

NEBRASKA LICENSEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A SERVICE OF BEST CARE EAP

RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION IS A FAMILY AFFAIR*

Addiction is a disease that can adversely affect the families, patients or clients, and others in relationship to those who are addicted. Here are some excerpts from the comments of the spouse of an addicted health care professional who had utilized the Nebraska Licensee Assistance Program (NE LAP) services.

*My husband is a health care professional who was addicted to opiates. Once discovered, no longer could I believe a word he said. All of his tangled lies, his inconsistent behavior, rage, paranoia, fits of anger, lack of motivation, sadness, accidents,... I knew safety precautions were necessary. Not only to protect our children and myself, but I felt a deep responsibility to the patients he was caring for. Something had to be done. It was crystal clear. I had an obligation to the patients that my husband was caring for. This is where the NE LAP program came into our lives. My husband was told about the NE LAP program in a meeting which he then shared with me. We both agreed this was a good idea. His reasoning for going into the program was to protect his professional license before he was caught. For me, it was a way to protect the patients. My husband was never forced into the NE LAP program, he voluntarily signed up. I still remember that day sitting in the parking lot. He almost backed out, his career was on the line. He had to get clean and the motivation of losing his license was everything to him. Every morning my husband would call-in to listen for his number for drug testing. If his number was called, he would drive to get tested. For 12 months the LAP monitored his progress. For 12 months, my husband's professional license was on the line. He had to stay clean. The NE LAP program; Valley Hope 30 days in-patient care; close friends through Valley Hope; meetings; family; and rekindling his faith in God all played important roles in my husband's recovery. It's been 8 months without the NE LAP program. My husband says he is clean. I will always have doubts. The NE LAP program gave me some sense of sanity through this horrible ordeal.***

According to NCADD*, "alcoholism and drug addiction affects the whole family-young, teenage, or grownup children; wives or husbands; brothers or sisters; parents or other relatives and friends. One family member addicted to alcohol and drugs means the whole family suffers." NCADD also states, "People recovering from alcoholism and drug addiction, their families, and their children can and often do achieve optimum levels of health and functioning, but this achievement is best measured in years rather than days, weeks, or months. In the process of recovery, families are strengthened through increased levels of genuine intimacy and families are better able to cope with life's challenges. Over time, the discipline of recovery can bring the family together to be the healthiest its ever been!"

The NE LAP encourages health care professionals with alcohol or drug problems to seek treatment and prevent these problems from hurting their families. For those health care professionals who are already in recovery, we encourage them to steadfastly ensure their continued recovery for themselves and their families. Together they can have a family that is "the healthiest its ever been!"

*National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) (www.ncadd.org)

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If you are a licensed health service professional wanting more information about alcohol/drug abuse or addiction treatment, please contact the NE LAP at (800) 851-2336 or (402) 8055 or visit our web site at www.lapne.org. If you would like to schedule an educational presentation on alcohol/drug addiction and the health service professional, please ask for Judi Leibrock, NE LAP Coordinator.