

## **Oregon Wellness Program Changes**

Effective July 1, 2024, the Oregon Wellness Program (OWP) will reduce the number of free counseling sessions available to medical and dental professionals from 8 annually to 3 visits.

All other sessions will be self-pay by the client, by insurance claims or an employer's EAP. An Emergency Fund will be available to fund additional client sessions under unusual circumstances. For existing clients, the OWP will honor any currently scheduled June appointments. New clients as of June will be subject to the new 3 free session limit.

**This reduction in free mental health counseling sessions is the result of a funding deficit following the 2024 Legislative Session, in which the Legislature failed to pass a \$1M funding package for the OWP.**

Advocates for the OWP, including the ODA, plan to submit another funding request to the legislature in the 2025 session in order to fully fund the program back to previous levels and restore the number of free counseling sessions back to 8.

This is a critical program for medical and dental providers throughout the state, offering confidential, free mental health support to those in our industry. **Ahead of and during the 2025 Legislative Session, ODA will be calling upon our members to provide testimony, write letters, and explain to Legislators why funding for this program is so crucial.** We look forward to working with you to advocate for the OWP in the coming months.