**Want to support student and physician mental health by reducing barriers to people seeking mental health care? Send the email below to your Office of Student Affairs (sometimes called Office of Medical Student Affairs) to request that your medical school not ask about mental health on credentialing applications!**

Dear Doctor [add the physician’s last name who is the Dean of Student Affairs],

I hope this email finds you well! I am reaching out to bring to your attention an issue that I care deeply about.

Many students and physicians have fears about receiving mental health care, and it is important to reduce those fears. I recently learned that the American Medical Student Association is working to reduce barriers for medical students, residents and attendings seeking mental health care. One [recommended practice for reducing suicide risk](https://www.ihi.org/communities/blogs/one-way-to-stop-stigmatizing-physicians-receiving-mental-health-care) is to revise privileging/credentialing applications to not ask about mental health and to explicitly encourage mental health care when needed. Questions that ask about mental health deter physicians and students from seeking care, and haven’t been shown to improve care. Medical students have to complete privileging applications for many rotations during their 3rd and 4th years of medical school, and we know as future residents and attending physicians there will be more applications that may ask questions related to mental health. We are concerned that our institution may ask questions on this topic.

We are asking for your help working to address this issue with the physician credentialing office. We hope to remove questions regarding mental health from credentialing applications to work or volunteer at our institution or any institutions we partner with. Alternatively, if unable to remove those questions for some reason, the language could be revised to read: “Do you have any condition that currently adversely affects your ability to practice medicine in a safe, competent, ethical and professional manner?"

It would be helpful to also add language supportive of applicants receiving mental health care. Suggested language is: "It is common for clinicians to feel overwhelmed from time to time and to seek help when appropriate. We emphasize the importance of wellbeing and appropriate treatment and support for all health conditions."

Thank you for your time and consideration with this matter, and I look forward to speaking about this further.