

Chapter 246-867 WAC
IMPAIRED PHARMACIST REHABILITATION

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WAC

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WAC 246-867-001 Purpose and scope. These rules are designed to assist the board of pharmacy regarding a registrant/licensee whose competency may be impaired due to the abuse of alcohol and/or drugs. The board intends that such registrants/licenseses be treated and their treatment monitored so that they can return or continue to practice pharmacy with judgment, skill, competence, and safety to the public. To accomplish this, the board shall approve voluntary substance abuse monitoring programs and shall refer registrants/licenseses impaired by substance abuse to approved programs.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and chapter 18.64A RCW. WSR 91-18-057 (Order 191B), recodified as § 246-867-001, filed 8/30/91, effective 9/30/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005. WSR 90-03-054 (Order 025), § 360-15-010, filed 1/17/90, effective 2/17/90.]

WAC 246-867-010 Definitions. For the purpose of this chapter:

(1) "Chemical dependence - Substance abuse" means a chronic progressive illness which involves the use of alcohol and/or other drugs to a degree that it interferes in the functional life of the registrant/licensee, as manifested by health, family, job (professional services), legal, financial, or emotional problems.

(2) "Board" means the Washington state board of pharmacy.

(3) "Diversion" means illicit dispensing, distribution, or administration of a scheduled controlled substance or other legend drug not in the normal course of professional practice.

(4) "Drug" means a chemical substance alone or in combination, including alcohol.

(5) "Impaired pharmacist" means a pharmacist who is unable to practice pharmacy with judgment, skill, competence, or safety to the public due to chemical dependence, mental illness, the aging process, loss of motor skills, or any other mental or physical condition.

(6) "Approved substance abuse monitoring program" means a pharmacy recovery assistance program or program which the board has determined meets the requirement of the law and the criteria established by the board in WAC 246-867-040 which enters into a contract with pharmacists who have substance abuse problems regarding the required components of the pharmacists recovery activity and oversees the pharmacist's compliance with these requirements. Substance abuse monitoring programs do not provide evaluation or treatment to participating pharmacists.

(7) "Contract" means a comprehensive, structured agreement between the recovering pharmacist and the approved monitoring program stipulating the pharmacist's consent to comply with the monitoring program and its required components of the pharmacist's recovery program.

(8) "Approved treatment program" means a facility approved by the bureau of alcohol and substance abuse, department of social and health services according to RCW 70.96A.020(3) to provide concentrated alcoholism or drug addiction treatment if located within Washington state. Drug and alcohol addiction treatment programs located out-of-state must be equivalent to the standards required for approval under RCW 70.96A.020(3).

(9) "Aftercare" means that period of time after intensive treatment that provides the pharmacist and the pharmacist's family with group, or individualized counseling sessions, discussions with other families, ongoing contact and participation in self-help groups, and ongoing continued support of treatment program staff.

(10) "Twelve-step groups" means groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, and related organizations based on a philosophy of anonymity, peer group associations, self-help belief in a power outside of oneself which offer support to the recovering individual to maintain a chemically free lifestyle.

(11) "Random drug screens" are laboratory tests to detect the presence of drugs of abuse in body fluids which are performed at irregular intervals not known in advance by the person to be tested. The collection of the body fluid must be observed by a treatment or health care professional or other board or monitoring program-approved observer.

(12) "Recovering" means that a chemically dependent pharmacist is in compliance with a treatment plan of rehabilitation in accordance with criteria established by an approved treatment facility and an approved substance abuse monitoring program.

(13) "Rehabilitation" means the process of restoring a chemically dependent pharmacist to a level of professional performance consistent with public health and safety.

(14) "Reinstatement" means the process whereby a recovering pharmacist is permitted to resume the practice of pharmacy.

(15) "Pharmacist support group" means a group of pharmacists meeting regularly to support the recovery of its members. The group provides a confidential setting with a trained and experienced pharmacist facilitator in which pharmacists may safely discuss drug diversion, licensure issues, return to work, and other issues related to recovery.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and 18.130.050. WSR 92-12-035 (Order 277B), § 246-867-010, filed 5/28/92, effective 6/28/92. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and chapter 18.64A RCW. WSR 91-18-057 (Order 191B), recodified as § 246-867-010, filed 8/30/91, effective 9/30/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005. WSR 90-03-054 (Order 025), § 360-15-020, filed 1/17/90, effective 2/17/90.]

WAC 246-867-020 Applicability. This chapter is applicable to all registered/licensed externs, interns, pharmacists, and any pharmacy assistants. For the purpose of this chapter, the word "pharmacist" shall include externs, interns and pharmacy assistants, as defined under chapter 18.64A RCW.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and chapter 18.64A RCW. WSR 91-18-057 (Order 191B), recodified as § 246-867-020, filed 8/30/91, effective 9/30/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005. WSR 90-03-054 (Order 025), § 360-15-030, filed 1/17/90, effective 2/17/90.]

WAC 246-867-030 Reporting and freedom from liability. (1) Reporting.

(a) If any pharmacist or pharmacy owner knows or suspects that a pharmacist is impaired by chemical dependence, mental illness, physical incapacity, or other factors, that person shall report any relevant information to a pharmacy recovery assistance program or to the board.

(b) If a person is required by law to report an alleged impaired pharmacist to the board, the requirement is satisfied when the person reports the pharmacist to a board-approved and contracted pharmacist recovery assistance program.

(2) Any person who in good faith reports information concerning a suspected impaired pharmacist to a pharmacy recovery assistance program or to the board shall be immune from civil liability.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and chapter 18.64A RCW. WSR 91-18-057 (Order 191B), recodified as § 246-867-030, filed 8/30/91, effective 9/30/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005. WSR 90-03-054 (Order 025), § 360-15-040, filed 1/17/90, effective 2/17/90.]

WAC 246-867-040 Approval of substance abuse monitoring programs.

The board will approve pharmacist recovery, assistance, and monitoring programs which will participate in the board's substance abuse monitoring program. The board may contract for these services.

(1) The approved monitoring program will not provide evaluation or treatment to participating pharmacists.

(2) The approved monitoring program/recovery assistance staff must have the qualifications and knowledge of both substance abuse and the practice of pharmacy as defined in this chapter to be able to evaluate:

(a) Clinical laboratories.

(b) Laboratory results.

(c) Providers of substance abuse treatment, both individuals and facilities.

(d) Pharmacist support groups.

(e) The pharmacist's work environment.

(f) The ability of the pharmacist to practice with reasonable skill and safety.

(3) The approved monitoring program will enter into a contract with the pharmacist and the board to oversee the pharmacists' compliance with the requirements of the program.

(4) The approved monitoring program may make exceptions to individual components of the contract on an individual basis.

(5) The approved monitoring program staff will determine, on an individual basis, whether a pharmacist will be prohibited from engaging in the practice of pharmacy for a period of time and restrictions, if any, on the pharmacist's access to controlled substances in the work place.

(6) The approved monitoring program shall maintain records on participants.

(7) The approved monitoring program will be responsible for providing feedback to the pharmacist as to whether treatment progress is acceptable.

(8) The approved monitoring program shall report to the board any pharmacist who fails to comply with the requirements of the monitoring program.

(9) The approved monitoring program shall provide the board with a statistical report on the program, including progress of participants, at least annually.

(10) The approved monitoring program shall receive from the board guidelines on treatment, monitoring, and limitations on the practice of pharmacy for those participating in the program.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and chapter 18.64A RCW. WSR 91-18-057 (Order 191B), recodified as § 246-867-040, filed 8/30/91, effective 9/30/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005. WSR 90-03-054 (Order 025), § 360-15-050, filed 1/17/90, effective 2/17/90.]

WAC 246-867-050 Participation in approved substance abuse monitoring program. (1) The pharmacist who has been investigated by the board may accept board referral into the approved substance abuse monitoring program. This may be part of disciplinary action.

(a) The pharmacist shall undergo a complete physical and psychosocial evaluation before entering the approved monitoring program. This evaluation will be performed by health care professionals with expertise in chemical dependency. The person(s) performing the evaluation shall not also be the provider of the recommended treatment.

(b) The pharmacist shall enter into a contract with the board and the approved substance abuse monitoring program to comply with the requirements of the program which shall include, but not be limited to:

(i) The pharmacist will undergo intensive substance abuse treatment in an approved treatment facility.

(ii) The pharmacist will agree to abstain from the use of all mind-altering substances, including alcohol, except for medications prescribed by an authorized prescriber, as defined in RCW 69.41.030 and 69.50.101. Said prescriber shall notify the monitoring program of all drugs prescribed within fourteen days of the date care was provided.

(iii) The pharmacist must complete the prescribed aftercare program of the intensive treatment facility. This may include individual and/or group psychotherapy.

(iv) The pharmacist must cause the treatment counselor(s) and authorized prescriber(s) to provide reports to the appropriate monitoring program at specified intervals. Reports shall include treatment prognosis, goals, drugs prescribed, etc.

(v) The pharmacist shall submit to random drug screening, with observed specimen collection, as specified by the approved monitoring program.

(vi) The pharmacist will attend pharmacist support groups facilitated by a pharmacist and/or twelve-step group meetings as specified by the contract.

(vii) The pharmacist will comply with specified employment conditions and restrictions as defined by the contract.

(viii) The pharmacist shall sign a waiver allowing the approved monitoring program to release information to the board if the pharmacist does not comply with the requirements of this contract.

(c) The pharmacist is responsible for paying the costs of the physical and psychosocial evaluation, substance abuse treatment, random urine screens, and other personal expenses incurred in compliance with this contract.

(d) The pharmacist may be subject to disciplinary action under RCW 18.64.160 if the pharmacist does not consent to be referred to the

approved monitoring program, does not comply with specified employment restrictions, or does not successfully complete the program.

(2) A pharmacist who is not being investigated by the board or subject to current disciplinary action or currently being monitored by the board for substance abuse may voluntarily participate in the approved substance abuse monitoring program without being referred by the board. Such voluntary participants shall not be subject to disciplinary action under RCW 18.64.160 for their substance abuse and shall not have their participation known to the board if they meet the requirements of the approved monitoring program:

(a) The pharmacist shall undergo a complete physical and psychosocial evaluation before entering the approved monitoring program. This evaluation will be performed by a health care professional with expertise in chemical dependency. The person(s) performing the evaluation shall not also be the provider of the recommended treatment.

(b) The pharmacist shall enter into a contract with the approved substance abuse monitoring program to comply with the requirements of the program which shall include, but not be limited to:

(i) The pharmacist will undergo intensive substance abuse treatment in an approved treatment facility.

(ii) The pharmacist will agree to abstain from the use of all mind-altering substances, including alcohol, except for medications prescribed by an authorized prescriber, as defined in RCW 69.41.030 and 69.50.101. Said prescriber shall notify the monitoring program of all drugs prescribed within fourteen days of the date care was provided.

(iii) The pharmacist must cause the treatment counselor(s) and authorized prescriber(s) to provide reports to the approved monitoring program at specified intervals. Reports shall include treatment prognosis, goals, drugs prescribed, etc.

(v) The pharmacist shall submit to random drug screening, with observed specimen collection, as specified by the approved monitoring program.

(vi) The pharmacist will attend pharmacist support groups facilitated by a pharmacist and/or twelve-step group meetings as specified by the contract.

(vii) The pharmacist will comply with specified employment conditions and restrictions as defined by the contract.

(viii) The pharmacist shall sign a waiver allowing the approved monitoring program to release information to the board if the pharmacist does not comply with the requirements of this contract.

(c) The pharmacist is responsible for paying the costs of the physical and psychosocial evaluation, substance abuse treatment, random urine screens, and other personal expenses incurred in compliance with this contract.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and chapter 18.64A RCW. WSR 91-18-057 (Order 191B), recodified as § 246-867-050, filed 8/30/91, effective 9/30/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005. WSR 90-03-054 (Order 025), § 360-15-060, filed 1/17/90, effective 2/17/90.]

WAC 246-867-060 Confidentiality. (1) The treatment and pre-treatment records of license holders referred to or voluntarily participating in approved monitoring programs shall be confidential, shall be exempt from RCW 42.17.250 through 42.17.450 and shall not be subject to discovery by subpoena or admissible as evidence except for

monitoring records reported to the disciplinary authority for cause as defined in WAC 246-867-050 (1) and (2). Records held by the board under this section shall be exempt from RCW 42.17.250 through 42.17.450 and shall not be subject to discovery by subpoena except by the license holder.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, board orders shall be subject to RCW 42.17.250 through 42.17.450.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and 18.130.050. WSR 92-12-035 (Order 277B), § 246-867-060, filed 5/28/92, effective 6/28/92. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005 and chapter 18.64A RCW. WSR 91-18-057 (Order 191B), recodified as § 246-867-060, filed 8/30/91, effective 9/30/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.64.005. WSR 90-03-054 (Order 025), § 360-15-070, filed 1/17/90, effective 2/17/90.]