

NEBRASKA LICENSEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A SERVICE OF BEST CARE EAP

Substance Use Disorder Treatment Options For Health Care Professionals

Health care professionals with moderate or severe substance use disorders often make many vows to themselves or others to quit drinking or using drugs. They vow not just to cut back, but to quit. They know that any continued drinking or drug use will continue the destruction caused by their alcohol or drug use. They know they must end the destruction and begin the reconstruction of their lives so they can live healthier and happier lives.

A few individuals with substance use disorders can quit on their own. Some go directly into self-help recovery programs and achieve their sobriety and recovery working their programs. However, generally due to the nature of an alcohol or substance use disorder, most have to have intense, structured treatment provided by alcohol/drug professionals in certified treatment programs to achieve their vow to quit. There are several education and counseling options available to help health care professionals resolve their misuse of alcohol or other substances if there is not yet a moderate or severe substance use disorder.

- Professional counseling or therapy provided by a qualified counselor or therapist.
- Alcohol/substance use education classes. These are generally geared toward those who have had a first DUI.
- Substance use counseling or Level I treatment. The treatment focus is on resolving mild alcohol or substance use problems.
- Self-help recovery programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) or Smart Recovery. These types of groups are free, readily available, offer substantial peer support and are very effective. Licensee Support Groups are also available in Lincoln and Omaha. These self-help recovery groups are just for health care professionals.

The NE LAP recommends that health care professionals who have concerns that they have a substance use disorder schedule a NE LAP Alcohol/Substance Use Assessment. The NE LAP provides a thorough diagnostic assessment and determines the nature and scope of the substance use problem and recommends appropriate treatment. Treatment recommendations must take into consideration the tolerance level and potential withdrawal issues when there is a moderate or severe substance use disorder. Those who will have withdrawal issues will need to have medical management or monitoring of these symptoms after they cease their use of alcohol or other substances. If there is a moderate to severe substance use disorder, treatment needs to be more intense and structured to help the health care professional achieve remission.

- Intensive Outpatient Treatment (IOP). This is usually six to eight weeks of intense, structured treatment on an outpatient basis, followed by at least six months of one time a week aftercare/continuing care group meeting and at least one self-help recovery meeting each week.
- Residential treatment. This is intense, structured treatment and includes medical supervision of detoxification and other medical issues. It is generally four weeks in duration and after treatment is followed by at least one year aftercare/continuing care group meeting one time each week and two self-help recovery meetings each week.
- Inpatient substance use treatment is intense, structured treatment, and includes medical management of detoxification and other medical issues. It is generally two to four weeks in duration and followed by transfer to an intensive outpatient program, followed by at least one year aftercare/continuing care group meeting one time each week and two self-help recovery meetings each week.

The NE LAP may not make treatment recommendations that initially find great favor with health care professionals who have alcohol or drug problems. However, the NE LAP recommendations are made based on the diagnosis and level of treatment care each professional needs to successfully achieve the resolution of substance use problems, and put an end to the progressive destruction substance use has been causing in their lives.

If you are a licensed health or health-related service professional wanting more information about sobriety and recovery, please contact the NE LAP at (800) 851-2336 or (402) 354-8055 or visit our web site at www.lapne.org. If you would like to consult with the NE LAP, or schedule an assessment or an educational presentation, please ask for Judi Leibrock, NE LAP Coordinator, or Michelle Hruska, NE LAP Counselor.