

MnFIRE 

# PROVIDER CONNECTIONS

## *Resources and Tools for the MnFIRE Assistance Program Network*

From Dr. Melinda R. Coscarelli –  
MnFIRE Medical Director, Mental Health

Hello, providers!

Recent [Minnesota Firefighter Initiative](#) (MnFIRE) data shows that mental health visits are up 100% since this time last year. We, as mental health providers, are carrying a significant increase in caseloads. In turn, several industry sources are reporting about 63% of health care professionals are experiencing burnout.



***Are you part of the 63%? If so, what are you doing to take care of yourself?***

As mental health providers, we are very good at taking care of others. But when it comes to our own health and well-being, we are just like those in the firefighter community – we often hang on until we break!

What causes mental health care providers to burn out? One of the main contributors is vicarious trauma. If your practice is mainly working with first responders, you are likely getting an earful of vicarious trauma. Some signs of vicarious trauma include: being overly involved with or, conversely, avoiding a patient; hypervigilance and/or fear for one's own safety (the world no longer feels safe and people can't be trusted); intrusive thoughts and images; or nightmares from patient stories.

Another source of burnout for health care providers is compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue is a combination of physical, emotional and spiritual depletion associated with caring for patients in significant emotional pain and physical distress.

This is why health care professionals need to have good boundaries with their clients. We all joined this field because we are caregivers. But we must make sure we are taking care of ourselves. Remember the saying while traveling on an airplane – put your own oxygen mask on first before assisting others. The reason for this is if you run out of air, you are no good for anyone!

Let's be more mindful of taking time for ourselves. Check in with yourself regularly. If you are feeling a little "off," it may be an indicator that you need a break. Have a safety plan for yourself and share it with someone. Have phone numbers available such as your doctor, emergency contact, suicide prevention number, etc. in case you think you might need them. Have a support team in place. Tell a trusted person what you are going through so you can have accountability and someone checking on you.

We offer this same advice to our patients every day. Be sure to give yourself the same compassion.

# -Melinda

Melinda R. Coscarelli, PhD, LADC, LPCC  
Medical Director, MnFIRE Assistance Program & Peer Support  
[mcoscarelli@mfireinitiative.com](mailto:mcoscarelli@mfireinitiative.com)

Visit MnFIRE's Website

## Updates

### QUARTERLY TOWN HALL:

In late March, MnFIRE Assistance Program (MAP) leaders and providers connected on how to better serve firefighters. The virtual Provider Quarterly Town Hall meeting included sharing new resources available through Optum, as well an update on Optum's recent branding change from utilizing "EAP" (Employee Assistance Program) terminology to the new "EWS" (Emotional Well-being Solutions) wording. This change is meant to be more inclusive and decrease the stigma of seeking mental health treatment. If you missed the Town Hall, the presentation deck is available on the [MAP Provider Resource](#) website.



### FREE TRAINING:

MnFIRE offered two free Living Works SafeTalk workshops this spring where providers and peer supporters enhanced their suicide alertness and lifesaving connection skills, held in Maplewood and Duluth. We're thankful for the grant from Essentia Health that made these workshops free to attendees. Stay tuned for future training opportunities, or reach out to [ProNetwork](#).

## Tools for Your Practice

Want more free resources to better serve firefighters and their families? Check out the provider resources page on the [MnFIRE website](#). MAP providers can click on the "provider resource log-in" button linked in the header. Simply enter your name and email to access the page.



## Utilize the Peer Support Network

Firefighters are exposed to traumatic stress at particularly high rates and getting help from someone who has lived similar experiences can make all the difference. Please utilize [MnFIRE's Peer Support Network](#) to complement the work you are doing in your sessions with firefighters and their families. This confidential service is free to all Minnesota firefighters and offers them the unique opportunity to connect and converse with someone who has been through similar experiences. By providing emotional support outside of the traditional medical system, peer support directly reduces the culture of silence in the fire service that has all too often resulted in worsening mental health and suicide.



Your firefighter patients can access peer support by calling the 24-hour hotline at **888-784-6634**. All calls are answered live, 24/7, by experienced mental health professionals, and they can match your client with a peer supporter who has had similar life experiences.

# Hometown Heroes Assistance Program Elements



- Up to 5 no-cost yearly personal and confidential sessions with trained professionals.
- Can be matched with a trained peer supporter.
- If you are in crisis or need support, call 1-888-784-6634 or visit [mnfireinitiative.com](http://mnfireinitiative.com).



- A free insurance policy providing up to \$20,000 towards expenses after a diagnosis of cancer, cardiac or other critical illness.
- To file a claim, call 1-888-784-6634 or visit [mnfireinitiative.com](http://mnfireinitiative.com).



- Ongoing, free annual training to keep you up to date on occupational health risks.
- Basic awareness training and deep-dive sessions covering cancer, emotional trauma, cardiac, nutrition and family.
- Sign up at [mnfiretraining.org](http://mnfiretraining.org).

## Claim Reminders

- MAP providers will receive a premium reimbursement rate for eligible services.
- Optum pays providers directly – no patient financial responsibility.
- All MAP claims must include an HJ modifier.
- Claims must also include the 9-digit member ID and authorization number.
- Claims can be submitted at [providerexpress.com](http://providerexpress.com).
- Providers participating in the MAP network will be reimbursed premium rates for the service codes below *only if* the Minnesota firefighters and their families are *offered an appointment within five business days of request*.

SERVICE CODE	SERVICE TITLE/ DESCRIPTION	FEE: PHD	FEE: MAA
90832HJ	30-37 min individual therapy	\$125	\$125
90834HJ	38-52 min individual therapy	\$125	\$125
90846HJ	Family therapy without patient in attendance	\$125	\$125
90847HJ	Family therapy with the patient in attendance	\$125	\$125
90853HJ	Group therapy other than family	\$125	\$125

\*\* Please note that extended therapy visits code (90837) and formal diagnostic

## Helpful Authorization Tips

- Authorization letters are sent to the individual via email or USPS mail. Ask the member for this information.
- Verify authorization details via our Authorization Inquiry tool at [providerexpress.com](https://providerexpress.com).
- Call Optum MAP for assistance (1-866-694-9662).

## Important Contacts

**MnFIRE Hotline:** 1-888-784-6634

1 – MAP (Firefighter/Family Access)

2 – Peer Support

3 – Critical Illness Insurance

4 – Cardiac & Cancer

5 – Provider Authorization Hotline (Note: this option is not announced on the greeting)

**Authorization Hotline:** 1-866-694-9662

**Provider Questions:** [emily.schumacher@optum.com](mailto:emily.schumacher@optum.com)

---

## About MnFIRE

MnFIRE is a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to providing education and support for firefighters and their families with regard to cardiac, emotional trauma and cancer, achieving better health outcomes. For more information, visit [mnfireinitiative.com](https://mnfireinitiative.com).



Share This Email



Share This Email

Minnesota Firefighter Initiative | PO Box 124, Isanti, MN 55040

[Unsubscribe djankovich@mnfireinitiative.com](mailto:djankovich@mnfireinitiative.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [info@mnfireinitiative.com](mailto:info@mnfireinitiative.com) powered by



Try email marketing for free today!