

Pennsylvania's Approach to Impaired Nursing Practice



Presented by: **Kathie Simpson**, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Nurse Peer Assistance Program

DEVELOPMENT OF A PEER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CONTRACTED WITH THE STATE

- **RFP** = Request For Proposal – Department of State solicits bids to develop a Peer Assistance Program for all Licensed Nurses in Pennsylvania
- **Technical Submittal** – statement of problem, management summary includes mission statement, goal and objectives, who we will assist, a specific work plan and coordination with the State Program responsible for monitoring all 29 health care Boards.
- **Cost Submittal** – detailed line item expenses required to operate the program.
- **Essential Elements of a Contracted Peer Assistance Program**
- **Personnel** – Job Descriptions – manage caseload of 150 under contract, Performance Appraisals, Salary – starting salary \$52,500 with annual increases, Benefits – Paid Healthcare, Short and Long term Disability, Vision, Dental and Life Insurance – Vacation 3 weeks for Case Managers with 12 paid state holidays, 8 hours off site education paid annually, paid attendance at INTNSA or NOAP conference (rotates annually).

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- **Incorporate as 501 (c) 3 Non Profit Corporation**
- **Establish bylaws for the program**
- **Develop and appoint members to a Board of Directors**
- **Develop Clinical and Business Code of Ethics for employees and Board members.**
- **Trademark the name of the organization. Develop Logo.**
- **Establish Contracted Services – Legal Counsel, Payroll Services, Accounting Services/Auditor, Information Systems Consultant, Employee Benefit Insurance, Liability Insurance, Board of Directors Insurance, Workmen's Compensation Insurance, Building Insurance**

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- **Establish Human Resource/Financial Position (Assistant to Director)** – Responsible for payroll –new hire required paperwork, direct deposit, vacation accrual and disability when appropriate, financial management – accounts payable and receivable, monthly reports and coordination with contracted payroll and accounting firms, review insurance contacts for annual renewal and submit invoices to state for payment.

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- **Filing of Annual 990 Taxes with Accounting Firm**
- **Scheduling Annual Audits by Workmen's Compensation**
- **Report each participant's compliance when involved with the State Board on a quarterly basis. Non-compliance is reported immediately.**
- **Annual Statistical Report with Outcome Analysis**

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- **Establish network of approved evaluators and treatment facilities.**
- **Provide educational programs to hospitals, schools of nursing, facilities with Continuing Education credits**

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Types of Assistance Provided and to Whom

- **Assistance** – P.N.A.P provides assistance to **nurses and nursing students** who are seeking help and support in **recovery from a condition that may render them unsafe to practice**.
- **Intervention** – PNAP provides guidance to any person who refers a nurse in regard to **confronting the nurse** suspected of impairment, mandatory reporting requirements, involvement with loss prevention and/or the criminal justice system, and assistance in obtaining appropriate treatment.
- **Assistance To Employers** – PNAP provides guidance to employers regarding nurse impairment in the areas of early identification, documentation and intervention, mandatory reporting requirements, access to treatment referrals, contract interpretation, re-entry to practice and continued monitoring.

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Types of Assistance Provided and to Whom

- **Representation** – PNAP staff provides sworn testimony and documentation to the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing at disciplinary and reinstatement hearings.
- **Non-treatment Referral** – PNAP can provide referrals to attorneys who specialize in representing nurses with criminal charges or convictions and Board hearings. These attorneys have extensive knowledge of the Pa. Nurse Practice Act and Law.
- **Education, Training and Professional Outreach** - PNAP provides free continuing education in the area of nursing impairment, mandatory reporting requirements, avoiding licensure discipline and new trends in drug abuse to assist nurses to better care for themselves, their colleagues and their patients upon request. Target outreach to employers and their nursing staff, schools of nursing, healthcare facilities and treatment providers.
- PNAP provides each nurse the opportunity to self-refer in an atmosphere that is safe, supportive and confidential.

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PENNSYLVANIA NURSE PEER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

To identify, intervene upon, advocate, monitor and provide support, help and hope to the Nurse or Nursing Student experiencing Addiction, Alcoholism and other Mental Health Disorders.

Establish P.N.A.P. as a recognized, credible, professional organization that appropriately represents the nursing community and its interests.

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MONITORING APPROACHES

Confidential monitoring with P.N.A.P. only:

- Licensing board and/or PHMP not involved.
- Nurse self-reports directly to P.N.A.P.
- Nurse signs P.N.A.P. Agreement
- P.N.A.P. monitors licensee for up to 3 years to ensure he/she remains in stable recovery
- Nurse successfully completes P.N.A.P.



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MONITORING APPROACHES

Dual monitoring with PHMP and P.N.A.P.

- Eligible nurses are enrolled and enter into PHMP and P.N.A.P. agreements.
- P.N.A.P. does the majority of the monitoring of the case and provides quarterly progress reports to PHMP.
- If noncompliance occurs, PHMP and P.N.A.P. develop action plan.
- Successful completion based on licensee's compliance with his/her PHMP and P.N.A.P. monitoring agreements.



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MONITORING REQUIREMENTS



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MONITORING

- Generally three year agreements, but may be modified if board action or legal requirements mandate additional monitoring.
- Mandates total abstinence.
- Random, observed drug testing for drugs and alcohol.
- Monitors adherence with treatment recommendations.
- Requires verified 12 step meeting attendance, including nurse assist meeting attendance.
- Monitors nurse's practice through required quarterly work evaluations.



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AND FINALLY...

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SO WHAT DOES CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY HAVE TO DO WITH ME? ~ART ZWERLING

- Everything really, given the challenge of developing a rational approach to our colleagues who are impaired and our patients who are chemically dependent.
- A large part of the challenge for us is finding the moral courage to stop our perception that chemical dependency is willful misconduct.
- We no longer have the luxury of throw away nurses.
- Our wounded colleagues deserve at least as much care and compassion as our patients.

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ANA CODE OF ETHICS

- The nurse extends compassion and caring to colleagues who are in recovery from illness or when illness interferes with job performance.
- In a situation where a nurse suspects another's practice may be impaired, the nurse's duty is to take action designated to both protect patients and to assure that the impaired individual receives assistance in regaining optimal function.

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Nurses are in the business of helping people to recover from illness. P.N.A.P. is here to help our own to recover from a disease that is progressive and fatal if left untreated.

Believe what you see and care enough to do something...you just may be SAVING A LIFE!

CONTACT P.N.A.P. AT
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PNAP.ORG

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