

# Executive Summary

## 2025 Survey of State Dental Society Wellbeing Initiatives

A national survey of State Dental Societies (SDSs) examined how peer support, mental-health referral pathways, and wellbeing resources are structured and accessed. Findings show strong commitment across SDSs, with significant variation in program design, clinical integration, and accessibility.

## Key Findings

**Program structures vary widely.** SDSs organize their wellbeing resources in different ways, ranging from informal, volunteer-led efforts to more structured programs with defined processes and clearer roles.

**Intake and triage models differ across states.** Some SDSs rely on staff or volunteer dentists to take initial calls and make early decisions, while others have licensed mental health professionals available to conduct clinical triage.

**Access pathways are often unclear.** In several SDSs, contact information or instructions for initiating support are not easy to find, making it difficult for dentists to identify where to start.

**Confidentiality policies and communication differ.** Respondents reported variation in how confidentiality is defined and explained across states, which influences dentists' willingness to seek support.

**Substance use concerns and confidentiality-related stigma dominate help-seeking patterns.** Substance use was the most common reason dentists sought help, and concerns about stigma or breaches of confidentiality were the barriers cited most frequently.

## Key Insight

These differences reflect varying levels of infrastructure, clinical integration, and program investment. Without these elements, SDS wellbeing efforts risk being well-intentioned but unreliable when dentists need support most. Strengthening access, clarifying entry points, and

**National Council of Dentist Health Programs**

[www.ncdhp.org](http://www.ncdhp.org) | [info@ncdhp.org](mailto:info@ncdhp.org)

ensuring access to licensed clinical triage are critical to building programs that function consistently and reliably when dentists need support.

**National Council of Dentist Health Programs**

[www.ncdhp.org](http://www.ncdhp.org) | [info@ncdhp.org](mailto:info@ncdhp.org)