



SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Text Button D

PRINCIPLES OF INTERVENTION

Once a resident with a substance abuse problem has been identified and the problem is documented, he/she should be confronted with the facts. Intervention should take place with the help of a team. Depending on your system, this team may consist of the physician associated with your employee health program, director of your hospital physician wellness committee, or the physicians health program in your state. You may benefit from investigating what services these groups provide so you will be knowledgeable when the situation arises.

- Use a trained, experienced leader for the team. Consider the most experienced resource in your institution, head of human relations, the designated institutional official, chair, chief of medical staff, the head of occupational health/employee health, or your state physicians' health program
- Select, train, and coach team members from the most significant persons in the resident's life. Training and coaching should emphasize knowledge and objectivity
- Select the site of the confrontation carefully (e.g. choose a quiet, non-threatening, neutral space)
- Determine goals—all members of team must agree on the choices to be given to resident (e.g. leave of absence, required evaluation, immediate drug testing)
- Present documented information (e.g. dates, time, places, events)
- Rehearse the confrontation, if possible (each team member practice role)
- Plan for all outcomes (e.g. options, transportation, action plans, and consequences for non-compliance are agreed on in advance and executed immediately)