



News Release

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State disciplines health care providers

OLYMPIA — The Washington State Department of Health has taken disciplinary actions or withdrawn charges against health care providers in our state.

The department's Health Systems Quality Assurance Division works with boards, commissions, and advisory committees to set licensing standards for more than 80 health care professions (e.g., medical doctors, nurses, counselors).

Information about health care providers is on the agency website. Click on "[Look up a healthcare provider license](#)" in the "How Do I?" section of the [Department of Health website](#) (doh.wa.gov). The site includes information about a health care provider's license status, the expiration and renewal date of their credential, disciplinary actions and copies of legal documents issued after July 1998. This information is also available by calling 360-236-4700. Consumers who think a health care provider acted unprofessionally are encouraged to call and report their complaint.

Clallam County

In December 2013 the Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Systems Program entered an agreement with paramedic **Paul Rynearson** (ES00106508) and placed him on probation for at least three years. He must participate in a substance abuse monitoring program. Rynearson took and used narcotics kept at the fire department where he worked and reportedly came to work appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Clark County

In November 2013 the Pharmacy Commission denied a pharmacy assistant credential to **Cindy Marie Higdon** (VB60422156). On her application, Higdon said she'd never had action taken against a health care credential. In 2012 her certified nursing assistant credential was suspended for two years.

In December 2013 the Medical Commission charged physician **Richard D. Knowles** (MD00042903) with unprofessional conduct. Knowles allegedly ordered testosterone repeatedly without his clinic owner knowing about it, and didn't keep records to show proper use. Charges say he inappropriately prescribed testosterone, steroids, and human growth hormone to multiple patients, several of whom had histories of weight training or bodybuilding. Knowles allegedly didn't evaluate, treat, or attend to patients adequately, and didn't document treatment as required.

King County

In December 2013 the Nursing Commission entered an agreement with registered nurse **Jean Elizabeth Trost** (RN00079042) that placed her on probation for at least five years. Trost must pay a \$2,000 fine and take continuing education in ethics. While working at a spa, Trost administered Botox, Juvederm, and other prescription fillers to hundreds of patients who didn't get initial consultations or prescriptions from qualified licensed health care professionals. An advanced registered nurse practitioner served as the spa's medical director, but never went there and didn't see the patients Trost treated. Trost used the advanced registered nurse practitioner's information to order prescription fillers.

In November 2013 the Psychology Board denied a psychologist credential to **Kerry Ann Mayhall** (PY60331112), who doesn't meet the education requirements.

In December 2013 the Nursing Assistant Program charged certified nursing assistant **Igor A. Novikov** (NC10044900) with unprofessional conduct. Novikov was convicted of one felony and three gross misdemeanors, and received deferred prosecution on another gross misdemeanor charge between 2005 and 2011. Novikov allegedly didn't report the convictions to the Department of Health as required.

In December 2013 the Pharmacy Commission ended conditions on the credential of pharmacist **Jeff Gebenus** (PH00042289).

Pierce County

In December 2013 the Nursing Commission ended probation for licensed practical nurse **Moises J. Villanueva** (LP00048571).

Snohomish County

In December 2013 the Nursing Assistant Program charged certified nursing assistant **Peter W. Eng** (NC60116761) with unprofessional conduct. Eng, who worked at an assisted living facility, allegedly stole a resident's wallet and used her credit card to make about \$492 in purchases for himself. When confronted, Eng allegedly offered to repay the money, and said he threw the wallet away after taking the credit card from it. The Department of Social and Health Services found Eng had financially exploited a vulnerable adult, and will not allow him to be employed in caring for or having unsupervised access to vulnerable adults.

In December 2013 the Nursing Assistant Program charged registered nursing assistant **Audrey P. Erickson** (NA00093399) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say Erickson neglected a vulnerable adult at an adult family home she owned. Erickson allegedly admitted to not reporting an employee's conviction on possession of a controlled substance in connection with diverting a resident's controlled substances for her personal use. Erickson also allegedly kept the employee on staff and gave her access to controlled substances. The Department of Social and Health Services won't allow Erickson to be employed in caring for or having unsupervised access to vulnerable adults.

In December 2013 the Medical Commission charged physician **Samuel Ross Fox Jr.** (MD00005293) with unprofessional conduct. Fox allegedly prescribed Phentermine, a weight loss drug, to 17 patients without reviewing systems or monitoring for side effects, without recording vital signs, and potentially creating health risks. Charges say Fox prescribed controlled substances for his wife without conducting an examination or documenting treatment, and he didn't adequately respond to a Medical Commission inquiry.

In December 2013 the Nursing Commission ended probation for registered nurse **Carol Ann Schreck** (RN00110142).

In December 2013 the Nursing Commission ended probation for licensed practical nurse **Leslie J. Young** (LP00037142).

In December 2013 the Chemical Dependency Counselor Program conditionally granted a chemical dependency professional trainee credential to **James Brian Slusher, Sr.** (CO60425031) and placed him on probation. He was ordered to undergo evaluation for a substance abuse monitoring program, and directed to take continuing education in professional law and ethics. Slusher was convicted of one felony and five gross misdemeanors between 1999 and 2011.

In January 2014 the Nursing Commission charged registered nurse **Caryn M. Carter** (RN00167165) with unprofessional conduct. Carter allegedly didn't comply with a substance abuse monitoring contract.

Spokane County

In December 2013 the Nursing Assistant Program charged certified nursing assistant **Kara M. Langford** (NC10094425) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say Langford was one of only two employees working when patients' fentanyl patches were found to be missing at an assisted living facility where she worked. Co-workers allegedly saw her pacing back and forth outside rooms occupied by patients who used fentanyl patches. Langford hasn't responded to a Department of Health investigator's inquiry.

Thurston County

In December 2013 the Counselor Program conditionally granted an agency affiliated counselor credential to **James McLeod Huntsman** (CG60427841) and placed him on probation. Huntsman must take continuing education in professional law and ethics, and must undergo evaluation for a substance abuse monitoring program. In 2010 Huntsman was convicted of fourth-degree assault and drinking in public.

Whatcom County

In December 2013 the Pharmacy Commission charged pharmacist **Kevin L. Faris** (PH00019349) with unprofessional conduct. Faris employed a licensed pharmacy technician as

manager of a Seattle pharmacy he owned. Charges say the licensed pharmacy technician directed other employees to accept returned medications from long-term care facilities. The drugs allegedly were co-mingled and lacked reliable storage records. The manager allegedly told workers to repackage and resell the drugs as if they were new. Faris allegedly didn't respond to reports that these activities were taking place. Charges say the pharmacy didn't have the proper ratio of pharmacy technicians to licensed pharmacists, and the pharmacy manager gave drug samples to pharmacy technicians who were expected to fill patient prescriptions with them.

Yakima County

In November 2013 the Medical Assistant Program denied a medical assistant — phlebotomist credential to **Hope Rene Whitaker** (PC60419270), whose registered nursing credential was suspended in 2013 for two years. She didn't comply with a substance abuse monitoring contract.

In December 2013 the Nursing Commission charged licensed practical nurse **Jaimie J. Melsen** (LP00059258) with unprofessional conduct. Melsen allegedly didn't comply with a 2013 stipulation requiring her to enroll in a substance abuse monitoring program.

Out of State

Idaho: In December 2013 the Pharmacy Commission charged pharmacy technician **Pamela E. Benson** (VA00049895) with unprofessional conduct. Benson managed a Seattle pharmacy. Charges say she disregarded her supervisors' instructions about pharmacy operations, directing other employees to accept returned medications from long-term care facilities. The drugs allegedly were co-mingled and lacked reliable storage records. Benson allegedly told workers to repackage and resell the drugs as if they were new; contrary to instructions she'd been given. Benson allegedly didn't inform her supervisor about an unsatisfactory inspection score the pharmacy received. Charges say the pharmacy didn't have the proper ratio of pharmacy technicians to licensed pharmacists, and that Benson disregarded her instructions by giving drug samples to pharmacy technicians who were expected to fill patient prescriptions with them.

Note to Editors: Health care providers charged with unprofessional conduct have 20 days to respond to the Department of Health in writing. The case then enters the settlement process. If no disciplinary agreement can be reached, the case will go to a hearing.

The [Department of Health website](http://www.doh.wa.gov) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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