



**Area: University of Oklahoma School of Community Medicine PA Program, Tulsa**  
**Title: Program for PA Students with Chemical Dependence Problem**

### **Oklahoma Health Professionals Program**

The Oklahoma Health Professionals Program (OHPP) is a special program of the Oklahoma State Medical Association (OSMA). The program's purpose is to provide a peer-sponsored program for physicians and physician assistants (and medical/physician assistant students) who have developed a chemical dependence problem.

The program approaches individuals suffering chemical dependence with the following resources: (1) a method for confronting physician assistant students regarding their problems, (2) provides a mechanism for evaluation of chemical dependence problems, and (3) identifies appropriate treatment programs for these individuals.

The OHPP officially works with allopathic physicians, osteopathic physicians, physician assistants, and dentists. It also provides services to physician assistant students. The Oklahoma State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision has recognized the OHPP for its activities, and the Board allows the OSMA to supervise physicians and physician assistants who voluntarily commit to its program and ongoing monitoring activities. The Board generally respects the confidentiality of the OHPP program.

### **College of Medicine**

The College of Medicine recognizes the importance, value and success of the OHPP and has developed working agreements with the OSMA to provide an avenue for intervention and treatment for physician assistant students who develop or have alcohol or other chemical dependence problems.

The College and its faculty want our students to understand that there is a desire to work with them in a strongly supportive manner for their rehabilitation if they are discovered to have a chemical dependence problem.

### **Procedures for the Physician Assistant Program**

1. The Program Director (or other designated official) will contact the OHPP regarding the options available for a physician assistant student who is suspected to or discovered to have a chemical dependence problem or potential problem.
2. The OHPP committee will meet with the physician assistant student and others who have collaborative information.
3. The OHPP meeting is a “pre-evaluation” session, which normally leads to a formal multidisciplinary evaluation, but it may lead directly to a treatment program.
4. The College requires the student to follow the OHPP’s recommendations as a condition of continuing in the physician assistant program. The student will be placed on a leave of absence as necessary.
5. The expense of these evaluation and treatment programs is the responsibility of the student but may be covered partially by health care insurance.
6. The College requires periodic verification by the OHPP that students continue in the program in order for involved students to continue in the physician assistant program. Failure to continue in the OHPP program will result in dismissal from the physician assistant program.
7. The OHPP includes a monitoring testing schedule. Students who are participants in the OHPP must submit to the program’s testing schedule. A “miss” in monitoring testing is considered a positive unless a satisfactory explanation is received from the individual scheduled for testing. The OHPP’s testing sites/laboratories will be designated by OHPP.
8. If students are successfully rehabilitated and continue in the physician assistant program, they will continue to be monitored by the OHPP during their rotation training that is done in Oklahoma.