



National Council of Dentists Health Programs 2026 Conference: Working Together to Support Dental Professionals and Keep Patients Safe

Jennifer Thompson, DDS, FACD, FICD, FPFA
August 21, 2026

NCDHP | 2026

1

Jennifer L Thompson, DDS

- Chair, ADA Council on Dental Practice
- ADA Liaison to National Council of Dentist Health Programs (NCDHP)
- ADA Liaison to Oral Health Interoperability Alliance
- ADA Liaison to ADA Standards Oversight Committee
- Past President, NM Dental Association
- Chair, NM Board of Dental Health Care
 - Rules Committee
 - Applications Committee
 - Complaint Committee
 - Anesthesia Committee
 - Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) Committee
 - NM Overdose Prevention and Pain Management Advisory Council
 - ADEX Council on Examinations and Dental Exam Committee
 - CRDTS/SRTA Steering Committee
- General Dentist in NM since 2008



NCDHP | 2026

2

How common are mental and behavioral health risks in dentistry?



- **1 in 3 adults** have experienced mental health illness or SUD in the past year (SAMHSA 2024 report)
- **82% of dentists experience major career stress**
- **Dentists' risk of suicide: 2X** general population



NCDHP | 2026

3

Know Your Baseline: Dental Well-Being Index (WBI)



Anonymous, validated, and available at **no cost.**
Take it regularly to receive personalized support resources.



Access code:
ADA Wellness

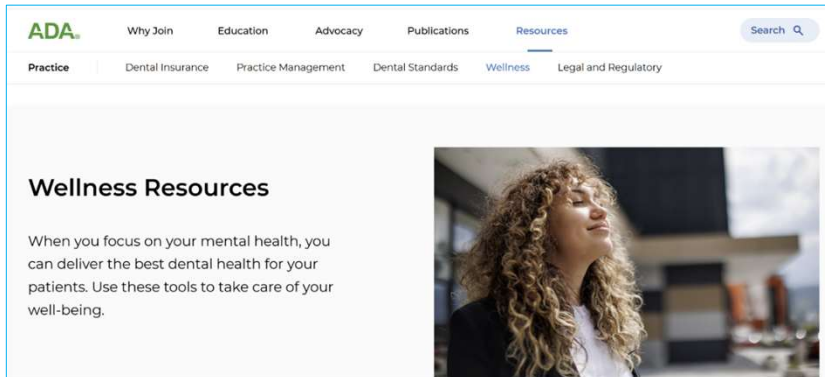
ADA

© 2026 American Dental Association, All Rights Reserved

4

4

ADA Wellness Hub: ADA.org/Wellness



- Mental Health
- Burnout Prevention
- Team Wellness
- Physical Health

NCDHP | 2026

5

ADA Well-Being Programs Directory



Dentists and dental professionals, like anyone else, can face challenges with mental health, substance use, stress, or burnout. For years, peer support networks have offered help from those who understand these struggles.

The **State Well-Being Programs Directory** connects dental professionals to confidential resources, including peer assistance, ADA Wellness Ambassadors, and Physician Health Programs (PHPs) in 28 states. These programs offer support for substance use disorders, mental health issues, and more.

Find help and support in your state.

Select a State:

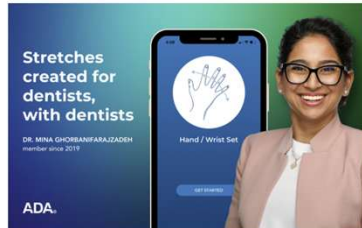


ADA

© 2026 American Dental Association. All Rights Reserved 6

6

Shareable ADA Resources



Dental Sound Bites™: Exploring mental health in dentistry

Explore the Dental Sound Bites podcast episodes focused on addressing mental health issues that may arise in dentistry.



ADA.

WELLNESS RESOURCES FOR ADA MEMBERS AND DENTAL STUDENTS

Find programs and resources to support your mental, emotional and physical well-being at [ADA.org/wellness](https://ada.org/wellness). All resources are free for all to use – dentists, dental team members, dental students, specialists – unless marked with an asterisk.



Well-Being Index (WBI) ADA.org/WellBeingIndex

Your health matters. The ADA offers access to the Dental Well-Being Index (WBI), a validated, anonymous risk assessment tool invented and provided by the Mayo Clinic. Scan the QR code to set up your WBI account using the code: **ADA Wellness**. In just one minute, you'll have access to a personalized dashboard and resources, allowing you to track your well-being over time.



Dental Sound Bites™ ADA.org/podcast

Dental Sound Bites is an ADA podcast created for dentists, by dentists. Explore the show's episodes focused on addressing the mental health issues that may arise in dentistry. Hear expert insights and real experiences designed to give you practical strategies to support your well-being over time.



NCDHP | 2026

7

State Dental Association Member Assistance Programs (MAPs)



Member Assistance Program (MAP): Supporting Your Wellness Journey



Disclaimer: Your participation in the Member Assistance Program (MAP) is completely confidential. Any information you share, including your name or the nature of your concerns, will never be shared with NYSDA, the ADA, local dental societies, or any other members. Your privacy is our top priority.

All services are free and available to you and your eligible family members.

INFORMATIONAL BROCHURE

DOWNLOAD THE APP

Getting started is easy, free, and confidential.

Support for Members

Concierge Counseling Referrals- 3 sessions per issue per year

- In Person
- Video
- Phone
- Live Chat
- Messaging



Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Florida, Minnesota, New York, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington

NCDHP | 2026

8

Building a Safe Pathway to Support

State Dental Society

- Peer support
- Wellness committee
- MAP (Monitoring Assistance Program)

Professional Health Programs

- Assessment
- Treatment referral
- Monitoring
- Confidential, therapeutic support

State Dental Board

- Evaluate licensure questions
- Communicate working relationships with programs
- Protect the public

State Dental Well-Being Program Directory
American Dental Association
www.ada.org

For This to Work...

- Dentists must be **aware** of resources.
- Dentists must **not be afraid** to seek help.

NCDHP | 2026

9

State PHPs that accept Dentists

Therapeutic Alternative to Discipline

- Arizona (2)
- Arkansas
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Florida
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Louisiana
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- Utah
- Virginia
- Washington
- Wyoming
- New Hampshire* (soon)
- Wisconsin* (soon)

4 States with Dentist-specific Programs

- Georgia
- Massachusetts
- North Carolina
- Tennessee

NCDHP | 2026

10



Do licensing / credentialing questions asking about past mental, behavioral, or physical health conditions actually work?

NCDHP | 2026

11

ADA Resource Toolkit: Reducing Barriers to Care for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders



Reducing Barriers to Care for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders | American Dental Association

www.ada.org

No dentist should fear disciplinary action for seeking care for their own physical, behavioral or mental health condition.

NCDHP | 2026

12

Dental Board Progress So Far...

Wellbeing First Champions for Dental Licensing

Wellbeing First Badge

- Alabama
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Michigan
- North Carolina
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Texas

Updated questions, not yet badged

- Iowa
- Minnesota
- New Jersey
- South Carolina
- Wisconsin
- Vermont



NCDHP | 2026

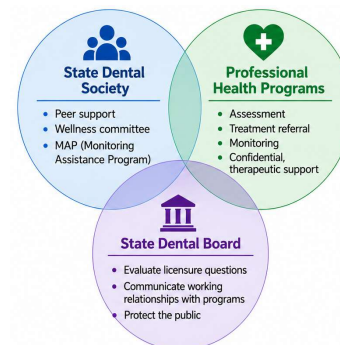
13

Three Actions You Can Take Today

1. **Assess** with the **Dental WBI**
2. **Assess** your state resources
 - **State/Local Dental Society assistance**
 - **Dentist/physician health program**
 - Self-referred or board-ordered only?
3. **Assess board licensure questions**

Support should be available

- *Peer support*: Dental Society Wellness Program, MAP, www.warmline.org
- *Confidential pathway*: state PHP or dentist-specific program
- *Urgent crisis*: call or text 988



NCDHP | 2026

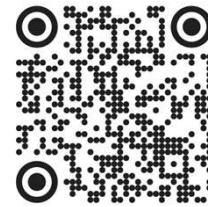
14

Questions?

jenniferthompsondds@hotmail.com



dentalpractice@ada.org



ADA.org/Wellness

NCDHP | 2026