician or “Shrink”
It ought to be easy: Just help people
think!**

**But humans are tough and resistant to change
Not even for love will their lives rearrange.
Examples on TV are nothing like us
We might work for weeks just to build simple trust ...**

**Yes, our job is unique, and the work never ends
Yet it’s one of the few you can’t do for your friends!
We have to make money. We can’t work for free,
But we’ll take the next closest: a “sliding scale” fee!**

**Our greatest successes, of course, stay untold.
And we never shall know how their lives may
unfold... The seeds that we plant may not sprout up
for years, Though deep in the moment we take all
their tears.**

**On call day and night, no duty we shirk,
A strange occupation; people are work!
So why do this job and answer the call?**

Because, thank God, it’s most “human” of all ...

M. Bruce Garris

A Heartfelt Farewell

On behalf of all the members of the NCBLCMHC, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Denauvo Robinson and Charles Wentz for their many years of visionary guidance, exceptional leadership, and unconditional commitment serving as members of the executive board.



Dr. Denauvo Robinson

Dr. Robinson has over 50 years of extensive people-related experience in education and community-related settings. He retired after serving as president and CEO of Albemarle Alliance for Children and Families and started a private mental health practice. Dr. Robinson has bachelor's and master's degrees from Truman State University and a doctorate from Grambling State University. He is a National Certified Counselor and a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor and Counselor Supervisor in the state of North Carolina.

Dr. Robinson serves on numerous civic and social boards. He is past-president of the American Association of State Counseling Boards and serves on the Executive Committee of the Counseling Compact Commission. He also serves on the board of trustees for the College of the Albemarle. Dr. Robinson has previously served as chair of the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors, chair of the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools Board of Education, and chair of Trillium Health Services Governing Board. He is a 33rd degree Mason and a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity. Dr. Robinson is married to Jan King Robinson, JD. They have two adult children, a daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren.

"During my tenure on the board we experienced many accomplishments. A few of the most notable include contracting with our current management company, doubling the size of the staff, and creating an Executive Director Management system. We opened up the rules portion of our general statute, changed the name of our board, the individual license, and adopted CACREP standards. We were also one of the first states to join the Counseling Compact Commission," he says.

"My years on the counselor licensing board are among the top highlights of my career. I am proud to have had the opportunity to be of service to the counseling profession. I have been extremely fortunate to have worked with dedicated professionals and amazing staffs."

— Dr. Robinson



Charles Wentz

Charles Wentz and his wife, Susan, are proud parents of two children and five grandchildren. He is a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) in The Presbyterian Church (USA) and is currently commissioned to the pastoral ministry of Scotland Family Counseling Center in Laurinburg, N.C. Wentz is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor Supervisor and National Certified Counselor at the counseling center. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's from UNC-Pembroke. He served as a board member on NCBLCMHC from 2017–2023. Wentz has contributed to following initiatives during his tenure on the board:

- Increasing board staff, including the appointment of an executive director, an assistant executive director, and an ethics consultant and board investigator
- Changing the name of our credential to LCMHC to include the clinical designation
- Improving the ethical review and investigative processes
- Improving laws and rules regarding our licensure
- Working toward an Impaired Professionals Program for our licensees
- Promoting and approving reciprocity of licensure with other states and inclusion in the Interstate Counseling Compact

“Exciting points in my board experience have been working with an incredible group of board members and staff to improve the licensure process for our profession.”

— **Charles Wentz**

Don't Miss Important Messages About Your License!

All LCMHCAs shall only provide counseling while under the supervision of a qualified clinical supervisor with a supervision contract approved by the board. You must receive approval of the supervision contract prior to rendering counseling services. At least one contract is required per supervisor. You may have multiple supervisors, but a separate contract is needed for each of the supervisors. Notification must be given to the board within two weeks of termination of or a change in supervision contract. If not receiving supervision, it shall be the responsibility of the LCMHCA to report such to the board. A Final Report is to be filed at conclusion or termination of supervision. If you have multiple supervisors, a Final Report is required from each supervisor.

**SUPERVISION MUST CONTINUE UNTIL THE LCMHCA/APPLICANT
RECEIVES THE LCMHC LICENSE.**

ATTENTION:

Effective Jan. 31, 2024, the NCBLCMHC will not retroactively approve supervision contracts or supervision hours earned without an approved supervision contract on file. Please be advised, if you are currently receiving or providing supervision and you have not received written approval from the board, you will need to submit all required documentation no later than Jan. 31, 2024.

Please visit

www.ncblcmhc.org/Licensure/Current/LCMHCA

**to review important information regarding supervised
professional practice.**

What's New

NCBLCMHC to Launch Impaired Professionals Program

The NCBLMHC is pleased to announce our partnership with North Carolina Physicians Health Program (NCPHP)

What is NCPHP? The North Carolina Physicians Health Program provides North Carolina's health care and Clinical Mental Health Counselors with evaluation, monitoring, and advocacy support for substance use disorders. This allows them to participate in a sustainable recovery program and serve the public in a safe manner.

NCPHP also provides assistance with mental health disorders as well as stress and burnout.

North Carolina Physicians Health Program (NCPHP) helps the board's licensees and applicants for licensure in screening, monitoring, recovery, and support from any impairments, including substance use disorders, burnout, compassion fatigue, and other mental health issues. The program will also be available for self-referred professionals so they can receive the help they need. The program will become available early next year. Additional information regarding referrals and self-referrals will be posted on the board's website soon.

If you wish to learn more about NCPHP, visit

<https://ncphp.org/>



Just for Fun!

Puzzles are a healthy way to relieve stress, reduce anxiety, improve focus, and relax.
Decompress with this word find.

B B B L C U Y U G K G K A J Z D P G X D I E E P I
X Q M C Y X R N I A U H W U K M M G V T B I O X G
X U K X H Q Y K S Z F L I Y A V B Z E A Y K M W R
Y Y J O V O F E O D I F F E O C C Y E K L M O H A
S T S E O M J C U P J J I M G G A T A E J O M O T
U J A I V S Q T B O R N T R O O A A C A N H J X I
A O A L C D D W U U W A D T M W X U U B F V A A T
E U L T K D I N H L C P E X R A I X F A X C G O U
T R G U D T G W Y U B G R G S Y T B P T T O L J D
R N I N Z X O T V R X I U Q S E N I B H P L N P E
R A N G E J Z F D D Y Q R R H H C E O M N O P J G
Z L E B O S L N R D Y W E C H H O J W N T R G R R
K I G U I E X O N I Q L A N I N R W Z T S J P S F
X G U J V I B Q B C E G D N R V M D E T H D Z Y H
Q J A H J I E K A U W N B X C R B A M R K I R N A
P W C T P Q P S R I C N D K O Q F Q S O B R N A U
I D U W U W O I I S J P K S O H G Z G S B U Z G W
H U G S O M E O N E X A T H K W K D Z L A R P Z S
H K D K E X E R C I S E C M K I C I S R G G P T B
M K Q K Z V E S X G U V H X H A C B D G E K E V T
V W K O O A D P E U M E S U F E P S G U I L W X R
P Q P P X U U P E O O N N O C Q S Y Y S Z A F U R
O X G O W V U P V N R S A E O A B O U T K J L P P
B K R A A X T P A F R P R O B J D K D Q U G T D O
D O F E H T Z E O C Q E H K U S T U G F U N R W I

talk to friends

affirmations

try new things

cook

hug someone

gratitude

journal

read

take a bath

exercise

massage

yoga

shower

color

draw

nap

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