

Frequently Asked Questions

Clinician Support Team (CST)



Purpose: To provide our clinicians (Faculty, APPs, Fellows, Residents) with confidential, independent, and collegial support and resources for the inevitable clinical and professional challenges they will face during their careers.

Everyone can use a little help sometimes

WHY CLINICIAN SUPPORT?

Supporters are available to talk about whatever you want to talk about. Possible topics include:

- distress over difficult clinical events or litigation
- problems with career or workplace conflicts
- burnout
- patient issues

We know that at certain times, clinicians prefer to talk to colleagues over any other group. We value and are committed to your welfare.

WHAT DO CLINICIAN SUPPORTERS DO?

While we don't have a magic wand, we can listen, provide perspective, provide resources, and help you identify options. Clinicians who have used similar programs have been positive; they appreciated receiving practical, helpful information and feeling heard in the context of not being judged.

WHO ARE THE CLINICIAN SUPPORTERS?

Volunteer WUSM physicians and advanced practice providers have been trained to provide support. You will be paired with a clinician who is not in your department, and who does not know you but is similar to you in terms of seniority and practice. Talking to someone with a slightly different viewpoint can be very helpful. Supporters may understand circumstances in a way that even caring family members may not.

WHAT IF I AM WORRIED ABOUT A COLLEAGUE?

Thank you for caring about your colleague! Please tell them that you are concerned and let them know about the Clinician Support Team. While self-referral is best, concerned medical center providers and staff can request support for a colleague by calling (314) 747-1477 or by submitting a Support Request Form online at the address shown below.

HOW DO I INITIATE CLINICIAN SUPPORT?

Visit the Clinician Support Team website and submit a Support Request Form, or call the confidential Clinician Support Hotline. A supporter will be assigned and will contact you within 24 hours. A face-to-face meeting is ideal; but support can also be provided by phone. Typically, support consists of one-or-two interactions, with resources sent to you as follow-up. We are all part of a medical community of shared experiences. We are here for you!

HOW DO I KNOW THIS WON'T GET BACK TO MY DEPARTMENT?

Conversation details are known only by the clinician supporter. We are an independent program and are not associated with any evaluative part of WUSM or BJC. The only outgoing information from CST are usage stats and anonymous feedback to improve the program. We take confidentiality very seriously.

ARE THESE CONVERSATIONS LEGALLY PROTECTED?

Clinician support is a resource provided by WUSM Risk Management, the Faculty Practice Plan, and the GME wellness office to enhance quality of care by supporting clinicians experiencing personal and professional challenges. Supporters do not keep records of their conversations with clinicians. These conversations are confidential but may not be legally protected.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER LIMITS TO CONFIDENTIALITY?

As you can understand, we may need to breach confidentiality if there is a danger to yourself or others, including substance use issues that put patients at risk; disclosure of child/elder/dependent adult abuse or neglect; and complaints about discrimination, sexual harassment, or retaliation. Depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary to report these issues internally to your WUSM Department Chair, training program/GME office, Risk Management, and/or General Counsel.