Iowa Physician
HEALTH PROGRAM

MISSION

Supporting physicians by providing confidential, compassionate assistance and monitoring to those faced with mental, physical, or substance use disorders that could impact their ability to practice medicine safely.

CONTACT

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CONFIDENTIAL MONITORING SERVICES
SUPPORTING PHYSICIANS

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ABOUT

As a confidential monitoring program created by the Iowa Board of Medicine, the Iowa Physician Health Program (IPHP) was designed to protect the public by supporting and monitoring services for physicians whose health conditions may impact their ability to practice medicine safely. The IPHP promotes early intervention, diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring for physicians with potential impairments caused by a mental health condition, substance use disorder or physical condition.

The IPHP recognizes there is a stigma associated with certain conditions such as substance use and mental health disorders that can make it difficult for individuals to seek appropriate evaluation and treatment. Confidential monitoring increases the likelihood that physicians will seek help before their condition impairs their ability to practice medicine.

CONFIDENTIALITY & OUR PROGRAM

A physician's participation in the IPHP is confidential to the public. The public does not have access to the information that identifies participants in the program. Participant information is also confidential to the Iowa Board of Medicine, except in limited situations where communication is necessary as identified in Iowa Administrative Code 653-14.9.

WHY SELF-REPORT?

Physicians who suspect they are at risk of being unable to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety due to impairment have the right - and obligation - to ask for help when they need it. By failing to do so, they put both themselves and their patients at risk. It is a safe bet that by the time a physician is ready to address their condition, others are also concerned about their wellbeing.

When you self-report, you are proactively seeking help before your condition negatively affects your ability to practice medicine safely.

Concerns for which we receive referrals/self-reports include, but are not limited to the following:

- Being under the influence of mood-altering substances while in the workplace;

- Excessive use of mood-altering substances outside the workplace that may affect a professional's ability to practice with skill and safety;

- Untreated or poorly managed mental health disorders;

- Disruptive behaviors in the workplace, such as verbal or physical abuse towards staff or patients;

- Substance-related arrests, such as OWIs.

HOW CAN THE IPHP HELP?

Any licensee or applicant with the Iowa Board of Medicine can receive referral and monitoring services through the IPHP. Participants can receive confidential help without board involvement as long as they comply with program expectations. IPHP monitors treatment progress and work quality. Specific requirements are based on the individual's illness and risk to patient safety.

WHAT ARE MY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS?

Iowa Administrative Code 653, Chapter 23, identifies when a physician can be disciplined. One ground for discipline is being unable to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety as a result of mental or physical impairment or substance abuse. The Iowa Board of Medicine recognizes physicians are are not immune to health issues or personal struggles. The Board encourages physicians to self-report to the IPHP before their ability to practice medicine safely is compromised. As a physician seeking help, you deserve the same care and respect you show patients each day.

Physicians are mandatory reporters and have an obligation to report a colleague to the board if the individual is unable to practice medicine safely due to an impairment. Reporting information to the IPHP satisfies your mandatory reporter obligation. If you report an individual to us, your identity remains anonymous.