



## Shining a light on wellness in the professions with the Well-being Resource Centre

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I am so pleased that in February, the Law Society launched a new Well-being Resource Centre on LSO.ca. It brings together a variety of new and existing mental health and well-being resources under a single banner, making it easier for licensees to find the resources they're looking for.

You can access the Well-being Resource Centre from the Lawyer or Paralegal tabs in the main navigation or by visiting [LSO.ca/well-being](https://lso.ca/well-being). Whether you're looking to connect with the Member Assistance Program or learn how to better support a colleague or client, the Well-being Resource Centre truly features something for everyone. So, let's have a closer look at what's inside:

### Featured articles

Over the years, a number of mental health and well-being articles and blogs have been shared on the Gazette. This page brings together a selection of articles centred on well-being.

### Member Assistance Program

In addition to providing information about the member assistance Program (MAP) and how to get help, this page provides information about the various counselling, coaching and peer support programs available through MAP. It also contains an archive of MAP newsletters.

### Practice supports

The practice supports page points readers to strategies; practice supports and resources to help lawyers and paralegals manage personal well-being in the legal professions.

### Continuing Professional Development

This page highlights a selection of live and on-demand CPD courses about managing mental health in the professions and supporting clients experiencing mental health challenges.

### Research and reports

In this section, readers will find Law Society and legal sector research and reports related to mental health in the professions.

### Resources

Here, readers can be connected to a variety of government, healthcare and community mental well-being supports. *Continued on next page.*

The Law Society regulates lawyers and paralegals in Ontario in the public interest. The Law Society has a mandate to protect the public interest, to maintain and to advance the cause of justice and the rule of law, to facilitate access to justice for the people of Ontario and to act in a timely, open and efficient manner.

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*Continued*

I want to make sure that anyone reading this knows that these resources, including the Member Assistance Program, are available to Ontario lawyers, paralegals, experiential learning candidates, law students, paralegal students, the judiciary and immediate family members - not just licensees.

I'm often asked about my personal commitment to supporting the well-being of the professions. My experience as a prosecutor and working with victims of crime has allowed me to see first-hand how we are shaped by our experiences. As legal professionals, we are all at risk that our work can pose real challenges for our mental health. We are problem solvers, setting exacting standards of ourselves and others. The very practice of law or provision of legal services itself can be demanding; from the time commitment, to expectations, billable hours and caseloads. Sometimes in the course of our work, we hear the horrors of what others have experienced. We face stressful situations regularly and it's only natural that we can carry these experiences with us.

As Treasurer, it's my privilege to have a platform that allows me to acknowledge the well-being challenges that can be faced in the legal sector and to work toward a better understanding and acceptance of those challenges. I want to empower licensees to understand the importance of their own well-being and to prioritize it at all stages of their career. Making our own well-being a priority is crucial - because we absolutely must, as legal professionals, care for ourselves if we are to take care of our clients.

I'm an optimist at heart and do believe we are making progress. For all of its challenges - and there have been many - the pandemic has shone a light on the need to support mental well-being. I encourage you all to keep the lines of communication open, to support each other and to actively work to eliminate the stigma and shame of mental health challenges that is so pervasive not just in the legal sector, but in society at large. The first step toward that is having these open, honest conversations and acknowledging that it's okay to not be okay.

It is my personal hope that this dedicated well-being centre will help bring more awareness, understanding and acceptance about mental health challenges in the legal professions. I encourage you to visit [LSO.ca/well-being](https://www.lso.ca/well-being) to learn more about the well-being information and resources available.

On a related note, I am honoured to once again be co-hosting what is now, the Law Society's second annual Mental Health Summit for Legal Professionals, along with Beth Beattie from the Ministry of the Attorney General. This year's summit will take place on May 3 and will feature a keynote address by the Honourable Clement Gascon and several panel discussions throughout the day. This free webcast will be accredited for four hours of EDI professionalism content. Visit the CPD store at <https://store.lso.ca> for more information and to register.

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