

Policies and Information

Impaired Nursing Student Policy

To provide safe, effective patient care, nursing students must be free of chemical impairment from alcohol and drugs. This applies to any academic setting.

Research College of Nursing believes that chemical abuse or dependency is a treatable disorder. The College desires early identification, evaluation and treatment to promote positive outcomes for nursing students.

Signs and symptoms of chemical impairment may include, but are not limited to, odor of alcohol, mood swings, patterns of irresponsible behavior, unexplained absences, frequent tardiness, poor documentation, poor physical appearance, pupillary changes, red eyes, unsteady gait, slurred speech, frequent crises, blackouts and erratic performance.

Procedure for Drug/Alcohol Screening of Students

If, in the judgment of the faculty member, a student demonstrates signs and/or symptoms of chemical impairment, the faculty member should suspend the student from participation in the academic activity (i.e. class, lab or clinical) and ask the student to wait in a secure, private area for testing. Testing should be done as soon as possible. The College assumes the cost of the testing by Concentra or its representative under an established agreement. Testing will include a drug screen and a BAT (breath analyzer test). If the student does not cooperate with the required testing, the College will consider the student to be of the same status as if the test results were positive.

If the student is on the RMC campus during regular business hours (M-F 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM), the faculty member will notify the Dean's Administrative Assistant to have the Director of Student Affairs or the Associate Dean escort the student to the Concentra office at 6420 Prospect for testing. The Dean's Administrative Assistant will contact the Concentra office to notify them that a student is coming for testing. If not on the RMC campus, or if outside of regular business hours, the faculty member will contact the After Hours Emergency Drug and Alcohol Testing Services. A representative will come to conduct the BAT on site.

If the screening test results are negative, the student suspension is removed without penalty to the student.

If drug or alcohol test results are positive the student will be required to participate in an evaluation conducted by a licensed healthcare provider and complete an approved treatment program. The student's continued participation in class, clinical and other college activities is contingent on evidence that the student completes an approved treatment program and remains alcohol and drug free. If the student does not provide evidence of completion of an approved program, he/she will be dismissed from the College. Evidence of participation will require the student's signed release of records so that the treatment personnel may communicate with a College official. The extent of the release may be limited to compliance with and satisfactory progress in the treatment program. The College will make every reasonable effort to help the student make up any class or clinical experience missed due to absence because of action taken to enforce of this policy. However, the regular college and course absence procedures are applicable.

The College may require random drug and alcohol testing for the remainder of the student's enrollment in the College after successful completion of an approved treatment program. A

second occurrence of positive drug or alcohol testing will result in the student's immediate dismissal from the College.

An administrative officer of the College appointed by the Dean on a case by case basis will monitor the student's compliance with the rehabilitation program requirements. This monitoring of compliance may include a written contract with the student which specifies the treatment program, its length, the nature of progress reports and other conditions deemed appropriate for successful treatment. Failure to meet the requirements in the contract will result in immediate dismissal from the College. Confidentiality of the student's test results and participation in the treatment program will be maintained by the College.

The cost of the treatment program is the responsibility of the student. Students must select an approved program which meets the commonly accepted standards of the profession of alcohol and drug rehabilitation treatment.

The type and standards of drug and alcohol testing used by the College of Nursing are determined by the testing organization (Concentra) and are outlined in the Research Medical Center Illegal Drug and Alcohol Policy.

If a student is taking prescription medication which may affect his/her behavior he/she should report this to his/her faculty. The College expects students to make every effort to take appropriate action regarding patient care and to avoid confusion about the possible use of alcohol and illegal drugs when the use of prescription medication is required.