Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana

POLICY TITLE
Reasonable Suspicion Drug and Alcohol Policy and Testing Guidelines-School of Health Sciences

POLICY NUMBER
ASOM 4.14.1

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
Academic Affairs
Student Affairs

CREATION / REVISION / EFFECTIVE DATES
Created April 2018/Effective May 2018

PURPOSE
Health care facilities and the college are obligated to document and follow up with any student who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while participating in patient setting or in college campus activities. This policy and procedure will be used in situations where a reasonable suspicion that student may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs is identified.

ORGANIZATIONAL SCOPE OR AUDIENCE
This policy applies to all School of Health Sciences students who will have direct patient contact within a health care facility or laboratory, or other setting where health care is provided. Students who do not have direct patient contact, but engage in practice-based learning within a setting where health care is provided, may have different or separate requirements.

DEFINITIONS

Faculty designee is defined as a programmatic faculty member who may act on behalf of the dean or chair to represent the college at a clinical site. Typically this is the programmatic clinical site coordinator.

Facility designee is defined as an on-site clinical instructor, supervisor, or manager who may act on behalf of the college to facilitate the handling of a situation due to time and/or distance constraints between the college and clinical site; a situation inherent to the School of Health Sciences.

Reasonable suspicion is defined to mean that the student’s instructor, supervisor, or his/her designee believes that the behavior, speech, body odor, or appearance of a student is indicative of the use of alcohol or drugs. Reasonably suspicious behavior could include conduct that prevents the student from performing the essential functions of his
or her role in the clinical activity or which poses a direct threat to the safety of others. Other behavior which could lead to a reasonable suspicion drug or alcohol test includes but is not limited to: odor of alcohol or drugs, unsteady or staggering gait, rapid or slurred speech, pinpoint or dilated pupils, unresponsiveness, bloodshot eyes, fine motor tremors, difficulty participating in activities, nausea, vomiting, sweating, erratic behavior, incoherent speech, verbal or physical outbursts, self-report of drug use or alcohol abuse, unsafe behavior, unsatisfactory care for others, and threats to harm self or others.

**POLICY**
If a clinical instructor/clinical site supervisor perceives the odor of alcohol or other substances, or observes behaviors to cause reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will remove the student from the patient care or clinical work area and notify the appropriate faculty. Faculty must consult with the regional dean or chair or designee to validate the basis for reasonable suspicion testing.

**PROCEDURE**
It is recommended that two non-student individuals interact with the student to determine if there is reasonable suspicion of impairment. If drug or alcohol use is suspected, the faculty member or facility designee should take the following steps:

Remove the student from the clinical activity:

- Confront the student in a private setting and in the presence of a non-student witness;
- Discuss the suspicious behavior with the student and allow the student to explain;
- Decide whether reasonable suspicion exists for drug and/or alcohol testing;
- If reasonable suspicion is validated, inform the student they cannot participate in clinicals that day or will not be able to complete the clinical day (as applicable).
- Inform the student that he/she bears the burden of proof and advise him/her to seek an alcohol test and drug screen immediately, but in no case more than 2 hours following removal from activity. A waiting period of 20 minutes must be observed between validation of reasonable suspicion and commencement of testing.
- In the rare circumstance where it is impossible to obtain testing within the 2 hour guideline above, documentation must be provided by the student showing that they reported for testing within the shortest possible timeframe not to exceed 4 hours following removal from activity.
- Inform the student that without negative results on the alcohol and drug screen, the clinical absence will be considered unexcused and further disciplinary actions may occur.
  a. Notify the student that disciplinary actions may include:
     i. Dismissal from the clinical site (which may impact progression in the program)
     ii. Failure of the course
     iii. Dismissal from the program
iv. Dismissal from the College

- Advise the student to arrange safe and lawful transportation to the testing site and home.
  - If the student is unable to arrange safe transportation, a cab will be called to transport the student, and the student will be responsible for the cost.
  - If the student is unable to pay the cost of a cab, the program chair or designee will attempt to reach the emergency contact noted in the student’s file.
  - If the emergency contact cannot be reached, or cannot provide transportation, local law enforcement may be contacted to facilitate removal from the clinical facility.
- Complete the Report of Reasonable Suspicion of Drug/Alcohol Use form (see Appendices).
- Complete the Maxient Incident Report form per ITCC policy.

If the student agrees to drug and/or alcohol testing, the faculty member will ask the student to sign the “Consent for Screening” form (see Appendices).

Results

Students shall not be allowed to hand deliver any test results to college representatives. Notification of drug or alcohol screening results must be delivered to the college in a manner that insures the integrity, accuracy, and confidentiality of the information. Ivy Tech Community College may refuse to accept any test result that fails to meet the requirements of the procedure and guidelines noted in this policy.

A. Refusal to Test
   If a student fails to produce the requested sample at the date and time designated, the student will be treated as if the test result was positive.

B. Negative Test Result
   If the drug or alcohol test is negative, the student must meet with the program chair, dean, or designee to discuss the circumstances surrounding the impaired clinical behavior before being allowed to participate in all clinical activities, and make-up any missed assignments.

C. Non-Negative/Positive Test Result
   If the drug screening result is positive, the student will be removed from clinical pending investigation.
   - If the student insists the positive or non-negative result is due to prescription medication, the student will be required to obtain a prescription (drug, dose, frequency) and written statement (expected duration, effect, any contraindications to being in the clinical setting) from the medical provider stating that the medication was prescribed, the drug level is within prescribed limits, and there is no indication of abuse.
• If the student insists the positive result is due to a **medical condition**, the student will be required to obtain a written statement from the medical provider indicating plan of care.

• Students who are impaired from approved prescription medications or medical conditions will be evaluated for safety in the clinical setting and will be removed from the clinical setting until safety to practice can be established by a fit for duty exam at the student’s cost.

• If medication and/or medical conditions are validated by the student’s healthcare provider, and safety to practice is established to ensure both student and patient safety, the student will be provided opportunities to make-up missed clinical assignments.

D. Retesting of Drug Screen

• In the event a screening specimen is deemed insufficient, diluted, or otherwise inappropriate for testing, the student will be required to complete a new drug test at a facility designated by the college.

• If a student challenges a result, they must comply with the vendor’s appeal process.

E. Post-Incident Testing

• Any student involved in an on-campus or clinical site incident which causes injury to the student, another student, visitor, clinical agency staff member, instructor, or patient under circumstances that suggest possible use or influence of drugs and/or alcohol at the time of the incident may be asked to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test.

Students will be dismissed from the School of Health Sciences programs for positive drug and/or alcohol screening results that are not validated by a prescription and a written statement from a medical provider. The reasonable suspicion for drug screening documentation and drug and/or alcohol screening results will be noted in the student’s record.

A student who is denied clinical placement or who is withdrawn from enrollment in a clinical or lab course due to positive drug screen not validated by a prescription or a written statement from a medical provider documenting a medical condition, may reapply to the same or different School of Health Sciences or School of Nursing program after one semester (per ASOM 4.14). To be considered for readmission to the same or different School of Health Sciences program, students will need to comply with additional criminal background checks and drug/alcohol screenings as required.

Further positive results on drug and/or alcohol screening after readmission to the program will result in dismissal from the program with no option for readmission. College program admission and progression policies will apply.
REFERENCES
Fair Credit and Reporting Act http://www.ftc.gov/os/statutes/031224fcra.pdf
Documentation of Eligibility for Clinical Placement with Affiliating Agencies form
Documentation of Eligibility for Clinical Placement in Campus-Based Clinics or Laboratories form

RESOURCES
Program or Department Chair – School of Health Sciences and School of Nursing
Dean – School of Health Sciences and School of Nursing
Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs
Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs
Ivy Tech Community College
School of Health Sciences

Consent to and Permission for Drug/Alcohol Screening

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the impairment and substance abuse testing policy guidelines.

I hereby release the designated testing agency and its director, Ivy Tech Community College, and faculty of the School of Health Sciences from any claim in connection with the drug/alcohol screening guidelines.

I understand that in the event any legal action is taken as a result of the drug/alcohol screening guidelines, confidentiality may no longer be maintained regarding clinical placement.

_____________________________________  _______________
Student Signature      Date

_____________________________________
Print Name

This form will be maintained by the School of Health Sciences and will be disclosed to appropriate clinical agencies upon their request.
Ivy Tech Community College  
School of Health Sciences

Report of Reasonable Suspicion of Drug/Alcohol Use

To be completed by the student, and faculty member observing suspected impairment.

1. Name of student suspected of substance abuse as defined in policy.
   ____________________________________________________

2. Reasons why you suspect the student of impairment. (Be as specific as possible, including times and dates when incidents occurred or unusual behavior was observed, the identity of any particular substance suspected of abuse, if known, and the names of those witnessing the incidents/behavior.)

   NOTE: Some types of information that should be documented if observed or known includes: speech (normal, incoherent, confused, change in speech, slurred, rambling, shouting, using profanity, slow); coordination (normal, swaying, staggering, lack of coordination, grasping for support); performance (unsafe practices, unsatisfactory work); alertness (change in alertness, sleepy, confused); demeanor (change in personality, fighting, excited, combative, aggressive, violent, argumentative, indifferent, threatening, antagonistic); eyes (bloodshot, dilated); clothing (dirty, disheveled); odor or alcohol on breath or clothing); other observed actions or behaviors; unexplained absences or tardiness; whether student was found with drugs/alcohol or admitted to use of drugs/alcohol; whether other students, faculty or staff have complained of the behavior and if so a list of witnesses to the behavior.

   ____________________________________________________________________________
   Witness Name                                     Date

3. Based on the information above, it is my opinion that there is reasonable suspicion to believe that this student has engaged in substance abuse as defined in the School of Health Sciences Reasonable Suspicion of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Testing Guidelines:

   ___________________________________________         ____________________
   Signature of Faculty/Dean      Date

   ___________________________________________          ____________________
   Printed Name          Title

The original of this form should be given to the School of Health Sciences for inclusion in the student confidential records. It may be disclosed on a “need to know” basis to clinical agencies and/or testing facilities.
References


Indiana University (2012). *School of nursing BSN student policy handbook 2015-2016.* Retrieved from Indiana University website: www.iusb.edu/nursing


Purdue University (2012). *Reasonable suspicion drug and alcohol policy and testing guidelines for nursing students.* Retrieved from Purdue University website: https://www.purdue.edu/hhs/nur/


UAB University Hospital (1995). *UAB University Hospital alcohol and drug testing for reasonable cause.* Retrieved from http://www.uab.edu/policies/content/Pages/UAB-HR-POL-0000250.aspx


University of Pennsylvania (2010). *School of nursing student substance abuse policy.* Retrieved from University Of Pennsylvania website: http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/Pages/default.aspx

References for Changes Suggested to Update for Use by the School of Health Sciences
