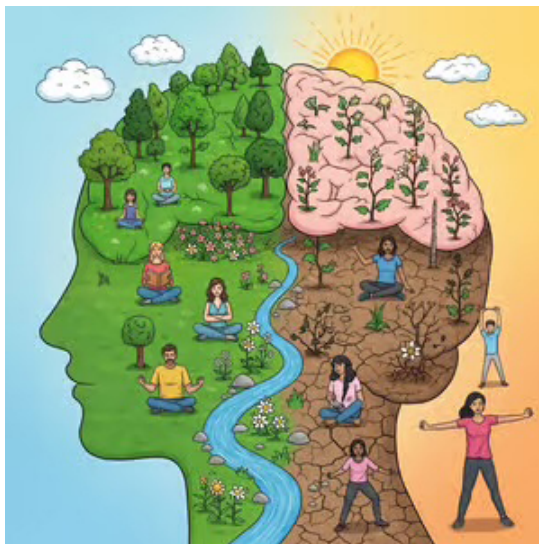




## World Mental Health Week

World Mental Health Week, established in 1992, is right around the corner! It is always the first full week of October, where World Mental Health Day ([WMHD](#)) is always October 10<sup>th</sup>.



Established by the [World Federation for Mental Health](#), WMHD provides an opportunity to educate, increase awareness about mental health, and work together on a large scale to find solutions. Each year, the theme varies and the theme for [World Mental Health Day 2025](#) is to prioritize mental health in the workplace and work toward prioritizing mental well-being into the culture of organizations.

There is a fair amount of research that demonstrates how nature during the workday can improve employee health. For example, [one study](#) evaluated burnout in nurses and found that taking daily work breaks in a hospital garden

resulted in significant improvements. Another study by [Daniels et al.](#), conducted a RCT (randomized clinical trial) using 45 employees, and found that those who participated in a nature-based program during work hours had lower scores on a burnout assessment, lower salivary cortisol levels, and improved cognition.

[Brossoit et al.](#) found that individuals who work and live in areas with greater natural amenities, such as access to water, topographic variation, and temperate climate, spend more time outside and enjoy time outside to a greater degree, and these experiences are associated with greater engagement and creativity at work.

## How is PRA contributing to Employee Mental Health and Mental Health, in general?

Many ways! My colleagues and I recently [published a study](#) with colleagues where we found significant improvements in mental health indices in participants of an employee wellness nature prescription program during the COVID pandemic. Participants had decreased symptoms of anxiety, depression, and feelings of social isolation, in addition to improved sleep.

PRA collaborated with El Centro de Corazón Community Health Center of Houston, Texas in 2023 to address



**El Centro de Corazón**  
*Quality Health Care*

provider burnout and chronic stress. In continued partnership with El Centro, PRA will be working with El Centro's entire staff during 2025-26, thanks to a grant from Texas A&M Forest Service, to provide guided nature therapy sessions, hands-on tree planting and tending, and access to PRA's nature/park prescribing platform to address burnout and other mental health indices amongst employees.

PRA is partnering with Rice University's [SNEWS Lab](#) to study the effects of these nature-based interventions on El Centro's staff mental health, burnout, and overall wellness.



**RICE**

We are also very excited to announce that we are partnering with [World Wildlife Fund](#) (WWF) to increase



awareness of mental health conditions and how being outdoors can benefit those who are affected. We are working with WWF on podcasts, a web page, and information about nature prescriptions and how they can be used to improve mental health. The campaign will go live during Mental Health Week.



You might wonder why a conservation group is partnering with a public health organization. As we have noted in previous newsletters, working together just makes sense! Mental health illness is incredibly common, where about 21 million adults suffer from [depression](#) and 40 million have [anxiety](#). It goes to reason that many WWF members either have themselves or a family member afflicted with anxiety, depression, and/or loneliness. We also have discussed that individuals who do not go outside are losing their connectedness to nature.

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Motivating ourselves to go outdoors not only improves our own mental health and sense of well-being, but also increases our connection to the outside world, and the resultant enhanced nature connection may lead to environmental stewardship. Thus, our reason for promoting reciprocal human and ecological restoration; in other words, spending time in nature is good for us and the Earth.

## What can you do?

If you have agency to make changes in your workplace, start an employee wellness program that includes time outdoors or nature-based indoors exposure, during the workday. If you are an employee, discuss the possibility of starting a program with your supervisor. Build in time outdoors before, during and/or after work. Something as simple as [1 nature experience](#) a week can improve our health. [Write yourself a nature prescription](#) or, if you are a health care provider, start to issue nature prescriptions for your patients.

# Professional of the Month



## Tamberly Conway, Ph.D.

I am the founder and CEO of [Conservation Conexions](#) and Nurturing Nature Lifelong Living. I serve as a bilingual Certified Nature and Forest Therapy Practitioner and a Certified Forest Therapy Trails, Spaces and Places Consultant and am also an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist and an international speaker.

I am passionate about inspiring holistic wellness by providing guidance for nature dosing both inside and out, particularly with seniors, healthcare professionals, care staff in eldercare settings and caregivers navigating the path of care for their loved ones. My goal is to empower individuals and communities to embrace a balanced approach to health and wellbeing and my mission is to inspire a harmonious lifestyle rooted in the healing power of nurturing nature to foster resilience, connection, and an enhanced quality of life.

I became interested in this field of work during my 12 years at the [U.S. Forest Service \(USFS\)](#) when I began working with healthcare professionals in 2008, who were writing nature prescriptions as a preventative form of care. My work in Conservation Education and community engagement helped to foster messaging for individuals and communities around the intricate relationship between forest health and human health and the power of intentional nature connection to promote health and well-being.

In 2018, I participated in a guided Nature and Forest Therapy experience, which inspired me to become an [Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Certified Guide \(ANFT\)](#), as I realized this practice was very different from a hike in the woods or a naturalist walk but something that promotes being in the present moment and healing on a much deeper level. I realized that this practice not only supported human health, but also a connection and relationship that develops between humans and the Earth, which is intricately connected to our own health and well-being. After becoming a certified ANFT guide in 2019, I left the USFS to bring the Forest Therapy practice, research and policy more deeply

into diverse communities, through focused partnerships, and collaborations to bring this global practice forward.

## Silent Healer's: Nature's Cure



Currently, I am working to bring the global forest therapy practice, research, and policy deeper into the US, using a national model from South Korea, integrating nature and forest healing and establishing senior living communities in these healing spaces where elders, caregivers and loved ones can thrive through a nurturing nature model of care. In this realm, I am working with the [Stay True Creative Productions](#) team to launch a documentary film, [Silent Healers: Nature's Cure](#), which captures the global expansion of the Forest Therapy practice, research and policy, and this vision to expand South Korea's forest healing center model to support the health of humans and forest communities.

## The World Forum on Forest Therapy

One last note! The World Forum on Forest Therapy, “**Forests for Health, Happiness and Well being**,” is holding its annual meeting **October 27-30, 2025** in South Korea. For further information, check out their [website](#).

[Learn More](#)

# Speaking of Partnerships...



## The Swedish Prescription

We have partnered with the country of [Sweden](#), yes, you heard it, the country... to support them in becoming the first country “on prescription,” where a healthcare provider can issue a prescription for them to visit Sweden. We realize at first glance that this might seem a little extreme, and only for the few who have the means to travel to such a distant destination. But we have many additional thoughts.

First, Sweden is always one of the happiest countries and about 70% is forested. Individuals have the right to hike and camp on land that is even privately owned, so access is plentiful. Many areas of Sweden have no light or sound pollution, and Swedes culturally build in a daily break, called Fika, where they encourage coffee and conversation, a social prescription for sure!

Sweden also has some pretty substantial environmental policies in place to deal with global warming. Obviously, not everybody can afford to visit and the country wants to encourage individuals to embody the spirit of their country with their love for nature and culture. We applaud their efforts to prioritize health and wellness and to use nature prescriptions in yet another creative way!

Now gotta go. It's Fika time!

## We want to hear from you!

With over 1,800 registered providers across the country, we know there are a lot of stories out there of prescribing nature for the first time and patient successes. Take a moment to [Share Your Story](#) and get a chance to be showcased on our [Provider Spotlight](#) page.

[Share Your Story](#)

PRA is grateful for your donation to help us keep our website and platform accessible to all!

[Support our Work](#)

Park Rx America is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.  
All donations are tax deductible. Our EIN is **82-0856734**.

*Keeping in mind the secondary trauma of caring for others, please take the time you need to recover and consider a dose of nature for yourself.*

**Stacy Beller Stryer, MD**  
*Associate Medical Director*

**Robert Zarr, MD, MPH**  
*Founder & Medical Director*



