

Public Health Live – T²B²

Addiction: Occupational Hazard for Nurses

Guest Speaker

- **Barbara Waite, APRN, BC, NPP**
Eastern NY Regional Coordinator
New York State Nurses Association
Statewide Peer Assistance for Nurses - SPAN

Thanks to our Sponsors:

- **School of Public Health, University at Albany**
- **NYS Department of Health**
- **NYS Community Health Partnership**
- **Milestones in Public Health Grant from Pfizer, Inc.**

Special Thanks to

- **NYS Association of County Health Officials**
- **NYS Nurses Association**

Viewer Call-In

Phone: 800-452-0662

Fax: 518-426-0696

Evaluations

Please visit

www.t2b2.org

to fill out your evaluation and post test.


Nursing Contact Hours, CME, CHES are available.

Thank you!




**Addiction:
Occupational Hazard for Nurses**

New York State
Nurses Association
SPAN



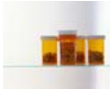




Addiction




**THE USE OF SUBSTANCES DESPITE
NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES**

1 IN 10







Addiction is a Brain Disease



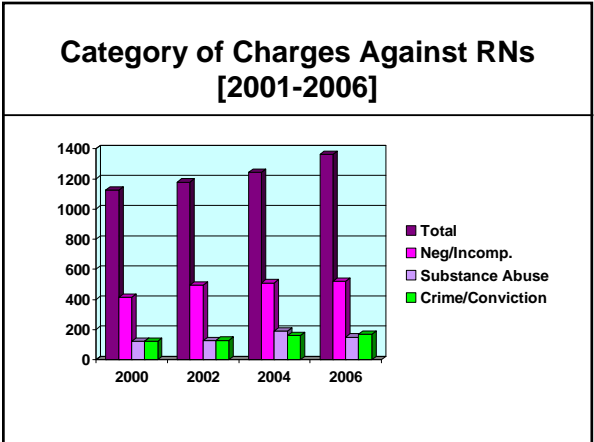
**Drugs Activate Reward Pathways of
the Brain by Increasing Dopamine**

**Activation of the reward
pathway by addictive drugs**

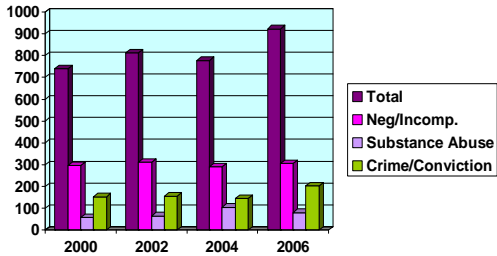


Nurses in NYS

300,000+

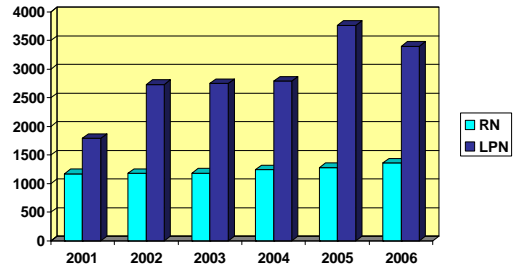



Category of Charges Against LPNs [2001-2006]



OP 2007

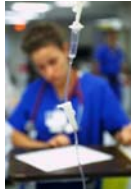
Comparing Disciplinary Cases Opened Against RNs and LPNs Using a Common Metric (2001-2006)



OP 2007



Question.....

What drugs are most abused by nurses? 



Drugs Most Often Abused by Nurses

• Alcohol



• Opiates



A Definition of Alcoholism / Chemical Addiction.

- Chronic
- Progressive
- Potentially fatal disease
- Pathological organ changes and/or
- Loss of control



Characteristics of Addiction



- Behavioral Symptoms
- Denial
- Loss of control
- Compulsive use
- Increased tolerance
- Continued use despite consequences

Comparison of Compliance and Relapse Rates in Specific Chronic Illnesses:

Disease Entity	Compliance rate	Relapse rate
• Alcohol addiction	30 – 50%	50%
• Opioid addiction	30 – 50%	40%
• Cocaine addiction	30 - 50%	45%
• IDDM medication	< 50%	30 – 50%
• IDDM diet & foot care	< 50%	30 – 50%
• Hypertension medication	< 30%	50 – 60%
• Hypertension diet	< 30%	50 - 60%
• Asthma medication	< 30%	60 – 80%

Chronic Diseases

- Diabetes, hypertension, asthma, addiction
- Occurrence rates, compliance rates, relapse rates and recovery rates are all the same
- None have cures
- All require life-long treatment



Fatalities

- Liver disease
- Cardiac arrest
- Suicide/homicide
- Accidental OD
- MVA's/trauma
- Withdrawal seizures

Drug Diversion

- Wastage
- Signing out more than needed
- Signing out under another patient
- Taking unused prns
- Siphoning from IV bags
- Substitution
- Used patches



Typical Scenario

- 45 year old mom of 3
- ICU for many years
- Back problems
- Diversion at work



General S/S of a Chemically Dependent Nurse

- Defensiveness
- Isolation
- Irritability
- Difficulty with follow-through
- Job shrinkage



Specific S/S of Alcoholic Nurse

- Time/attendance deficits
- Elaborate excuses for lateness, absence
- Odor of alcohol
- Blackouts
- Hangovers



Specific S/S of the Drug Addicted Nurse

- Suspicious behavior concerning controlled drugs
- Consistently signs out controlled drugs
- Often breaks or spills drugs
- Waits until alone to open narcotics cabinet
- Consistently volunteers to administer meds
- Vials appear altered
- Incorrect/inconsistent narcotic count

Specific S/S of the Drug Addicted Nurse

- Patient complaints of ineffective pain relief
- Multiple medication errors
- Defensive about medication errors
- Frequent bathroom breaks
- Comes to work early/stays late
- Volunteers for extra shifts



What is SPAN?

- Statewide Peer Assistance for Nurses (SPAN) is nurses helping nurses.
- It is a resource for nurses affected by alcohol and drug related problems.



Philosophy



Every nurse deserves access to treatment, help in preserving his or her license and employment status, and ongoing support throughout the recovery process.



Mission


To heighten awareness and understanding of drug related concerns for nurses and the healthcare community.

Create a balance between the needs of the nurse and the needs of the nurse's patients.

is available to:

- Any nurse licensed in New York State (NP, RN, or LPN)
- Those concerned with the effects of alcohol and drug related problems on the nurse workforce.




offers:


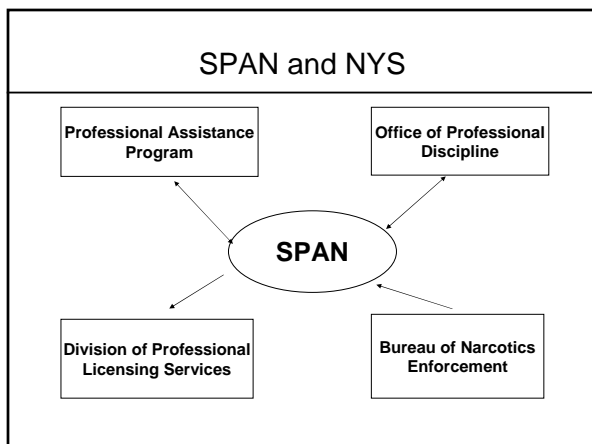
- Information and education
- Prevention and identification
- Ongoing support and advocacy
- Linkages with community resources
- A HELPLine
- Mentoring
- Support groups



What is the Cost of SPAN?

- SPAN services are offered free of charge
- A \$5/year surcharge on NYS nurses license / registration

"I think it a wise investment in the present and future of the nursing profession!"

The Proactive Employer

- Develop P&P regarding addictive disorders
- Education
- Ensure that policies re: witnessing waste are enforced
- Routinely check computer reports for patterns
- View diversion as symptom

The Proactive Employer

- Referral to EAP, SPAN, PAP
- Medical leave instead of termination
- Return to work agreements
- Hire nurses in recovery

Addiction is a potentially fatal disease. As a caring colleague, you have the obligation to ensure patient safety and the ability to help restore a nurse to optimal health, preserve a career, and return a valuable resource to the healthcare community.



- Contact SPAN
HELPLINE toll-free in NY and NJ
1 800 45-SPAN-1
1 800 457-7261 or
518 782-9400 ext. 265
E-mail: span@nysna.org
Website: www.nysna.org

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are available.

Thank you!

November 20, 2008

**Chronic Kidney Disease in Diabetes:
Identification and Intervention**

Speaker:
Joseph Vassalotti, MD, FASN
Chief Medical Officer
National Kidney Foundation