

# The Importance of Peer-to-Peer Connection

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Meeting with a trusted colleague can serve many purposes. A physician who meets with another physician works on things such as goals, challenges, stumbling blocks, staleness, or feeling stuck. Just as in medicine, there are different specialties to coaching based on the desired outcome, including, but not limited to, executive, leadership, performance, team, communication, health, life, and relationships. Connecting with a peer through the LifeBridge program may help

a physician to:

- Draw on their best qualities to evoke excellence and solve problems
- Develop and achieve short and long-term goals
- Be open to personal and professional development

## Types of Support

There are many styles of support for individuals. One of the goals of LifeBridge is to confidentially connect a colleague so that physicians feel heard, supported, and understood. Peer connection can assist individuals with performance improvement, identifying self-sabotaging behaviors, and expanding new thinking. Peer coaching addresses these things and turns them into actions. Mentoring and perspective aim to pass on advice and knowledge from someone with experience with a given situation. Teaching develops thinking resources and skills for development. Peer connection can facilitate problem-solving and accountability to stay on track to reach solutions or a more desirable outcome. LifeBridge

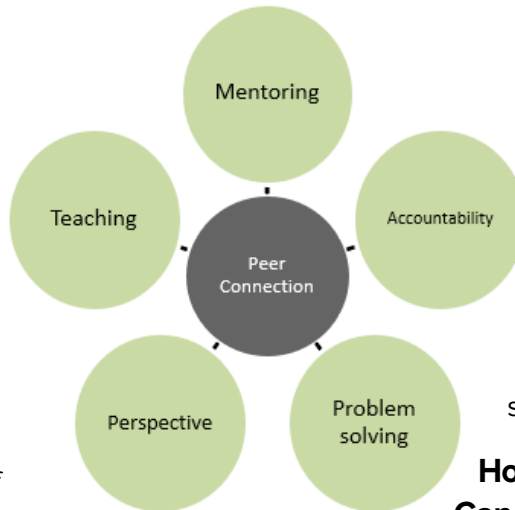
utilizes trained peers who are actively practicing physicians themselves.

LifeBridge does not provide therapy or counseling, the program has a list of trusted referral sources to offer to individuals who may need those types of services. In addition, individuals can continue to participate in LifeBridge concurrently with other benefits.

## Peer-to-Peer Structure

LifeBridge is designed for the individual physician's desired outcomes. Various tools are used to provide a deeper look at values, goals, or assessment of character traits to provide a deeper understanding of oneself. An "on-demand" or "open-topic" style also fits within the framework of LifeBridge. This style allows the

individual to come to a meeting with something that is top of mind, or they are hoping to gain more clarity on how to address it. LifeBridge currently provides the open topic style allowing physicians to bring various topics to their sessions. Structured programs are under development for specific issues.



## How Connecting with a Peer Can Help

### Behavior Change

You are struggling with completing EHR documentation and consistently spend too much time at home to achieve this. Your significant other is upset with your lack of time spent with family. Coaching on time management skills and tips for EHR documentation could be beneficial in managing your time.

### Skill Development

You have recently been named chair of your department. You get along great with your colleagues

but will be in a new role as their supervisor. Learning more about your communication style and identifying others' preferences may help with this transition. A coach can work with you through different scenarios you might encounter.

*Increasing Positivity*

Becoming a physician requires time, dedication, and immense self-sacrifice. Given increasing changes to physician autonomy, administrative requirements, and healthcare culture, attitudes play a critical role in your success and happiness. Peer coaching provides tools to teach relaxation methods, positive visualization, and mood improvement.

*Setting Goals*

You are looking to negotiate your contract at your new hospital. You have specific terms that you want to make sure are included. It can be a tedious and overwhelming process. Working with a physician coach can provide a non-biased setting to work out a plan for moving forward.

These are just a few examples of how LifeBridge has helped Nebraska physicians in the past. If you are interested in connecting with a peer physician coach, call our confidential line: **1-888-569-2036**.

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**COACHES,**  
why shouldn't  
**PHYSICIANS?**

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Nebraska's Physician Wellness Program

*NMA 2022 Physician of the Year*

**Michael Rapp, MD** *(continued from page 9)*

Throughout the pandemic, the teamwork shown by all providers and healthcare workers was enhanced by Joan Anderson arranging and LCMS hosting multiple physician updates by the health department and the hospitals. These updates on Fridays at noon via Zoom often included experts such as Dr. James Lawlor and local pulmonologists and infectious disease experts providing educational information.

In conclusion, due to my unique position during the Covid-19 crisis there were multiple opportunities to lead. It was an honor working with dedicated and conscientious people, whether at the Governor's office, National Guard, hospitals, LCMS, Health Department, or vaccine clinics.