The ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs (CoLAP) has a mission to assure that every judge, lawyer and law student has access to support and assistance when confronting alcoholism, substance use disorders or mental health issues. This mission is carried out by supporting the work of state and local Lawyer Assistance Programs (LAPs) as they provide hands-on services and support to those in need of their assistance.

A 2016 study conducted by ABA CoLAP and the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation found that alcohol use disorders and mental health problems are occurring in the legal profession at higher rates than in other professions and the general population. Too often, lawyers do not take the measures necessary to seek help until it is too late. We need your help to assist with our outreach efforts. We encourage you to let us know how we can be a resource to you so that together we can advance well-being for all those in our profession.

CoLAP would like to collaborate with anyone interested in advancing well-being within the profession. The Commission can provide the resources to plan and produce panels, presentations and articles, and can help establish programs, lawyer assistance committees and best practices within your organizations.

The CoLAP website provides resources such as links to national sources for help, a directory of lawyer assistance programs, toolkits, articles, reports and event information. Visit the website to connect with CoLAP through its Twitter and Facebook accounts and to follow its blog, CoLAP Cafe.

Special populations have special needs, and CoLAP has a series of committees to address those needs such as those dedicated to senior lawyers, law students, judges and diverse and underserved populations. CoLAP also has committees dedicated to conducting research, furthering education and advancing policy that better enables state LAPs to serve those in need. Anyone is free to join a committee - visit www.ambar.org/colap to contact us and get involved.

If you or someone you know needs assistance, contact your state or local Lawyer Assistance Program: www.ambar.org/lapdirectory