

## **Position Statement – Drug Screening**

To facilitate a transparent and efficient communication between educators and clinical facilities, and to align with local, regional, and federal regulations regarding drug use and impairment, the following position statement has been drafted by the Inland Empire Healthcare Education Consortium.

While the use of marijuana may be legal in the state of California, it is not considered professional practice in the field of nursing since it has the potential to jeopardize the safety of others. In the recent passage of AB-64, it was noted that the legalization of marijuana should not be presumed to usurp the rules governing specific vocations, industries, and facilities in prohibiting the use of marijuana as appropriate.<sup>1</sup> Also, as noted in the Fall 2017 BRN report, “A person who holds an RN license has a responsibility and obligation to ensure public safety. Drugs such as cannabis (aka marijuana), opioids, and alcohol may impair an RN’s ability to make decisions that may affect the life and safety of the public and have negative outcomes. This action constitutes conduct that would be considered unprofessional nursing practice.”<sup>2</sup> Further, evidence that an RN has used marijuana, alcohol, prescribed drugs or controlled substances in a manner dangerous or injurious to others is cause for discipline (CA Business and Profession Code 2762- Drug-related transgressions).<sup>3</sup>

Marijuana is a legal substance with the potential for impairment and licensees are advised to completely abstain from marijuana.<sup>4</sup>

To ensure a safe environment for patients at clinical facilities, educators are recommended to complete a drug screening for all students and be free from any impairment in order to participate in placement(s) at clinical facilities.

Recommended drug screenings adhere to the following guidelines:

- 10 panel drug screening (cocaine, marijuana, heroin, meth, phencyclidine, benzodiazepines, barbituates, methadone, propoxyphene, methaqualone).
- Completed prior to starting nursing courses and/or clinical rotations.
- Additional drug screenings may be requested by a clinical site and/or school if a student demonstrates indicators of impairment. Such screenings should be completed immediately upon request. Failure to complete this screening may result in disciplinary action according to the policies of the academic institution and/or host clinical facility.
- Students may be denied access to clinical facilities based on evidence of impairment, lack of testing, or associated concerns.

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[http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=HSC&division=10.&title=&part=&chapter=6.&article=2](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=HSC&division=10.&title=&part=&chapter=6.&article=2).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rn.ca.gov/pdfs/forms/brnfall2017.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> As communicated via email from Badrieh Caraway, RN, MS, Med, CHES to Ms. Vina Ocampo, RN, MSN, PHN on Saturday, May 16, 2020 in collaboration with Dr. Donna Schutte, NEC and Mr. Joseph Pacheco, BRN Chief of Enforcement unit.

<sup>4</sup> As communicated via email from Badrieh Caraway, RN, MS, Med, CHES to Ms. Vina Ocampo, RN, MSN, PHN on Saturday, May 16, 2020 in collaboration with Dr. Donna Schutte, NEC and Mr. Joseph Pacheco, BRN Chief of Enforcement unit.