

## 2020 HAP Achievement Award Optimal Operations Award

# Washington Health System

## Caring for our Caregivers

The health system's idea for a peer support program emerged during 2018, when an obstetrician who had gone through the unexpected loss of a newborn at delivery approached hospital administration. In response, the hospital created the "forYou Team," which helps care for workers who experience an unanticipated traumatic event.



Upon implementation, the system identified opportunities to provide support for workers, such as adverse surgical events, clinical staff experiencing patient/family violence, and a new nurse experiencing a "first death."

The system-wide support program has several key features, including:

- A robust team of peer supporters to serve as rapid responders to meet with employees in need
- Thorough education and marketing efforts to highlight the support program
- A confidential documentation process
- Quarterly meetings with a steering committee and peer supporters to review monthly data and survey results, while providing additional opportunities for education

The initial months of the program yielded very strong results, leading to increased referrals and peer support for dozens of employees.