



Joint Commission Statement on Removing Barriers to Mental Health Care for Clinicians and Health Care Staff

May 12, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic is placing unprecedented strains on the health care workforce. As a result, many health care workers feel that it would be helpful to talk to a mental health professional. However, clinicians have concerns that seeing a mental health professional could adversely affect their career if they are asked about a previous history of mental health issues during the credentialing or licensing process.

The Joint Commission does not require organizations to ask about a clinician's history of mental health conditions or treatment. We strongly encourage organizations to not ask about past history of mental health conditions or treatment. As an alternative, we support the recommendations of the Federation of State Medical Boards and the American Medical Association to limit inquiries to conditions that *currently* impair the clinicians' ability to perform their job. It is critical that we ensure health care workers can feel free to access mental health resources.

The Joint Commission supports the removal of any barriers that inhibit clinicians and health care staff from accessing mental health care services, including eliminating policies that reinforce stigma and fear about the professional consequences of seeking mental health treatment.

For helpful resources please refer to [The Joint Commission's Staff Health and Wellbeing section on the Coronavirus portal](#).