Alaska State Medical Association

# Physician Health Committee

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Physician Health Committee

## Philosophy

We, as members of the Physician Health Committee of the Alaska State Medical Association recognize and accept our responsibilities to enhance the health and safety of the public and to promote the well being of our colleagues who are reliable and competent. We seek to assist a physician in the identification of alcoholism and/or drug abuse, and other emotional or cognitive problems which would result in impairment and to provide appropriate monitoring of the path towards recovery.

We recognize that alcohol and drug abuse are treatable diseases and that a vast majority of physical, emotional and cognitive impairments can be reversed or effectively treated. Therefore, it is our duty to help our impaired colleagues to acknowledge that their health and their professional roles are adversely affected by their diseases. Additionally, we believe that appropriate treatment should be available for impaired physicians and family members to enable affected physicians to re-enter the profession as accountable and reliable professionals. Re-entry should occur when the well being of the physician and his or her patients are assured.

The physician’s entry into the recovery process should be confidential and should be instituted in a non-punitive manner. As peers, we seek to monitor the treatment of sick physicians in their recovery and thereby enhance the well being of our profession and of its members.

The Physician Health Committee does not wish to interfere with the statutory obligations of the Alaska State Medical Board and the Division of Occupational Licensing in their relationship with physicians. The Physician Health Committee only wishes to offer an appropriate path to provide identification, intervention, referral, monitoring and education for sick or addicted physicians.

## Purpose

The purpose of the Physician Health Committee is to provide a facilitation for physicians whose functioning is impaired due to alcoholism and /or drug abuse, or other emotional and cognitive impairments to receive assistance and thereby restore their function.