

Alberta Doctors' Digest

Supporting physician wellness

In today's demanding health care environment, the pressures of practicing medicine are greater than ever. Recognizing the toll this can take on physicians' mental and physical health, the Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA) has introduced a new resource to support its members: the [Physician Well-Being Index \(WBI\)](#).

We spoke with Dr. Catherine Pound, Director of Physician Support and Wellness at CMPA, to learn more about this innovative tool and how it's designed to help physicians take charge of their well-being.

The Well-Being Index delivers meaningful insights

The WBI is a brief, two-minute online assessment that evaluates six key dimensions of physician wellness. Developed and validated by researchers at the Mayo Clinic, the tool is anonymous, web-based and designed to deliver meaningful insights through just a few targeted questions.

"The assessment explores various aspects of well-being and distress including burnout, feelings of overwhelm, increased fatigue and impacts on physical health," explains Dr. Pound.

She emphasizes that the process is both simple and secure.

"The assessment begins with a short set of demographic questions to help CMPA interpret the data within the Canadian and medico-legal context. From the moment you log on, your responses remain completely anonymous."

"Doctors dedicate their time to caring for others, but their well-being matters, too."

- Dr. Catherine Pound



Dr. Catherine Pound

Immediate results, personalized support

Once the assessment is complete, physicians receive instant feedback.

“You’ll see where you stand across the six dimensions of well-being,” says Dr. Pound. “It may highlight your risk level for burnout or the likelihood of medical errors.”

Participants also receive an overall wellness score, benchmarked against peers by age, gender and specialty. Based on the results – and the physician’s location in Canada – the tool provides tailored support resources.

“For example, if your score suggests you may be in crisis and you're located in Alberta, the tool will guide you to appropriate crisis services available in your region,” she adds.

Tracking progress and informing support

One of the most valuable features of the WBI is its ability to track changes over time.

“Physicians can monitor their progress, reflect on their well-being and compare results as they continue working toward wellness in both their personal and professional lives,” says Dr. Pound.

For CMPA, the tool also offers a broader benefit.

“Our hope is that the Well-Being Index will provide meaningful insights that allow us to better support our members,” she explains. “By analyzing the data, we can develop targeted programs that address the specific well-being challenges physicians face – especially those related to medico-legal stress. Whether it’s support for the entire membership or for groups at higher risk, the results will help guide our efforts in a more focused and effective way.”

Message of support

Dr. Pound underscores the importance of physician wellness.

“Doctors dedicate their time to caring for others, but their well-being matters, too. We want our members to know that we are here for them – and that their wellness is just as important as the care they provide.”

How to access the WBI

CMPA members can access the Physician Well-Being Index by visiting the WBI site and creating a personal account. For more information, [visit the CMPA website](#).

Banner image credit: Nowaja, pixabay.com