

SP 14.0 Substance Abuse

Approved by Council July 2005
Effective August 1, 2005

Purpose and Objective

As a regulated and primary care provider, it is imperative that all chiropractors follow a formal set of standards governing misuse and abuse of alcohol, illicit drugs, over-the-counter medication and prescription drugs. The purpose and objective of implementing a substance abuse standard is to ensure our members fulfill their professional obligations by maintaining a safe working environment, including protecting the well-being of themselves as well as their patients. This standard will assist in ensuring that registered members shall not act or continue to act in any manner in which they may be reasonably seen as being unable to provide safe and competent services.

Definition(s)

Substance Abuse refers to patterns of use of alcohol and/or drugs (street, over the counter or prescribed drugs) which interfere with an individual's social, occupational, legal, financial, emotional and physical function.

Current literature defines addiction as a primary, progressive, chronic disease with genetic, psychosocial, and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations. The disease can be progressive and fatal. It is characterized by impaired control over use of the substance, preoccupation with the substance, use of the substance despite adverse consequences, and distortions in thinking.

Enforceability

A member identified to the Complaints Director as non-compliant in the Standard of Practice related to substance abuse is subject to sanction through the complaint process under Part 4 of the *Health Professions Act* by the Hearing Tribunal. These sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

- conditions on practice;
- practice supervision;
- psychological evaluations;
- suspension of license;
- revocation of license;
- voluntary entrance into a treatment facility of the Complaint Director's choice;
- referral to a mandated treatment facility of the Complaint Director's choice, or;
- any combination of the above.

In situations where public safety is identified as a clear and present concern, the member may, be directed to cease providing professional services by the Complaints Director (per Section 118(4) of the *Health Professions Act*)

Identification of concern may occur as a result of information provided by the affected member, a colleague, a patient obtaining services at a member's practice, a member of the ACAC staff or a member of the public at large.



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The Hearing Tribunal, upon finding a member to be identified as having a substance abuse issue may:

- a) mandate that the member engage in the substance abuse treatment program, abide by the decisions of the evaluation process of the program, and demonstrate successful evaluations as scheduled by the program. Such engagement to be a matter of a contractual agreement between the member and the ACAC.
- b) suspend the member from practice until the treatment program is engaged.
- c) cancel the registration of the member as unfit to practice chiropractic as a matter of unskilled practice and/or professional misconduct.
- d) place any other conditions on the practice of the member that it sees as appropriate.

Penalty

	Member agrees to	Follow-up treatment
Voluntary entrance into treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in an initial assessment (at the expense of the member) • enter into a treatment program of the Complaint Director's choice, if it is deemed necessary after the initial assessment, for a minimum of <u>two</u> years (at the expense of the member) which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - admission of circumstances - consent to obtain or share information with relevant parties - contractual arrangements regarding other program expectations - specified expectations and consequences in the event of relapse • suspension <u>if it is deemed</u> that the member may jeopardize the safety of patients, peers or his/her self. Such determination to be made by the treatment program in consultation with the Complaints Director • attend any weekly/monthly recovery meetings as deemed necessary by the treatment program and/or the Complaints Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree to any follow-up treatment as deemed necessary by the treatment program and/or the Complaints Director.



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	Enforceable penalty	Follow-up treatment
Mandated entrance into treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• participate in an initial assessment (at the expense of the member)• enter into a treatment program of the Complaint Director's choice for a minimum of <u>five</u> years (at the total expense of the member) which includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- admission of circumstances- consent to obtain or share information with relevant parties- contractual arrangements regarding other program expectations- specified expectations and consequences in the event of relapse• suspension <u>until it is deemed</u> that the member is able to return to practice with no threat to patients or him or her self. Such determination to be made by the treatment program in consultation with the Complaints Director• attend any weekly/monthly recovery meetings as deemed necessary by the treatment program and/or the Complaints Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• agree to any follow-up treatment as deemed necessary by the treatment program and/or the Complaints Director.

