

Wellness and Substance Use Disorder (Chemical Dependency)

Wellness is defined as a positive state of mind, body, and spirit reflecting a balance of effective adaptation, resilience, and coping mechanisms in personal and professional environments that enhance quality of life. Substance Use Disorder is defined as a chemical dependency and addiction, is a chronic and progressive disease which threatens physical and mental well-being and is individually characterized by a multiplicity of behaviors from misuse through dependency/addiction to alcohol and/or drugs (legal and illegal).

Purpose

The educational program for nurse anesthesia has a vital interest in maintaining a safe, healthy and efficient environment for its students and patients and an environment free from the misuse of alcohol and drugs. Recognizing that substance abuse is both a disease and a professional hazard, the purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the prevention and management of substance abuse within the Nurse Anesthesia Program.

Policy

The policy is intended to provide a safe, fair working environment for all anesthesia practitioners and their patients. A person currently involved in substance abuse cannot safely learn or practice as a nurse anesthetist. Nurse anesthesia students are required to abide by college, program, and clinical site wellness and substance abuse policies. Nurse anesthesia students are required to submit to drug testing as a condition of enrollment. Nurse anesthesia students are expected to comply with the credentialing requirements, including alcohol and/or substance abuse testing, of all clinical sites. Students may be subjected to immediate alcohol and/or substance abuse testing by the college for no cause, at their expense. Students may be required to undergo alcohol and/or substance abuse professional evaluation for no cause, at their expense. Failure of any alcohol or substance abuse test, or refusal to cooperate with any aspect of this policy, or any clinical site policy on alcohol and/or substance abuse, will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, refusal of enrollment, and the reporting of use to the appropriate authorities. Because of the paramount concern for patient safety, these disciplinary actions may be imposed without the customary mechanisms of academic contract and probation period.

Nurse anesthesia students with substance abuse issues are encouraged to self-report to the program faculty and/or administration, clinical site, seek help from AANA Peer Assistance, and/or utilize the state Licensed Assistance Program. Such disclosure or the presence on an alcohol/substance abuse test of any intoxicant, narcotic, hallucinogen, marijuana or other controlled substance in blood or urine will result in immediate placement of the student on probation without clinical privileges. The faculty may also place the student on probation

without clinical privileges if they have reasonable cause to suspect 1) diversion; 2) inappropriate or excessive use of controlled substances, illegal drugs, prescribed drugs, or alcohol, or 3) any other condition which may threaten patient or student safety, particularly if any of these are resulting, or may potentially result, in impairment.

If alcohol/substance abuse test results are positive, the student is required to undergo professional evaluation with recommendations for treatment. Failure to undergo this evaluation and comply with treatment recommendations will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

See COA DNP Standards E2.2 and Definition: Wellness and Substance Abuse Disorder;
Clarkson College Policy SW-15 Drug and Alcohol

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