

## Nurses are not immune from addiction to alcohol or other drugs.

“My drinking increased as I became preoccupied with my daughter’s illness.”  
— J.P., RN

“I started taking some of my father’s pain medication in an effort to deal with the stresses of taking care of my father and the divorce of my husband of 22 years.”  
— E. M., RN

“My drug use got to a point where I did something I never thought I would do, take medication from work for myself. When I got caught taking a Demerol tubex, I thought my life had ended. Now, after dealing with all of the negative consequences of my use and actions, I am sober. I also have my license back.”  
— B. W., RN

“I would be honored to have any of the SPAN participants I know as my nurse.”  
— C.K., RN  
SPAN advocate of 4 years

Do you want to help nurses affected by an alcohol or drug-related problem? You can become a SPAN volunteer advocate. Time commitment is about 8-hours a month. You do not need a background in mental health or substance abuse. Training is provided.

Call: 1-800 45-SPAN-1  
or e-mail: [SPAN@nysna.org](mailto:SPAN@nysna.org)

New York State Nurses Association  
SPAN  
11 Cornell Road  
Latham, NY 12110-1499

NYSNA  
SPAN  
Statewide Peer Assistance for Nurses



Do you know a nurse who is affected by an alcohol or drug-related problem?  
**SPAN can help.**

*Confidentiality Guaranteed*



## Nurses Helping Nurses

The SPAN program is a resource for *individual* nurses who are affected by an alcohol or drug-related problem or related mental health problems. It is also a resource for schools, organizations, agencies, and healthcare facilities concerned about the effects of alcoholism and drug addiction on the nurse workforce.

The program is staffed by registered nurses who understand the healthcare workplace and the psychological, professional, and legal problems that nurses affected by addiction face.

Underlying every aspect of the SPAN program is the belief that every nurse deserves access to treatment, help in preserving his or her license and employment status, and ongoing support throughout the recovery process. SPAN is also designed to provide a balance between the needs of the nurse and the needs of the nurse's patients, who are entitled to skilled and compassionate care. The aims are to restore the nurse to optimum health, preserve a career, and return a valuable resource to the healthcare community.

# WHAT THE SPAN PROGRAM OFFERS:

## Information and education about addiction and peer assistance

- How to access treatment and other supportive services
- The role and functioning of New York state's regulatory agencies
- Compliance with the provisions of the Professional Assistance Program (PAP)
- When voluntary license surrender is advantageous
- When the need for legal assistance exists

## Resources to promote prevention and early recognition in the workplace

- Speakers who address groups and run workshops
- HELP-line for confidential inquiries
- Troubleshooting for facilities with immediate concerns

## Ongoing support through contact with trained volunteer advocates

- Participants attend peer support groups to address recovery and practice issues.
- Advocates mentor individual participants
- Staff or advocates accompany participants to PAP or regulatory agency meetings.

## Linkages with treatment providers, Employee Assistance Programs, PAP and other regulatory agencies

### Do you know?

Many employers of nurses are required by New York state laws to report to the New York State Education Department's (SED) Office of Professional Discipline (OPD) any nurse who has:

- Been identified, or suspected of being an abuser of alcohol or other drugs;
- Been reassigned to another position because of substance abuse problems;
- Been terminated from a position because of problems associated with alcoholism or substance abuse;
- Left a position while under suspicion of addictive illness

**New York State Nurses Association — SPAN**  
11 Cornell Road, Latham, NY 12110-1499  
1 (800) 45-SPAN-1  
1 (800) 457-7261 or (518) 782- 9400 ext. 265  
[www.nysna.org/programs/SPAN](http://www.nysna.org/programs/SPAN)  
e-mail: [SPAN@NYSNA.org](mailto:SPAN@NYSNA.org)

Funding administered by the NYSED

The State Education Department does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, gender or sexual orientation in the educational programs and activities, which it operates. Portions of this publication can be made available in a variety of formats, including Braille, large print or audiotape, upon request. Inquiries concerning this policy of nondiscrimination should be referred to the Department's Office for Diversity, Ethics and Access, NYS Education Department, Room 530, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.