

The CVMA's Member Assistance Program

Offering Help with Substance Abuse



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Substance abuse affects people from all segments of society, regardless of age, income level, and background. The National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics reported that 21.4% of Americans ages 12 and over have used illegal drugs or misused prescription drugs within the last year.

Substance abuse is a particularly acute concern in the veterinary profession. Those in the profession face an inordinate amount of stress as a result of long work hours, difficult clients, clinical and non-clinical challenges, emotionally charged situations, and economic hurdles. These stressors can lead to vulnerability that, when combined with access to potentially addictive drugs, can put veterinary professionals at high risk for drug or alcohol abuse.

Untreated substance abuse can affect a practitioner's health, relationships, finances, and work, which in turn can adversely impact their patients' health and safety. Recovery is possible with professional help. Unfortunately, many in the profession are reluctant to seek help with drug use and abuse because of the stigma attached to the problem and the fear of license-related consequences.

To address veterinary professionals' wellness concerns, the CVMA offers its members a complimentary confidential member assistance program, LifeWorks. In addition to 24/7 access to professionally trained consultants, LifeWorks also offers online resources on a range of wellness topics, including substance abuse. This member benefit is available to CVMA members and their direct family members.

On the LifeWorks website and app, members can utilize the Addiction and Recovery Toolkit, which addresses alcohol and drug abuse, tobacco, addiction among

adolescents and young adults, addictive behaviors, and finding treatment, help, and confidential support.

Articles within the toolkit provide information on substance addiction, recovery, and how to find professional support for yourself, a partner, child, parent, co-worker, or someone you care about. Articles on drug and alcohol abuse include but are not limited to:

- Addiction in the Workplace: Toolkit for Managers
- Are You Misusing Drugs or Alcohol to Cope with Depression or Anxiety?
- Alternatives to 12-Step Programs for Alcohol and Drug Addiction
- Co-Dependency in Families with Substance Abuse
- Marijuana: Health Effects, Prevention, and Treatment
- Prescription Drug Misuse: Causes, Signs, and Strategies
- Recovery Is Possible
- When Someone You Care About Abuses Drugs or Alcohol
- When Someone You Love Is Using or Abusing Opioids
- How to Help Someone Get Past Resistance to Drug or Alcohol Treatment
- Rehabilitation Treatment ("Rehab") for Alcohol and Drug Addiction

Additionally, LifeWorks offers wellness assessments and their Care Now digital programs, including a program on Substance Abuse. The Care Now Programs offer short (3-15 minute) step-by-step modules with useful tools, including self-assessments, instruction, action plans, and advice to help you or a family member on the road to recovery. ■

LifeWorks provides confidential counseling and additional resources like articles, videos, and audio recordings on a variety of wellness-related topics, including relationships, mental and physical health, money, work, and more. CVMA members have been emailed an invitation to join LifeWorks. If you have not received this email or are unable to locate it, please email jsmith@cvma.net or call us at 800.655.2862. If you are not yet a CVMA member and would like to take advantage of this and many other valuable CVMA member benefits, visit the Membership tab at cvma.net to join.