

Substance Use Disorder Toolkit for Graduate Health Professional Students

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Background

- Approximately 12 % of physicians and 15% of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists will abuse substances at some point in their career
- Healthcare professionals (HCPs) with SUD represent a vulnerable group at risk for workplace impairment, reducing their ability to deliver safe, high-quality care to their patients
- Health profession students have an increased risk of substance misuse and drug abuse due to high stress associated with their training and their close proximity to narcotics and hypnotics during clinical rotations

Project Aims

- Aim 1:** Establish a comprehensive understanding of the RFUMS Drugs and Alcohol Policy to address organizational needs.
- Aim 2:** Understand the federal and state procedures, laws, and regulations that affect the university's management of drug use among students and staff.
- Aim 3:** Identify and engage key stakeholders to understand their contributions and gain buy-in for implementing the SUD toolkit.
- Aim 4:** Analyze collected data on university policies and procedures and compare findings with existing literature.
- Aim 5:** Recommend Enhancements to RFUMS Drug and Alcohol policy by integrating a comprehensive SUD Toolkit.

Methods

Comprehensive Literature Search:

- PubMed, CINAHL, and Ovid MEDLINE (January 2000–July 2023).
- Critical appraisal using JBI tools.

Policy Analysis and Needs Assessment:

- Comparison of RFUMS policies to existing literature for alignment with best practices.
- Emphasis on evidence-based enhancements to manage SUD among students and faculty.
- Conducted meetings with RFUMS stakeholders to identify policy gaps, barriers, and improvement opportunities.
- Holistic review of institutional policies and college handbooks as it related to drug and alcohol use.

Regulatory Context:

- Review university students and institutions' compliance with federal and state regulations (e.g., Drug-Free Workplace Act, FERPA, and ISUD Act).

Theoretical Framework:

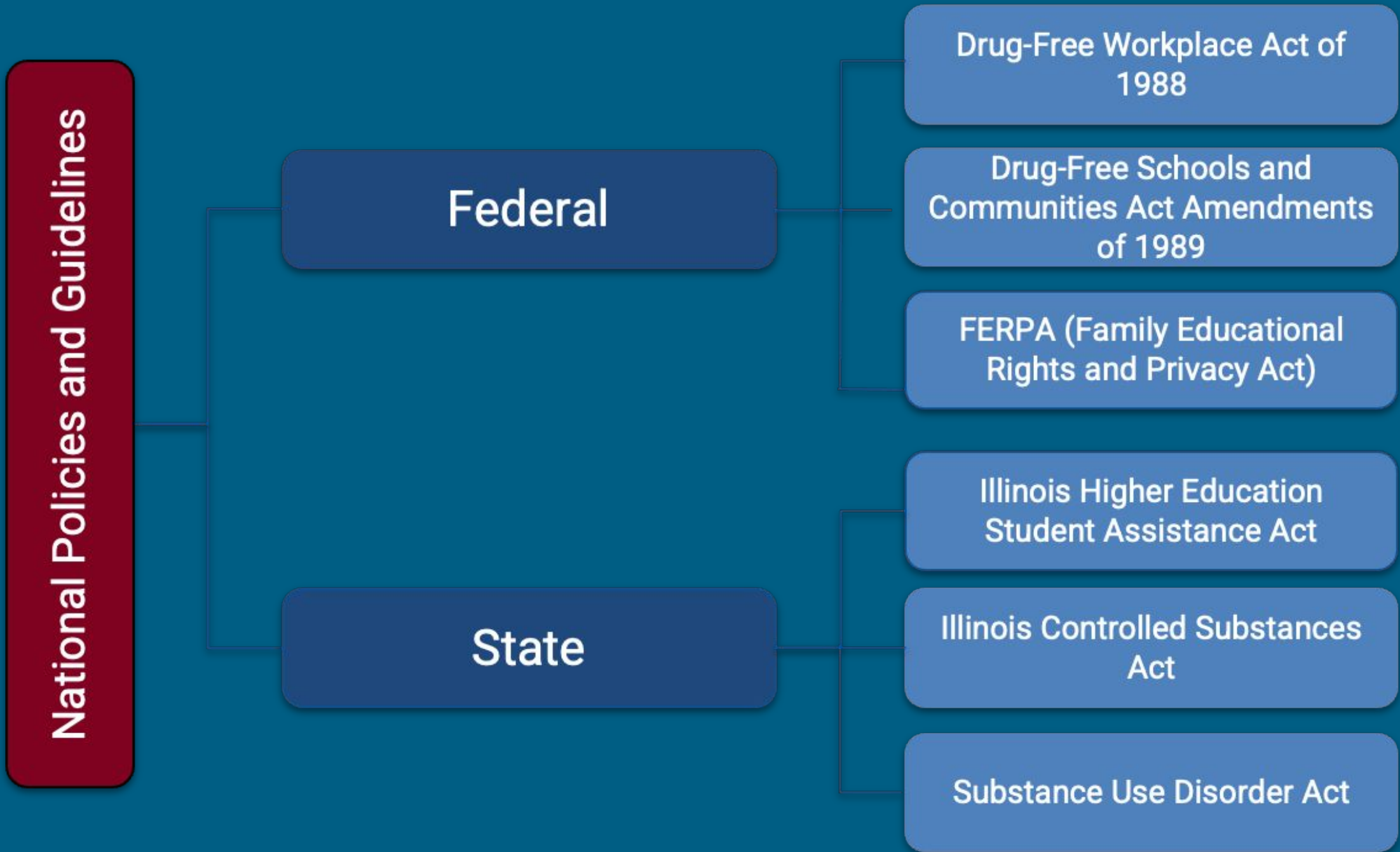
- Frame the toolkit using the Four-Pillar SUD framework: **education, early identification, intervention, and reentry**.
- Ottawa Model of Research Use (OMRU) as foundational theory guiding the project.

Results

University Stakeholder Meetings



Federal & State Laws and Regulations



RFUMS Data Comparison With Existing Literature

SUD Education: <i>Research:</i> High stress and substance use among professional students suggest the need for broad SUD education (Allen et al., 2020). <i>RFUMS:</i> Limited SUD education, with only half of the programs offering drug awareness training.	Drug Screening: <i>Research:</i> Randomized drug testing reduces incidence of positive screens (Fitzsimons et al., 2018). <i>RFUMS:</i> Drug screening is done at clinical rotation start, but it is inconsistent and lacks random, ongoing testing.
Interventions and Resources: <i>Research:</i> Accessible online resources (e.g., BASICS, AlcoholEDU) help reduce stigma and promote self-reflection (Fachini et al., 2012). <i>RFUMS:</i> Lacks a centralized webpage for SUD resources, hindering easy access for students.	Reentry: <i>Research:</i> Peer mentoring and abstinence contracts enhance retention and reduce relapse (Beeson et al., 2017). <i>RFUMS:</i> RFU lacks formal peer support groups and university-wide mandatory training on drug and alcohol issues.

Discussion

Implementation Strategies for SUD Toolkit

4 Pillars SUD Toolkit

Pillar 1 – Education

Emphasize prevention, enhance awareness, promote wellness, destigmatize SUD.

- Establish a student organization to promote SUD awareness and recovery support.
- Hold awareness campaigns throughout RFU.
- Incorporate and update SUD education modules into curriculum for all programs.
- Openly provide self-screening tools and resources on the RFU webpage to destigmatize SUD.
- Create and distribute leaflets, flyers, and videos focused on awareness, stigma reduction and available resources at RFU.

Pillar 2 – Early Identification

Higher occurrence of substance use noted during the didactic phase of training.

- Make RDS applicable university-wide for all colleges and programs.
- Begin screening during didactic phase to deter the development of a SUD.
- Implement drug screens at random; eliminate 10-day advanced notice.
- Implementing RDS demonstrates the university's commitment to addressing substance abuse seriously.

Pillar 3 – Intervention

Publish clear local, state, federal laws on RFU website in addition to university policies to establish clear understanding of rules.

- Post mandatory reporting requirements for licensed professionals.
- Outline common sanctions for violations as it pertains to alcohol and other drugs.
- Include links to self-screening tools for alcohol and drugs.
- Feature programs such as AlcoholEDU to encourage self-reflection on drinking patterns.
- Highlight support services on student health and wellness page.

Pillar 4 – Reentry

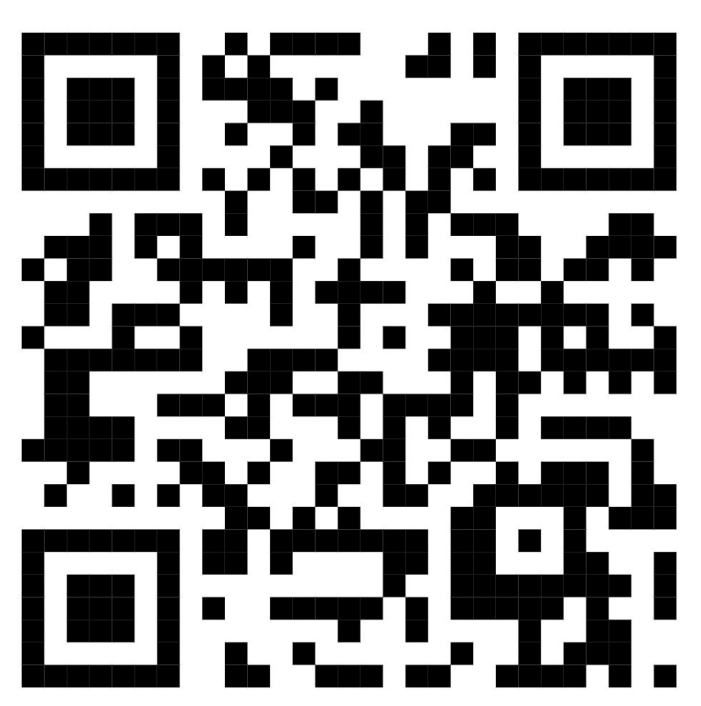
Streamline return to didactic/ clinical training throughout university.

- Eliminate ambiguity regarding reentry to practice qualifications in the university student handbook.
- Establish clear guidelines for reentry in each program handbook.
- Referral to RFU support services for peer mentoring and allyship on campus.
- Randomized screenings to promote continued maintenance.
- Establish contract agreements with clinical sites in accordance with privacy laws.
- Outline readily available financial aid implications for taking a break and returning to school for treatment.

Translation of Findings

- Establish SUD Taskforce, identify and appoint key champions and change agents to oversee the SUD toolkit's implementation and long-term sustainability.
- Collaborate closely with the Division of Student Success and Wellness to prioritize SUD initiatives.
- Raise awareness of SUD, provide education, and make all related resources available to students during the Admitted Student Visit Day, orientation.
- Distribute feedback surveys to students and staff to continuously improve educational campaigns and interventions.

References



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