



FIVE YEARS ... FIVE REASONS

By Vince Parrish, LCSW | Development Director

In this space in *Tennessee Medicine*, you often see us address the growing problem of substance abuse and addiction among physicians. For this September issue, in keeping with National Recovery Month, we want to focus on recovery – and the importance and future of our own Physician Health Program.

The Tennessee Medical Foundation (TMF) is marking this special month by announcing the launch of **“Five Years ... Five Reasons,”** a new campaign to invite physicians in Tennessee to pledge \$1,000 annually for five years to support our crucial work of **Saving Lives. Saving Careers.**

Pledging to the “Five Years ... Five Reasons” campaign acknowledges that you recognize the five most important reasons to support Tennessee’s only program to identify, intervene, rehabilitate and support physicians in distress:

1. We need to safeguard patients

Physicians uphold the Hippocratic Oath; protecting their patients is a priority for our physician community and our state.

2. We need a program focused on physician support, not punishment

Tennessee has a mindset and a program focused on assisting doctors with addiction, mental health, emotional or behavioral issues. While other states are focusing more on punitive action, we need to preserve Tennessee’s program focused on giving these physicians a second chance.

3. The PHP benefits your group or organization

Hospitals and medical groups know how costly and difficult it can be to replace a valued medical staff member. Supporting a program with a good track record of returning these highly-skilled clinicians to work just makes sense.

4. The PHP benefits you

You may have personally benefited from the Physician Health Program, and chances are high that a colleague has definitely benefited from the PHP’s mission to restore doctors to health and practice.

5. The PHP embodies your mission as a physician

To heal, and not to harm: again, the Oath is imbued in the Tennessee Physician Health Program. We seek to save lives, to save careers, and to restore.

long-term financial commitments from several health-related entities over the years. This includes generous support from the Tennessee Medical Association (TMA), the organization that birthed the Impaired Physician Program (now the PHP) 35 years ago. We are deeply grateful for these faithful supporters, but these commitments do not cover the annual costs of our program.

We strongly believe one of the most obvious groups we should rely on for financial support is physicians. We doctors experience the miracle of recovery and renewal as part of our profession. Who better to provide the financial support and donor leadership the TMF needs to continue fulfilling its lifesaving recovery mission among our colleagues?

Thank you for your support in the past. We hope you will consider the “Five Reasons” – **and then commit to continue supporting your Physician Health Program for the next five years to put us** on a more stable footing for the future. Contact me at 615-467-6411 for more information on this campaign, or visit www.e-tmf.org to make your tax-deductible contribution. +

As always, if you or a colleague need assistance the TMF or Physicians Health Program can provide, please contact TMF Clinical Coordinator Jeanne Breard, RN, at 615-467-6411. National Recovery Month is celebrating its 25th year in September 2014, sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT). To learn more, visit www.recoverymonth.gov.

The TMF is not a state agency—it is a 501(c)3 organization that relies on private donations and grants, many of which must be renewed annually. The TMF PHP has been fortunate to receive