



# News Release

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## **Spokane area nurse suspended after patients die due to prescription drug use**

**OLYMPIA** — A Spokane County nurse’s licenses have been immediately suspended after allegations that she failed to properly screen or monitor patient use of prescription narcotics, which allegedly led to the deaths of three patients.

Registered nurse and advanced nurse practitioner Susan Bowen-Small (RN00082859 and AP30004008) is charged with prescribing large amounts of narcotics to numerous patients, without providing appropriate oversight. The Department of Health and the Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission took action based on their investigation of three patient deaths. The Spokane County Medical Examiner found the causes of death for three of Bowen-Small’s patients to be drug toxicity, including “combined drug toxicity, methadone and diazepam toxicity, and methadone toxicity.”

Susan Bowen-Small cannot work as a nurse or as an advanced registered nurse practitioner until the charges are resolved.

She has 20 days to answer the charges and ask for a hearing. The charges can be seen online by clicking on “[Provider Credential Search](#)” on the [Department of Health’s website](#). Copies can also be requested by calling 360-236-4700.

The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission protects public health and safety in Washington by regulating the practice of nursing. The commission establishes, monitors, and enforces qualifications for licensing, consistent standards of practice, continuing competency, and discipline.

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