



SHEILA FINE

Take care of your patients; take care of yourself

LEAD Pittsburgh (www.leadpittsburgh.org) was honored to be recognized at the ACMS Foundation Celebration of Excellence Gala this past February, and was truly impressed and inspired by all of the awardees.

One lasting impression from the event was that the experience of “wellness” is multi-faceted and requires the cooperation and coordination of many systems: physical health, emotional support, opportunities and access, understanding, research, teaching, providers, administrators and more – ALL are needed for optimal community wellness!

LEAD raises the awareness that behavioral health is an imperative element for wellness, and that all of the aforementioned systems could benefit from considering behavioral health in conjunction with their other goals and functions.

From here, I would like to particularly focus on the behavioral health of the medical community itself.

Challenges and stressors such as the following will come as no surprise to ACMS *Bulletin* readers:

- From medical students to the most seasoned practitioners, all are so pushed, stretched and stressed. Increased workloads, regulations, liability concerns and other factors sometimes lead to job dissatisfaction, burnout and depression. Oftentimes, vital elements

of overall health such as sleep, eating well, purposeful breaks, social support networks, stress management and exercise fall by the wayside. Also, it's sometimes difficult to talk openly even with a trusted other about your overall health, or seek help for behavioral health concerns when needed.

- Further, there is still stigma – among the medical community as well as in the general population – associated with behavioral health challenges which can limit the sharing, acknowledgement, treatment and support of such challenges.

LEAD Pittsburgh is aware of these challenges and stressors the medical community faces, and at the same time we recognize and honor the valuable work you do while following your calling to aid others with tireless dedication. **While listening to your patients to provide optimal care for them, remember to listen to yourself and attend to your own self-care as well.** We are so thankful that you take good care of us, and hope you will do everything possible to take care of yourselves!

LEAD understands that there are many programs throughout the United States which specifically focus on physician wellness, and we applaud all who offer and participate in such programs.

LEAD Pittsburgh also has two

programs that may be of interest given that many in the ACMS community are involved beyond their practices – in schools, community centers, nonprofit boards, etc. Since 2011, LEAD has highlighted the benefits of building resilience skills. Our resilience programs, Curriculum on Resilience Education (CoRE – for adults in the workplace) and Student Curriculum on Resilience Education (SCoRE – for students preparing for and adjusting to college), help individuals consider their current resilience factors and learn where they may improve and strengthen skills to increase resilience.

If interested in tools to build resilience in young people, or for those in the workplace (such as office receptionists and managers, medical assistants, billing and coders), please contact LEAD for more information on CoRE or SCoRE.

In closing, it's all about CARE. Yours, as well as those you strive to keep healthy. LEAD values your dedication, and sincerely thanks you for all you do.

Sheila Fine has had a lifelong interest in health care advocacy from her teen years to today as co-founder of LEAD Pittsburgh (Leading Education and Awareness for Depression). She can be reached at sfine@leadpittsburgh.org or (412) 444-3539.