

Texas Peer Assistance Program for Nurses Advisory Committee

This is an informational agenda item. The Texas Peer Assistance Program for Nurses, or TPAPN, Advisory Committee meeting was held virtually on Friday, June 4, 2021. Board staff personnel in attendance were Anthony L. Diggs, Director of Enforcement, and Denise Benbow, Nursing Consultant for Enforcement.

TPAPN Program

The Advisory Committee was given an update on the TPAPN Program. The Program Director stated she provided a verbal quarterly reports to the Board of Nursing (BON) at the April Board meeting. The TPAPN Program Director indicated TPAPN staff have been participating in training. An update was provided to the committee related to TPAPN staffing.

Peer Support Partners

TPAPN has 130 Peer Support Partners (as of 5/31/2021) with 20 without assigned participants. TPAPN Participants with a peer support partner numbered 191 with 82 awaiting a peer support partner as of 5/31/2021. The ratio of participant to peer support partner averages 1.47 as of 5/31/2021.

TPAPN has been providing opportunities to support peer support partners as well as to provide information to those nurses who might be interested in becoming peer support partners through workshops, information sessions and other outreach activities. Some of the upcoming events include a Lunch and Learn on September 15, 2021 for any nurse wanting to learn more about TPAPN, and information sessions about the peer support partner role on August 17, September 21 and October 19, 2021. To become a new peer support partner, attendance is required at a Peer Support Partner Workshop with the next presentations on August 20 and November 12, 2021. The Peer Support Partners receive additional opportunities to connect virtually through a communication board and through the monthly meetings of the Peer Support Partner Beyond the Workshop Educational Group.

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee had group discussion related to three topics. The committee was provided a draft application for Advisory Committee Membership for a Former TPAPN Participant. The committee discussed the language in the application and the specific requirements for the applicant. The second topic discussed related to TPAPN eligibility orders from the Board. By the time a person with an eligibility order completes the nursing education program, the person may have a number of years of demonstrated sobriety/sustained remission. Discussion related to the process a person can go through to request for an exemption to a Board Order (based on the BON *Guidelines for Exceptions to Existing Board Orders*). The third topic related to evaluators. An evaluation

is a key component for a participant related to the specific restrictions to practice. The discussion related to an “in-house” evaluator with an alternative to discipline program and potential advantages and disadvantages of an in-house evaluator.

The next TPAPN Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled to occur on Friday September 3, 2021. This is a non-action item for informational purposes only.