The Impaired Nurse
Safe to Practice Policy

☐ Paula Meyer, MSN, RN
☐ Executive Director of the Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission
Objectives

- Will be able to name 2 criteria that may trigger a disciplinary review by the Nursing Commission
- Will state employer & Commission criteria for disciplinary action related to personal use of marijuana by nurses
Disciplinary Process

Color Key
- White – Event
- Gold – Decision point
- Green – Process
- Red – End or return to earlier step

NCQAC: Medical Marijuana  6/16/14
Disciplinary Process

2013 Formal Actions, January 1, 2013, to December 31, 2013

- Licensure Denied (31)
- Monitor (24)
- Probation (38)
- Reinstatement Denied (1)
- Full Reinstatement (4)
- Reprimand (1)
- License Surrender (3)
- Suspension (114)
- Revocation (0)
Disciplinary Process

Early Remediation Program, January 1, 2013, to December 31, 2013

- Action Plans developed (65)
- Action Plans successfully completed (50)
- Refusal to participate (8)
Safe to Practice Policy

• Provides guidelines about “safe to practice” concerns

• Nurses should constantly evaluate their ability to practice safely & competently

• Situations that may compromise safety
  – Stress, sleep deprivation, health conditions
  – Pain medications
  – Recreational use of legal or illegal substances
  – Medical use of substances
Laws & Rules

- RCW 18.130.050 – Authority of Disciplining Authority
- WAC 246-840-710 – Violations of Standards of Nursing Conduct or Practice
- WAC 246-840-730 – Mandatory Reporting
- WAC 246-840-780 – Participants entering the Approved Substance Abuse Monitoring Program
Resources/References

• Nursing Commission - Safe to Practice Policy:
  http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/6000/669327.pdf

• Regulation of Health Professions – Uniform Disciplinary Act (UDA):

• RCW 18.79 Nursing Care
  http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=18.79&full=true

• WAC 246-840 Practical & Registered Nursing:

• Marijuana Licenses, Application Process, Requirements & Reporting, Chapter 314-55

• Washington Health Professional Services (WHPS):
  http://www.doh.wa.gov/PublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/
  HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/ProfessionalResources/
  ImpairedPractitionerPrograms/WashingtonHealthProfessionalServices.aspx