

STRESS FIRST AID IN HEALTHCARE: A SELF-CARE AND PEER SUPPORT MODEL

*Presenters: Tiana Skawinski, PsyD., Mayer Bellehsen, PhD.,
and Annmarie Wacha-Montes, PsyD.*

**Friday, January 9, 2026 ♦ 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. (ET)
Zoom Webinar**

This presentation will explore the unique occupational stressors and trauma exposure faced by healthcare workers (HCWs), which can significantly affect their mental health and contribute to stress, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and burnout. It will describe the adaptation and implementation of Stress First Aid (SFA), a peer support and self-care model introduced within a large healthcare system. Presenters will review the evidence base supporting SFA and discuss its application across diverse healthcare settings. The session will include an overview of SFA's core components, training processes, and integration into the Northwell Health system, where it has reached more than 35,000 HCWs to date. Outcome data related to self-efficacy, stress, perceived support, resource awareness, burnout, and resilience will be presented. The presentation will conclude with key lessons learned and practical strategies for integrating SFA into a variety of workplace contexts, including examples of supporting healthcare providers, addressing implementation challenges, and incorporating SFA into existing workflows.

Level of Curriculum Content: Intermediate

Zoom at a Glance

Zoom is a web-based video conferencing tool with a local, desktop client and a mobile app that allows users to meet online, with or without video, whether you are connecting multiple conference rooms or meeting with attendees from their personal desktops or mobile devices. For more information or to download Zoom, please visit <https://zoom.us/>.

ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

Tiana Skawinski, PsyD is a licensed clinical psychologist in the state of New York who provides specialized PTSD and trauma treatment, as well as resilience support, for healthcare workers and community members at Northwell Health's *Center for Traumatic Stress, Resilience, and Recovery*. She began her career in the mental health field as a social worker, delivering clinical care to individuals impacted by trauma and serious mental illness (SMI). A proud graduate of Nova Southeastern University and TRIP alumna, Dr. Skawinski completed her predoctoral internship at Hartford Hospital's Institute of Living and her postdoctoral fellowship with the PTSD Clinical Team at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center. Her work is driven by a commitment to helping individuals restore, or discover, a sense of control, balance, and well-being in their lives.

Mayer Bellehsen, PhD, is an Assistant Vice President in the Behavioral Health Service Line at Northwell Health. He is a licensed Clinical Psychologist who received his Doctorate in Clinical Psychology with a Health Emphasis in 2011 from the Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology at Yeshiva University. Dr. Bellehsen has had extensive experience providing and overseeing behavioral health services for individuals and families impacted by trauma as well as publishing and teaching on topics related to the treatment of traumatic stress related conditions. Dr. Bellehsen most recently co-developed and now oversees the Center for Traumatic Stress, Resilience and Recovery (CTSRR) at Northwell Health. The center provides clinical and resilience services for health care workers and community members impacted by traumatic stress and is conducting research on the impact of COVID-19 and stress on health care worker wellbeing. Additionally, the center provides clinical services to NYPD uniformed officers through the Finest Care program, a short-term solution for officers seeking confidential behavioral health care access outside of their employer. Dr. Bellehsen is also the founding Director of the Unified Behavioral Health Center for Military Veterans and their Families: Northwell Health, which provides access to behavioral healthcare for US Military Service Members, Veterans and their families through partnership with the Northport VA.

Annmarie Wacha-Montes, PsyD is the clinical director for the Center for Traumatic Stress, Resilience and Recovery at Northwell Healthcare in NY and is licensed in NY and NJ. She is a graduate from Nova Southeastern University and alumni from Guided Self-Change Clinic and TRIP. She completed her internship at the Syracuse VA and fellowship in McLean Hospital in the Women's Trauma Center. Dr. Wacha-Montes specializes in trauma and co-occurring issues, health concerns, crisis response, suicide prevention and community psychology. She has spent much of her career creating and managing services and programs to build resilience and improve accessibility to care in healthcare systems and higher education. Her work has also included efforts related to diversity, equity and inclusion.

PROGRAM AGENDA

12:00pm – 12:10pm	Burnout and occupational stressors in healthcare
12:10pm – 12:25pm	The power of peer support: Evidence and benefits
12:25pm – 12:35pm	Center for Traumatic Stress, Resilience, and Recovery
12:35pm – 12:50pm	Stress first aid (SFA): Overview and implementation
12:50pm – 1:05pm	Integrating SFA: Embedding peer support into existing workflows
1:05pm – 1:20pm	Sustaining SFA: Long-Term Strategies and Organizational Impact
1:20pm – 1:35pm	Findings and outcomes: Self-efficacy, burnout, and resilience
1:35pm – 1:50pm	Challenges and opportunities
1:50 pm – 2:00pm	Discussion / Q&A: Lessons learned and next steps

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

- Identify 3 key features of the Stress First Aid model
- List 2 actions they can take to implement Stress First Aid in their setting.

For additional information on continuing education policies or upcoming workshops, please visit our web site at <https://psychology.nova.edu/ce>.

CONTINUING EDUCATION INFORMATION

Psychologists: Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Nova Southeastern University maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Clinical social workers, mental health counselors, and marriage and family therapists: Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is approved by the state of Florida's Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling to offer continuing education. Provider number: BAP# 330, Exp. 03/31/27.

School psychologists: Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is approved by the state of Florida's Board of Medical Therapies/Psychology, Office of School Psychology, to offer continuing education. Provider number: SCE# 11, Exp. 11/30/27.

Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is approved by the National Association of School Psychologists to offer continuing education for school psychologists. Nova Southeastern University maintains responsibility for this program and its content. Provider# 1024

Professional counselors: Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 4548. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is solely responsible for all aspects of the programs.

All mental health professionals will receive two (2) continuing education credits for the workshop. Full attendance is required. No partial credit will be awarded. Check your licensing state's rules and regulations for more information regarding your continuing education requirements.

Nova Southeastern University is committed to making its programs accessible to all prospective attendees. Let us know if you have specific requirements due to a disability.

ABOUT THE SPONSOR

Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology is dedicated to providing high-quality training, education, research, and service its students and to the community. The college offers two American Psychological Association (APA)-accredited doctoral programs (Ph.D. and Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology); a specialist and a doctoral program in school psychology; master's degree programs in counseling clinical mental health counseling, school counseling, substance abuse counseling, and applied behavioral analysis), forensic psychology, experimental psychology, and general psychology; and bachelor's degree programs in psychology and behavioral neuroscience. The College of Psychology has two APA accredited doctoral internship programs, the South Florida Consortium Internship Program and the Psychology Services Center Internship program.

NOTICES OF ACCREDITATION, MEMBERSHIP, AND NONDISCRIMINATION

Nova Southeastern University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. The university is chartered by the State of Florida. The College of Psychology Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. The College of Psychology Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. The College of Psychology has two APA accredited doctoral internship programs, the South Florida Consortium Internship Program and the Psychology Services Center Internship Program. Questions related to the programs' accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation: Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, American Psychological Association, 750 1st Street, NE, Washington, D.C., 20002-4242, Phone: (202) 336-5979, Email: apaaccred@apa.org, Web: www.apa.org/ed/accreditation. The college's master's degree program in school counseling and specialist program in school psychology are approved by the Florida Department of Education. In addition, the specialist and doctoral programs in school psychology hold the designation of National Recognition by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

Nova Southeastern University admits students of any race, color, sex, age, nondisqualifying disability, religion or creed, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school, and does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.