

Presentation to the
New York State Board
of Regents

May 2025



www.op.nysed.gov

Professional Assistance Program

Professional Assistance Program (PAP)

Mission

- To Protect the Public and Support the Professional in Recovery
- Voluntary and Confidential
- PAP is available to members of 53 of the 56 professions licensed by New York State Department of Education
 - excluding Physicians, Physician Assistants (PA) and Specialist Assistants (SA) as they are monitored by Committee for Physician Health under the DOH

IMMUNITY GRANTED BY PAP

Section 6509. Professional Misconduct

(3) Practicing the profession while the ability to practice is impaired by alcohol, drugs, physical disability, or mental disability.

IMMUNITY GRANTED BY PAP

Section 6509. Professional Misconduct

(4) Being habitually drunk or being dependent on, or a habitual user of, narcotics, barbiturates, amphetamines, hallucinogens, or other drugs having similar effects.

What is the Extent of the Problem?

- Overall, healthcare professionals are 10-15% more likely to develop substance abuse than the general population (American Addiction Centers, 2025).
- As many at 100,000 medical professionals has a substance or alcohol abuse problem in any given year (American Addiction Centers, 2025).
- Research suggests that rates of substance abuse and dependence is similar to those of the general population (Baldisseri, 2007).

PROGRAM ADVANTAGES

TO THE PARTICIPANT

- Expert Advice
- Referrals
- Structured recovery plan
- Immunity from 2 charges of misconduct
- Confidential
- Voluntary
- Involves surrendering professional license

TO THE STATE

- Immediate license surrender- which protects the public
- Thorough treatment plan
- Rigorous monitoring
- Strict practice conditions
- Return a trained professional to practice

Two PAP Tracks

PRISM

- Name for traditional PAP Track
- Requires immediate surrender of license
- For all licensed professions except Physicians, PA's and SA's
- The majority of clients are admitted into this track

Nurse to Nurse (N2N)

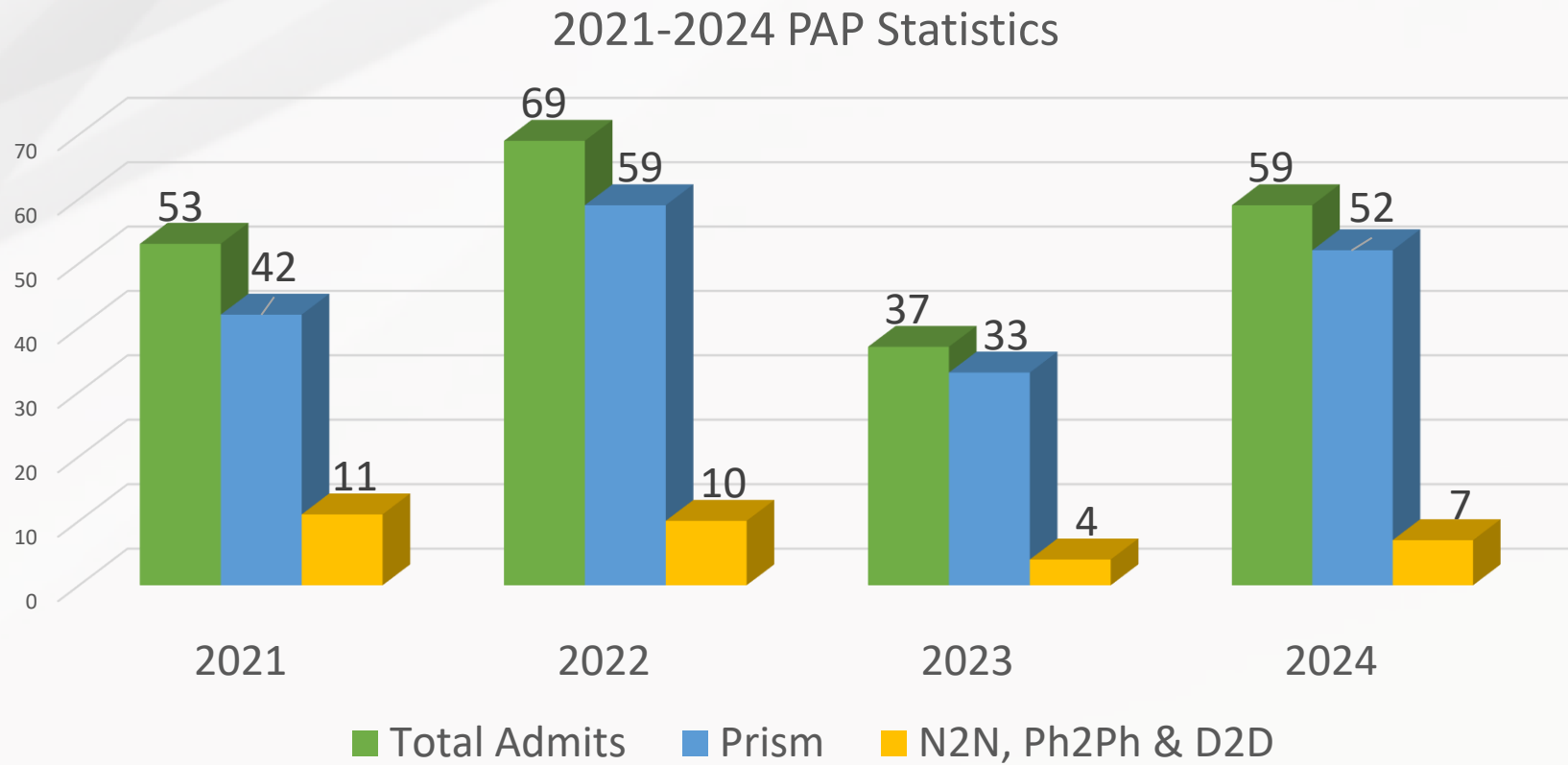
- No interruption of practice if no threat to the public and does not require surrender of license
- Must have a significant amount of time in recovery
- These clients not appropriate for the traditional track
- For RN, LPN, NP
- For any drug problem-not just addiction

Also available for Dentist2Dentist (D2D)
and Pharmacist2Pharmacist (Ph2Ph)

Committee for Professional Assistance

- Members appointed by the BOR
- 3- member panels
- State Board Member sits ex-officio
- Decisions by 2/3rds vote

Total Admits by Year



Professional Admissions in PAP

2024- Professional Admissions in the PAP



Statewide Peer Assistance for Nurses (SPAN)

- Non-profit agency offering advocacy to nurses (LPN, RN and NP) with substance abuse.
- PAP and SPAN collaborate together to help the participant successfully complete the PAP program.
- SPAN offers support groups to participants in order to discuss issues and gather advice.
- SPAN helps the participant develop their recovery plan.

Referral Sources

- Self referrals
- Office of Professional Discipline
- Attorneys
- SPAN
- Union Representatives
- Employers

Office of Professional Medical Conduct (OPMC)

- OPMC investigates complaints about physicians, physician assistants and specialist assistants and monitors practitioners who are subject to Orders of the State Board for Professional Medical Conduct.
- Contact Information
 - Phone- 1-800-663-6114 or 518-402-0836
 - Website Address:
<https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/doctors/conduct/>
 - E-Mail Address: opmc@health.ny.gov

Where are We Heading?

- Increase the number of professionals who take advantage of the PAP with increased outreach efforts.
- Continue to keep our program available to those in need.