



# Washington Health Professional Services Quarterly (W.H.P.S.)

## A Word From Our Executive Director, John Furman

I have recently passed the six-month mark here at Washington Health Professional Services (W.H.P.S.) It has been an exciting learning experience and I feel I am just starting to gain a working understanding of the many issues surrounding the program and how they impact our clients. Having the opportunity to visit peer support groups and listen to the professionals in the program has been one of the most beneficial experiences. While I've heard positive, negative, and everything in between, all comments have been helpful. I want to personally thank everyone for feeling comfortable enough to share your thoughts and experiences with me. I look forward to visiting more groups in the next six months.

We acknowledge that participating in W.H.P.S. does present some challenges when looking for employment. I am concerned about this and while it is always going to be a hurdle, I want to look for ways to increase the opportunities. While

talking about this with a peer group, the issue of the W.H.P.S. Program Participation Contract came up. The group talked about how challenging it was to work through the contract with a prospective employer. I put myself in both positions and thought that this is a hurdle that can be lowered. As a result, the W.H.P.S. Staff has developed a new *Employment Contract*. This is a concise two-page document that introduces W.H.P.S., supports employment, and collects necessary information from the employer. The new *Employment Contract* is available for use now and all W.H.P.S. clients should have received an Affinity Online Solutions (AOS) e-mail notification with a copy attached.

I have also been asked on more than one occasion about a set of "client rights." I am happy to announce that we now have a set of *Client Rights and Responsibilities* (see page 2). These set basic expectations for program performance and the responsibilities that clients have as a part-

ner in success. I do want to point out a common theme in both lists- availability and communication. While it is important that W.H.P.S. responds to clients in a timely manner, it is equally important that clients make sure they are available. Please make sure to check voice and e-mail on a daily basis to avoid complications due to miscommunications; for example, an unnecessary call to a worksite monitor or confusion about testing.

Lastly, I want to thank everyone who completed the confidential W.H.P.S. Client Satisfaction Survey. I'll be the first to admit that it was a little long, however, every question is important. The survey is extremely helpful in allowing us to conduct an objective program evaluation.

The WHPS Staff and I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season!



## The Holidays Are Coming!

*With the holidays rolling around, please be aware that no check-in is required for the following dates:*

*Tuesday, December 25, 2012 (Christmas Day)*

*Tuesday, January 1, 2013 (New Year's Day)*

*Monday, January 21, 2013 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)*

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### Special points of interest:

- *Renew Your Credential Online*
- *Client Rights and Responsibilities*
- *Alcoholics Anonymous*
- *Winter Safety Tips*
- *Accomplish Your Goals*

# More Healthcare Providers Able to Renew Online

A convenient new way to renew healthcare licenses is now available to more than half of the health care professionals in the state. This includes more than 82,000 registered nurses and nearly 25,000 physicians who can now renew their license online 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, instead of having to mail or bring in their annual renewal forms.

As of today, registered nurses and seven other professions can choose online renewal instead of renewing by mail or in-person. Forty-four of the 83 different types of health care professions can now use the web-based process. The remaining 39 professions will be added over the next six months, and by March 2013, online license renewal will be available to all healthcare professionals in Washington. By next June, new applications for healthcare licenses will also be available online for several categories of healthcare providers.

Converting to the online renewal feature is part of a Department of Health project to add the online option for all health professionals. Previously only mailed and in-person renewals were available.



The project started with license renewals instead of new license applications, because there are more renewals each year. This allows more providers to benefit from the 24-hour online renewal service. All licensed healthcare professionals will be able to renew their licenses online when the project concludes in June 2013.

## You will not be able to renew online if:

- Your credential has already expired
- You are currently in any other status such as military, inactive, or retired
- You want to change your status from active to military, inactive, or retired
- You have an address change
- You have a name change

Please contact the Customer Service Office at 360-236-4700.

## To Renew Online:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/hsqa/Renewals.htm>

The Department of Health must have your current mailing address in the system for you to renew online. Department staff will mail updated credentials to the address on file. The United States Post Office will not send your credential to a forwarding address.

# W.H.P.S. Client Rights and Responsibilities

## Client has the right to:

1. Be treated with dignity and respect.
2. Confidentiality in accordance with state and federal laws.
3. Be informed about the terms and conditions of participation in W.H.P.S.
4. Be informed about the cost involved with participating.
5. Know the length of W.H.P.S. participation and the projected date of completion.
6. Decline/terminate participation and to be informed as to the possible consequences.
7. Know their assigned case management team and how to contact them.
8. A timely response to any communication to W.H.P.S.
9. To request a drug screen any time the client feels that their integrity is being questioned.
10. Speak with the W.H.P.S. Executive Director regarding program improvement recommendations and concerns.

*"Coming together is a beginning; keeping it together is progress; working together is success."*

-Henry Ford

## Client has responsibilities to:

1. To treat others with dignity and respect.
2. Read and understand the conditions set forth in the W.H.P.S. Handbook.
3. Adhere to the terms of their W.H.P.S. contract.
4. Consent to any drug tests and evaluations required by W.H.P.S.
5. Follow treatment recommendations.
6. Inform one's employer, health provider, and school of participation in W.H.P.S.
7. Be accountable to one's personal recovery and to professional standards.
8. Be available to W.H.P.S. (not responding to any communication from W.H.P.S. with that day's business hours may be considered a substantial contract violation.)
9. Reporting any personal or prescription use of drugs or alcohol to W.H.P.S.
10. Cease practice whenever required by W.H.P.S.

## Be Prepared for Inclement Weather as Winter Approaches

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As the winter season approaches, please be mindful of being prepared for rain, ice, and snow.

Before driving during inclement weather, consider the following:

- Stay off your cell phone—phone calls and text messages can wait until you arrive to a place where you can safely do this without endangering yourself and others
- Check roadways and traffic before traveling. Visit <http://www.wsdot.com/traffic/> weather for more information
- Make sure your car is equipped and well-maintained to handle winter weather (i.e. tire pressure is routinely checked, keeping your gas tank at half tank, regular oil changes)
- Carry items in your car that would be helpful in the event that an emergency occurs including bottled water, blanket, flashlight, jumper cables

- During extreme weather conditions, make alternate plans (if possible) to avoid being on the road and allow extra time for travel if it is necessary to travel



## Exercising and Winter Weather

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Regular exercise is important as part of a healthy diet. During the winter months, it can be difficult to get motivated to exercise; however, if doing so outside, keep in mind these tips for exercising outside during the cold, winter months.

1. Layering your clothing will not only keep you warm and dry, it will also help regulate your

body temperature. Wear layers close to your skin and avoid wearing big, heavy clothing that can cause moisture.

2. Cover your head! Most of our body heat comes from our head and neck.
3. Staying hydrated is helpful when doing any type of exercise either outdoors or indoors.

Avoid caffeine and other diuretics to avoid dehydration.

4. Protect your skin by using a good moisturizer and sunscreen as well as lip balm to avoid dry, cracked skin.

For more information, visit <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/fitness/HQ01681>

## Stay Healthy During the Holiday Season

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The cold and flu season are among us! Age, occupation, and current health status are factors to consider during colder months as illnesses can affect all.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends regular immunization for adults, not only

children and older adults!

Please view the immunization schedule for adults to stay current with your health needs as many illnesses are preventable:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/adult/adult-schedule.pdf>



# Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Wants to Work with You

Provided by Mark S., CPC Chair District 14

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Cooperation with the professional community is an objective of Alcoholics Anonymous and has been from our beginnings. We are always seeking to strengthen and expand our communication with you, and we welcome your comments and suggestions. They help us to work more effectively with you in achieving our common purpose: to help the alcoholic who still suffers.

## *A Resource for the Helping Professional*

Professionals who work with alcoholics share a common purpose with Alcoholics Anonymous; to help the alcoholic stop drinking and lead a healthy, productive life.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a nonprofit, self-supporting, entirely independent fellowship – “not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution.” Yet A.A. is in a position to serve as a resource to you through its policy of “cooperation but not affiliation” with the professional community.

## *How the Program Works*

A.A.’s primary purpose, as stated in our Preamble, is “... to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.”

The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Members share their experiences in recovery from alcoholism on a one-to-one basis, and introduce the newcomer to A.A.’s Twelve Steps of personal recovery and its Twelve Traditions that sustain the Fellowship itself.

**Meetings.** At the heart of the program are its meetings, which are conducted autonomously by A.A. groups in cities and towns throughout the world. Anyone may attend open meetings of A.A. These usually consist of talks by one or more speakers who share impressions of their past illness and their present recovery in A.A. Some *open* meetings – to which helping professionals, the media and others are invited – are held for the specific purpose of informing the nonalcoholic (and possibly alcoholic) public about A.A. *Closed* meetings are for alcoholics only. Alcoholics recovering in A.A. generally attend several meetings each week.

**Anonymity.** Anonymity helps the Fellowship to govern itself by principles rather than personalities; by attraction rather than promotion. We openly share our program of recovery, but not the names of the individuals in it.

## ***What A.A. Does NOT Do***

A.A. does not:

- Furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover
- Solicit members
- Engage in or sponsor research
- Keep attendance records or case histories
- Join “councils” of social agencies
- Follow up or try to control its members
- Make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses
- Provide drying-out or nursing services, hospitalization, drugs, or any medical or psychiatric treatment
- Offer religious services
- Engage in education about alcohol
- Provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money or any other welfare or social services
- Provide domestic or vocational counseling
- Accept any money for its services or any contributions from non-A.A. sources
- Provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials, social agencies, employers, etc.

## ***Referrals from Court and Treatment Facilities***

Today numerous A.A. members come to us from court programs and treatment facilities. Some arrive voluntarily, others do not.

A.A. does not discriminate against *any* prospective member. Who made the referral to A.A. is not what interests us – it is the problem drinker who elicits our concern.

***Proof of attendance at meetings.*** Sometimes a court asks for proof of attendance at A.A. meetings.

Some groups, with the consent of the prospective member, have the A.A. group secretary sign or initial a slip what has been furnished by the courts together with a self – addressed court envelope. The referred person supplies identification and mails the slip back to the court as proof of attendance.

Other groups cooperate in different ways. There is no set procedure. The nature and extent of any group’s involvement in this process is entirely up to the individual group.

## ***How to Make Referrals to A.A.***

Alcoholics Anonymous is listed in most telephone directories. (Some professionals call A.A. while the person is in the office, thus giving the individual an immediate opportunity to reach out for help.) Or, you can contact the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information. Write: P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Or phone: 212-870-3400.



**WASHINGTON HEALTH  
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

State of Washington  
Department of Health  
P.O. Box 47872  
Olympia, WA 98504  
  
Phone: 360-236-2880  
Fax: 360-664-8588  
E-mail: whps@doh.wa.gov

***A Confidential Program for Chemically  
Impaired Healthcare Professionals***

**We're on the Web!**  
<http://tinyurl.com/doh-wa-gov-whps>

*The W.H.P.S. Mission is to:*

- *Protect the public's health and safety from impaired practitioners*
- *Retain skilled, highly trained practitioners*
- *Encourage and promote recovery*
- *Bring the professional safely back to practice*

*W.H.P.S. accomplishes this mission by contracting with and monitoring individuals for compliance with treatment and recovery goals.*



## Request for Speaking Engagement

A lack of knowledge about substance use disorders is a major risk factor for nurses and other healthcare practitioners. We are available to provide education and consultation, free of charge, to your staff and students about substance use disorders among healthcare professionals and the WHPS program. Providing this information to nursing students is a valuable part of their education.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested date for presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_ 3<sup>rd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Presentation Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Meeting Room: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience (primary specialty of attendees): \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Attendees expected: \_\_\_\_\_

Available audiovisual equipment \_\_\_\_\_

General presentation topics include:

- Addictive Illness and Substance Abuse Issues Among Healthcare Professionals
- W.H.P.S. Program Overview

**Please FAX this completed form to W.H.P.S at 360-664-8588. Once we receive the request form, we will contact you to begin program arrangements. If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 360-236-2880.**