

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

WHPS Procedure Summary 15.01: Professional Peer Support Groups

Professional Peer Support Groups (PSG) are facilitated by approved facilitators who report weekly attendance to the Washington Health Professional Services (WHPS). PSG are an important part of the monitoring program and are different than Twelve Step meetings or psychotherapy groups. The role of the PSG in the monitoring program includes:

- Sharing experiences, strengths, hope and support in addressing issues related to the process of recovery from chemical dependency.
- Providing support regarding professional issues including re-entry into practice.
- Providing resources for additional support services.
- Reporting unauthorized use or impairment.
- Providing input and recommendations relative to the needs of nurses.

SUMMARY

1. WHPS:
 - A. WHPS recruits PSG Facilitators around the state and maintains relationships with the facilitator and support groups.
 - B. WHPS hosts semi-annual PSG Facilitator educational meetings.
 - C. A WHPS case manager attends each PSG at least once each year.
2. Approved PSG Facilitators must:
 - A. Subscribe to the abstinence model of recovery.
 - B. Maintain nurse confidentiality except in the case of unauthorized use or impairment, and when the nurse may be a threat to self or others.
 - C. Hold weekly meetings which are conducted by an approved Facilitator.
 - D. Have a fee structure (\$10–20/meeting recommended) which will not be a barrier to participation in the group, and offer a sliding scale for those in financial straits.
 - E. Provide a facilitator to nurse ratio not to exceed 12 to 1.

3. PSG Attendance:

- A. Nurse monitoring contract terms define attendance requirements.
- B. Nurses are allowed no more than six (6) absences per calendar year. (This may be increased to 12 allowances during the transition year. Nurses are expected to attend groups as scheduled however may not incur additional contract time if missing ≤ 12 groups during their transition year).
- C. A week will be added to the contract terms for every meeting absence above six (6) per calendar year.
- D. A pattern of missed meetings above the allotted six (6) may be considered material non-compliance and result in referral to the NCQAC.

4. PSG Facilitators must:

- A. Have an active health care license and be in good standing with their licensing authority.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge and experience in the field of substance use disorders which may include mental health/co-occurring disorders.
- D. Have worked in their field for at least one year within the last three years OR has at least thirty (30) hours of continuing education in the area of chemical dependency or mental health.
- E. Have a minimum of twelve (12) months experience facilitating groups.
- F. Not have been a WHPS nurse within the past year (may co-facilitate with WHPS approval).
- G. Not be a direct treatment provider for a nurse.
- H. Provide a WHPS approved alternate facilitator that is not a member of the PSG.
- I. Have a signed PSG Facilitator Agreement on file with WHPS.
- J. Have a minimum of three (3) years continuous recovery, if in recovery.
- K. Submit weekly reports on each nurse documenting attendance and level of participation.