

Complaint Resolution Philosophy

Impaired Nurse Addendum

In conjunction with the philosophy and principles of complaint resolution adopted by the Board, the additional principles contained herein are intended to address issues unique to complaints concerning actual or potential inability to practice nursing with reasonable skill and safety due to physical condition(s), mental illness(es), and/or misuse or abuse of mood-altering chemicals. These principles guide the Board's activities related to complaints regarding impaired nurses:

1. The Board recognizes that physical condition(s), mental illness(es), and use, misuse or abuse of mood-altering chemicals may affect a nurse's ability to provide safe and effective nursing care.
2. The Board recognizes there are various levels of impairment and the degree of risk to the public varies depending on the circumstances of each case.
3. The Board makes determinations regarding practice restrictions, monitoring, and removal of authority to practice based on the nurse's practice history, effective management of the nurse's condition/illness, and/or the nurse's compliant involvement in treatment/rehabilitation programs congruent with the prevailing modalities accepted within the treatment community.
4. The Board recognizes monitoring of management of a nurse's illness/condition through an alternative monitoring program, such as the Health Professionals Services Program, may be an acceptable alternative to action against the nurse's license.
5. The Board will periodically evaluate the effectiveness of its processes and the effectiveness of monitoring of nurses by the alternative monitoring program.
6. The Board supports the nurse's accountability for management of his/her illness/condition and may take action against the license of a nurse who demonstrates unwillingness or inability to comply with treatment recommendations and/or monitoring requirements.
7. The Board may take action against the license of a nurse for conduct that violates the Nurse Practice Act, even if it may be associated with an illness/condition.

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