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TN-PSQ MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING TOOL NOW OPEN TO PHARMACISTS

Five years after being launched by the TMF for the health professionals it serves, the Tennessee Professional Screening Questionnaire (TN-PSQ) is now open to pharmacy professionals in Tennessee. The change is the result of an agreement between the TMF and the Tennessee Pharmacy Recovery Network (TPRN) to allow access by an estimated 38,000 pharmacy professionals and trainees, as of January 2025.

The TMF is especially excited to make the announcement coinciding with the fifth anniversary of the free, online mental health screening tool.

"Since its launch in February 2020, the TN-PSQ has helped over 900 health



professionals across Tennessee, more than 20 percent of whom had suicidal ideations," said TMF Medical Director Michael Baron, MD, MPH, DFASAM. "Although it is difficult to quantify the exact number of physician and other healthcare provider lives saved from suicide as this tool is anonymous and confidential, we know that any life saved is

(Continued on page 7)

DR. MILLER JOINS TMF BOARD; PHQIC LEADERSHIP CHANGE

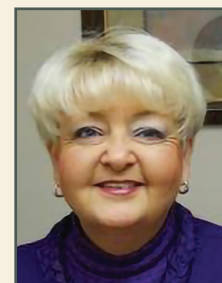
The TMF is pleased to announce our newest TMF Board member, Phyllis E. Miller, MD, of Chattanooga. Dr. Miller succeeds longtime Southeastern Tennessee representative Pat Lee, CPMSM, also of Chattanooga, who recently completed two three-year terms.

"We are thrilled to have Dr. Miller on our Board. She is an icon among women physicians in Tennessee and our mission, program, and participants will all benefit from her extraordinary leadership and perspective," said TMF Executive Director Jennifer Rainwater. "We are deeply grateful to Pat Lee, as well, for her dedication and tremendous service to the TMF over the years," she said.

"Dr. Miller is a distinguished member of the Tennessee medical community - she is a past member of the Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners and a former president of the Tennessee Medical Association (TMA)," added TMF Medical Director Dr. Michael Baron. "She brings both experience and previous connection to the TMF and our mission through both of those organizations."



Dr. Miller



Mrs. Lee

Considered a trailblazer, Dr. Miller served as the first woman president of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Medical Society, the first woman president of the TMA, and the first woman to serve as chief of staff at Erlanger Hospital. In 2024, she was named a Champion of Healthcare by readers of the *Chattanooga Times-Free Press*.

A native of Polk County, Dr. Miller graduated from Tennessee Technological University and earned her MD at the University of Tennessee School of Medicine; following an OB/GYN residency at Erlanger Health in

(Continued on page 5)



MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

CONFIDENTIALITY ENSURES PROTECTION IN A LESS-THAN-PERFECT WORLD

BY MICHAEL J. BARON, MD, MPH, DFASAM

In a perfect world, there would be no stigma associated with getting help for addiction or a mental or behavioral health condition. Sadly, we don't live in that world; in reality, stigma keeps people – including health professionals – from asking for help when they need it, especially for a mental health condition.

Stigma is lethal. It significantly deters physicians and other licensed healthcare workers from seeking help for mental illness. Stigma leads to exclusion, prejudice, discrimination, and can even lead to death. Professional Health Programs (PHPs), including ours, have seen some tragic losses due to stigma and its consequences.

It is a barrier to care for anyone suffering from addiction, depression and suicide, cognitive issues, even burnout and anxiety, and health professionals are no different. They fight both real and perceived fear about losing their license, livelihood, promotions or other career opportunities, and about being seen as a poor provider, weak, or “less than” if they admit they need help. When they don't come forward, they are at risk of disease progression that can lead to impairment, impacting their own safety and that of their patients.

In the battle against stigma, confidentiality is critical. Anonymity and confidentiality have long been sacred principles for those in recovery; 12-step programs have touted anonymity going back to 1935. These days, the personal health records of those in addiction or mental health treatment are safeguarded not only by HIPAA and HITECH regulations but by extra protection through Title 42 Part 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The goal is to eliminate fear of discrimination or even prosecution for those seeking help for substance use and other dependencies.

PHP CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is also a foundational component in the PHP world. Our national organization, the Federation of State Physician Health Programs (FSPHP) – of which I am currently serving as president – has written an issue brief on the importance of communicating about both the extent and limits of PHP confidentiality. The brief recommends that member PHPs publicly display their confidentiality parameters, including their standing under HIPAA, CFR, safe harbor and state peer review statutes, their confidentiality processes with state medical boards, and legal requirements and any limits or circumstances for releases of information.

The TMF has followed the Federation's recommendations; you can read our statement on Privacy & Confidentiality at e-tmf.org/privacy.

The FSPHP also has an initiative called the **Triad of Confidentiality**, which seeks to address the following scenarios:

- Medical licensing and credentialing processes often require disclosure of mental health history.
- Seeking help for a mental health condition can lead to breaches in confidentiality, potentially impacting their standing among colleagues or superiors.
- Demanding workloads make it challenging for physicians and other health professionals, including trainees, to prioritize their own mental health care.
- Many health professionals internalize negative attitudes about mental illness, viewing the need for help as a sign of weakness or personal failure causing self-stigma.

The elements of the triad are:

- 1. Regulatory Protection:** PHP is approved to accept confidential referrals without the involvement of the state medical board and may accept referrals in lieu of a medical board report in states that mandate reporting of impairment or potential impairment
- 2. Record Protection:** PHP records are protected from discovery in legal proceedings
- 3. Application Protection:** PHP compliance permits non-disclosure of protected health information on licensure/credentialing/insurance and certification applications PHP record protection, confidential referral to a PHP, and health fitness question reform.

All of these actions are part of the battle to eliminate stigma. You may have seen recent headlines detailing intense efforts by the House of Medicine to mitigate stigma. The AMA, Physicians Foundation, Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation, National Institutes of Health, FSPHP, FSMB, and many other healthcare entities, including the TMF, are waging this war together. There have been improvements on several fronts but there is still much to do.

In this imperfect world, we still need to protect those who seek help for mental health disorders. We can do that through the Triad of Confidentiality and continued efforts to let health professionals and stakeholders know that if they are referred to and become involved with a PHP, we are committed to holding their identity and information in the strictest confidence. ♡

Share your thoughts with Dr. Baron at michaelb@e-tmf.org.



2025 CADUCEUS RETREAT FEATURES DRS. LEVOUNIS, TEITELBAUM, GAITHER

Registration is now open for the 2025 Caduceus Retreat, featuring speakers Petros Levounis, MD, MA, Scott Teitelbaum, MD, DFASAM, and Clark Gaither, MD, FAAFP. The annual weekend event for TMF participants and alumni is scheduled for Friday, June 6-Sunday, June 8, at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs in Franklin, TN. This year's attendees can earn up to six hours of Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit.

The deadline for meeting registration is May 17; hotel reservations must be reserved by May 23 to receive the TMF special rate. Details and sign-up are on the TMF Caduceus Retreat web page at e-tmf.org/2025-caduceus-retreat.

The Caduceus Retreat is devoted to recovery, providing education, support, and networking opportunities. Those newly under contract can learn from veterans with years of recovery. New ideas and old standards are shared in group and lecture venues. The schedule includes time for 12-Step meetings as well as time with family.

SPEAKERS & PROGRAM



Dr. Petros Levounis is professor and chair of psychiatry and associate dean at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. He is immediate past president of the American Psychiatric Association and serves as chief of service at University Hospital in Newark, NJ, and director of the Northern New Jersey Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT) Center of Excellence. He has written numerous articles, monographs, book

chapters, and lectures extensively on addiction throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Dr. Levounis earned his MD at Stanford University and the Medical College of Pennsylvania and his MA in sociology at Stanford, earned the National Institute of Mental Health Outstanding Resident Award at Columbia University, and went on to complete his fellowship in addiction psychiatry at New York University.

THE NEUROBIOLOGY OF ADDICTION

Course Description: From a neurobiological perspective, addiction is the hijacking of the pleasure-reward pathways of the brain and a weakening of its executive function. In 2025, the fundamental model has been expanded to include newer concepts such as motivational circuitry, the anti-reward pathways, and interoception. These 21st century discoveries inform clinical innovations that are revolutionizing the landscape of the pharmacological and psychosocial treatments of substance use disorders and behavioral addictions.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADDICTIONS:

The New Frontier in Addiction Psychiatry

Course Description: Addiction to video games, cybersex, internet gambling, social media, texting and emailing, and online auctions can be as addictive as substances. These technological addictions have real-world ramifications and lead to the loss of jobs, money, and loved ones. As technology becomes integrated into many facets of modern life, the appreciation of such addictions has become increasingly

2025 CADUCEUS RETREAT

JUNE 6-8
**FRANKLIN MARRIOTT
COOL SPRINGS**
FRANKLIN, TN

e-tmf.org/2025-caduceus-retreat

REGISTRATION & ROOMS

Visit the Caduceus Retreat web page at e-tmf.org/2025-caduceus-retreat to register and reserve rooms for the retreat. **Meeting registration deadline is May 17;** the cost is \$125.00 per person, which includes Saturday lunch. Attendees can register and pay online or download and mail the completed registration form with payment to the TMF.

Rooms at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs are available at the TMF group rate of \$185.00 per night, plus tax. **Reserve by May 23** from the Retreat web page or call the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs directly at 615-261-6100; please mention the TMF Caduceus Retreat to receive the TMF rate.

challenging. This session will explore the addictive potential of technology and discuss the legitimacy of technological addictions as psychiatric conditions worthy of medical assessment, diagnosis, and treatment.



Dr. Scott Teitelbaum is the Pottash professor in psychiatry and neuroscience at the University of Florida (UF) College of Medicine. He has served as medical director of the UF Health

Florida Recovery Center (FRC) since 2002. As psychiatry chair and chief of addiction medicine, he developed one of the first-ever accredited fellowships in addiction medicine; that program has since trained more addiction medicine fellows than any other program nationwide.

He earned his MD at the University of Rochester, was a pediatric resident at the

(Continued on page 4)

QUESTIONS? For more information, visit the Retreat webpage at e-tmf.org/2025-caduceus-retreat or contact Jennifer Rainwater at 615-467-6411 or jenniferr@e-tmf.org.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HELP. HOPE. HEALING. RECOVERY.

BY CLAY RUNNELS, MD
TMF President

The title of my article summarizes the TMF Journey – this is the theme for our 2024 Annual Report but I felt it significant enough to share in our Spring newsletter as well. This is the lifesaving chain of events that health professionals referred to the TMF encounter every day, and the focus of our activities throughout the year.

HELP – A physician or other provider realizes and admits they need support and resources to overcome a personal struggle, health- or otherwise.

HOPE – They begin to see the benefits of asking for help and start to believe that positive change is possible and will result in a better future.

HEALING – They engage in a process of mending their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual selves, resulting in rebuilding and restoring a sense of wholeness.

RECOVERY – The provider has improved their health and wellness, is living a self-directed life and striving to reach their full potential, all the while mindful and diligent about managing their condition and maintaining the positive changes and choices that support physical and emotional wellbeing.

We remain passionate about the recovery journey but pragmatic about the world around us: the environment for healthcare remains a challenging one in 2025. We are seeing intense and increasing pressure on healthcare providers. Private practices especially continue to struggle and decline due to inadequate reimbursement, rising costs, and shortages of specialists. Many physicians survived the acute pressure of the pandemic, only to fight for the survival of their practices.

The burden on providers has never been greater or more constant than in the last four to five years. This situation drives burnout, mental health decline, and behavioral issues. There has never been a greater need for the TMF to support healthcare professionals. We are here doing that important work and will continue to do so as long as it's needed. Thank you to those who support and join in our mission. And thank you most of all to those who put their trust in the TMF to find Help, Hope, Healing, and Recovery. 🙏

CADUCEUS RETREAT *(Continued from page 3)*

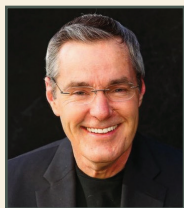
University of Connecticut, and completed fellowships in child and adolescent psychiatry and addiction medicine at the University of Florida.

SPIRITUALITY AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY

Course Description: This presentation delves into the integral role of spirituality in the context of recovery, including comparing and contrasting religion and spirituality, and the increased research and use of substances to facilitate contemplative/spiritual practices.

BACK FROM THE BRINK: A PERSONAL STORY OF SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER AND RECOVERY

Course Description: This presentation will share the personal recovery story of Dr. Scott Teitelbaum.



Dr. Clark Gaither serves as medical director of the North Carolina Physicians Health Program (NCPHP). In addition, he is an accomplished author, blogger, speaker, and corporate consultant. He is a national expert in the identification, mitigation, elimination, and prevention of physician job-related burnout. He is the author of *Reignite*, a best-selling book about professional job-related burnout.

Dr. Gaither earned his MD from Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, is a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians, and has been in family practice for over 30 years.

PROFESSIONAL JOB-RELATED BURNOUT: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Course Description: This talk is an in-depth examination of professional job-related burnout, the three principle hallmarks, the two types, the six major underlying causes, and viable remedies. The prescription for the cure has already been written, but few organizations have taken the medicine. I will show you how to get them interested.

WELLNESS—WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WELL?

Course Description: What does it mean to be well? Most people are familiar with the term wellness, but few understand what the term actually means or what all it might entail. I will break it down for you in this introductory talk on Wellness.

Learn more and register for the Retreat at e-tmf.org/2025-caduceus-retreat. 🙏

TMF RELEASES 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



The Tennessee Medical Foundation is proud to present its 2024 Annual Report; the theme: “Help. Hope. Healing. Recovery.”

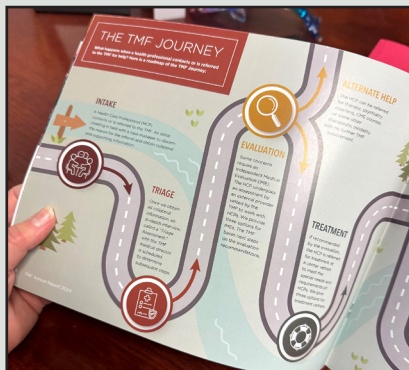
The 2024 Annual Report highlights the journey a Tennessee health professional embarks on when they contact or are referred to the TMF for a personal struggle or concern, and all the steps along the way — from help, to hope, to healing, to recovery.

Within its pages you will see:

- Messages from our executive leaders
- 2024 Highlights & Accomplishments
- Profiles of Volunteer Leaders, TMF Graduates, and a longtime Donor
- Board and Clinical Leadership
- The TMF Journey
- 2024 Clinical Data & Outcomes
- TMF Resources & Outcomes
- Revenue and Donation Report
- TMF Staff



SCAN TO SEE THE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



To view the 2024 Annual Report, scan the QR code above or visit the TMF website at e-tmf.org and click on “Publications.” 🏠

NEW BOARD MEMBER *(Continued from page 1)*

Chattanooga, she practiced obstetrics and gynecology for 47 years.

PHQIC LEADERSHIP UPDATE

John D. Rosdeutscher, MD, of Nashville, has stepped down after more than 10 years of service as chair of the Physician’s Health Quality Improvement Committee (PHQIC). “The TMF is truly grateful for Dr. Rosdeutscher’s oversight and guidance of the clinical side of our program,” said TMF Executive Director Jennifer Rainwater.

Co-Chair John B. Woods, MD, of Jackson, has succeeded Dr. Rosdeutscher as chair.

Timothy P. Davis, MD, of Chattanooga, a former TMF Board president, has been named PHQIC co-chair. 🏠



Dr. Rosdeutscher



Dr. Woods



Dr. Davis

TMF QUOTES

“ I was intervened on at work due to someone reporting me to the TMF in 2005 ... The night I was intervened on, I went to my first Caduceus meeting, unaware I was in need of much help. Two relapses and three treatments later, I needed everything — the meetings, the testing, the therapy, and finally I am accountable. TMF advocacy saved my life, my family, and my career. I am so grateful. ”

— **PHP Graduate**
Comment from TMF Outcome Study, 2024-2025

DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OUR MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

The TMF annually enjoys strong financial support from **State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Company (SVMIC)**, the State of Tennessee **Board of Medical Examiners (BME)**, **Board of Osteopathic Examiners (BOE)**, **Board of Physician Assistants (BOPA)**, **Board of Respiratory Care (BRC)**, and the **Tennessee Medical Association (TMA)**. Together they provide approximately 70% of the annual budget for the Physician's Health Program. Without their support, our crucial work would not be possible. Below are contributors who provide the rest of our program funding. We thank each and every one of you for the support you give to the mission of ***Saving Lives, Saving Careers.***

Donor acknowledgements run annually in the Spring issue of **TMF LifeLines**, reflecting all gifts received in the prior year.

Organizational Contributions 2024

HOSPITAL & HEALTH SYSTEMS

Ascension Saint Thomas Health.....	\$10,000
Ballad Health.....	\$5,000
Blount Memorial Hospital.....	\$5,000
Bristol Regional Medical Center-Ballad Health.....	\$2,500
CHI Memorial Health Care System.....	\$1,000
East Tennessee Children's Hospital.....	\$1,000
Erlanger Health System.....	\$10,000
Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center.....	\$6,000
Hardin Medical Center.....	\$500
Holston Valley Medical Center-Ballad Health.....	\$2,000
Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare.....	\$5,000
Nashville General Hospital.....	\$500
Parkwest Medical Center (Covenant).....	\$500
Saint Francis Healthcare (Tenet).....	\$2,500
Southern TN Regional Health System-Winchester.....	\$500
Sweetwater Hospital Association.....	\$1,000
TriStar Skyline Medical Center.....	\$2,500
TriStar Summit Medical Center.....	\$5,000
University of Tennessee Medical Center.....	\$2,500
Vanderbilt University Medical Center.....	\$7,500
West Tennessee Healthcare.....	\$10,000

FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS

HCA Healthcare Foundation.....	\$25,000
Medical Foundation of Chattanooga.....	\$3,000
Memorial Foundation, Inc.....	\$5,000
Tennessee Medical Education Fund, Inc.....	\$15,000
Tennessee Opioid Abatement Grant.....	\$333,000
Tharp Award Administrator.....	\$5,000

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Abercrombie Radiology.....	\$1,000
Galen Medical Group.....	\$2,000
Heritage Medical Associates, PC.....	\$1,000
Inpatient Physicians of the Mid-South.....	\$516.84
Premier Medical Group.....	\$1,000
State of Franklin Healthcare Associates.....	\$5,000
Summit Medical Group, PLLC.....	\$3,000
The Jackson Clinic, PA.....	\$2,000

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Ross E. Rainwater and R2MA: HealthMarkets+.....	\$1,200
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Northeast Tennessee Medical Society.....	\$6,800
Williamson County Medical Society.....	\$1,000
Tennessee Academy of Family Physicians.....	\$1,000
Tennessee Academy of Physician Assistants.....	\$1,000
Tennessee Chapter-American College of Physicians.....	\$1,000
Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association.....	\$1,000
Tennessee Society of Addiction Medicine.....	\$1,500
Tennessee Society of Anesthesiologists.....	\$2,000
Tennessee Veterinary Medical Association.....	\$2,500

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Christian Brothers University Physician Assistant Studies Program.....	\$195
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

A COMMON THREAD

BY JENNIFER RAINWATER

We hear a lot in the news these days about division.

There seems to be a pronounced emphasis on what makes us all different. I think this thought can be useful when approached positively. It is nice to think that we are all unique and special in our own way – that there is something exceptional in every person. I think there is. But there's also a lot of insight to be gained by focusing on what binds us all together.

If you are receiving this newsletter, you are linked in some way to the Tennessee Medical Foundation. I've been thinking a lot about the common thread that runs through us all and if I had to choose one word to define it, I would say it is "HOPE."

At the TMF we are all about HOPE. Hope that sobriety and mental health are not only attainable, but sustainable for life. Hope that families, friendships and practices can be restored. Hope that all of the time, hard work, dedication and money spent to become a health professional can be redeemed in a thriving practice.

I have been with the TMF for over nine years and I have seen what hope can do. Hope gives momentum that leads to action. Hope inspires us to take the next step on a difficult journey. Hope keeps us going.

Will you help us keep going?

2025 is already bringing new challenges. One of our larger contributors is reducing support to the TMF by 20 percent due to a budget shortfall. Grants are more competitive in this tough economic climate. Things like postage, insurance, supplies, security, and travel are all more expensive – and everyone is feeling the strain. But you can keep us going with your contributions. Individual donors make the difference for us. If you haven't given in a while, would you send a donation to the TMF? If you are a regular donor, would you consider giving a bit more?

Every gift helps bring hope to more and more health professionals in Tennessee. And every gift is vital and appreciated. 🙏

With hope,

Share your thoughts with Ms. Rainwater at jenniferr@e-tmf.org

TN-PSQ OPEN TO PHARMACISTS *(Continued from page 1)*



Dr. Baron

significant. We are happy to share this support tool with our colleagues licensed by the Board of Pharmacy as of this year," he added.

"Pharmacy professionals including student pharmacists continue to struggle with stress, burnout, and other mental health challenges," said TPRN Program Director Nancy Hooper, DPH.

"When I learned about the opportunity for pharmacy professionals to have access to this potentially lifesaving tool, I reached out to several members of the TPRN Advocacy Committee and members of the pharmacy community who support TPRN's mental health efforts."

"We are incredibly grateful to all who generously donated to the TPRN to make it possible for Tennessee's

pharmacy professionals to have access to this free, anonymous screening tool," she added.

The Tennessee Pharmacists Association (TPA) will share the TN-PSQ with its members and the pharmacy community at large to help address rising rates of burnout, depression, and suicide among pharmacists, pharmacy techs and assistants, and students/trainees.

The Tennessee Board of Pharmacy will also have a role in helping to share the TN-PSQ with its licensees.



Dr. Breeden

"We at the Board of Pharmacy are in full support of all the efforts taken to protect and prevent mental health issues across our profession. We will work closely with both TPRN and TMF to promote access to the TN-PSQ," said Board President Richard Breeden, PharmD, BCNSP, BCPS.

For more information, visit e-tmf.org/tnpsq or access the screening tool at tn.providerwellness.org. 🙏



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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please let us know your new address when you move.

Thank you for helping us keep in touch!



Linked

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TMF MEDALLION SOCIETY

RECOGNIZING SPECIAL COMMITMENT

Every donation to the TMF is deeply appreciated, yet special acknowledgement is given to those of you whose contributions exemplify your commitment to TMF mission of *Saving Lives, Saving Careers*. Your leadership is recognized by membership in the **TMF Medallion Society**, honoring individuals who have given \$10,000 or more within a 10-year period. We honor you for your generosity and commitment.

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