


**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
NURSING CARE QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMISSION
PROCEDURE**

Title:	Washington Health Professional Services (WHPS) Program Eligibility and Admission Types	Number: W31.02
Reference:	RCW 18.130.160 ; RCW 18.130.175 WAC 246-16-220 , 246-16-235 , and 246-840-750 through 246-840-780 ; NCQAC Procedure A49	
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Supersedes:	W01.01, W02.01, and W31.01	
Approved:	 Laurie Soine, Ph.D., ARNP, Chair Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission	

PURPOSE:

To define the criteria for eligibility to participate in the Washington Health Professional Services (WHPS) program, and define the various processes for admission to the program.

PROCEDURE:

I. Program Eligibility

- A. Hold, or be eligible to obtain, a Washington State nurse license.
- B. Has a Substance Use Disorder diagnosis or circumstances indicate that the nurse may have misused alcohol or drugs.
- C. Agree in writing to the terms of their individual Program Participation Contract.
- D. If licensed and residing in another state, must notify that state of WHPS enrollment and comply with that state's monitoring program as directed. WHPS and the other state of licensure will jointly monitor the nurse with WHPS receiving quarterly monitoring reports.

II. Eligible nurses may enter WHPS as follows:

- A. Voluntary Participation
 1. When a nurse contacts WHPS, WHPS provides the opportunity for the nurse to enter the intake process.

2. WHPS will admit self-referred nurses as voluntary and will not disclose their participation to the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (NCQAC) except when they are non-compliant with program requirements. (*See Procedure W32 Program Non-Compliance and Discharge Criteria.*)
3. When a third party (e.g., family member or employer) refers a nurse and the nurse does not contact WHPS or complete the intake process, WHPS will provide the referral source with information regarding filing a formal complaint with NCQAC.
4. WHPS will ensure that the nurse immediately reports or WHPS will report any of the following to NCQAC:
 - a. Actions that resulted in patient harm.
 - b. Any conviction, determination, or finding that the nurse committed unprofessional conduct.
 - c. Information that the nurse is unable to practice with reasonable skill and safety due to a mental or physical condition.
 - d. Any disqualification from participation in the federal Medicare or Medicaid program (Office of Inspector General (OIG) Exclusions List).

II. Non-Disciplinary Referral

- A. NCQAC may refer a nurse to WHPS in lieu of discipline when the nurse has an open complaint. The nurse and NCQAC make this agreement according to Procedure A49, *WHPS Referral Contracts*. If the nurse is already in WHPS, their status changes from voluntary to in lieu of discipline.
- B. At the conclusion of the intake process, which may be time-limited by agreement, WHPS will notify NCQAC by memo regarding case status.

III. Disciplinary Referral

- A. Discipline types referred to WHPS:
 1. Agreement to Practice Under Conditions (APUC)
 2. Stipulation to Informal Disposition (STID)
 3. Agreed Order
- B. WHPS will not contact a nurse referred by way of discipline. Doing so would interfere with the adjudicative process.
- C. At the conclusion of the intake process, which may be time-limited by order, WHPS will notify NCQAC and/or legal services by memo regarding case status.

IV. WHPS Referral Deadlines

- A. If the nurse does not meet a deadline for entry into the WHPS program as defined in a disciplinary order or Substance Use Referral Contract, WHPS will inform the NCQAC compliance officer. The Substance Use Disorder Review Panel (SUDRP) may extend referral deadlines dependent upon individual circumstances.