



The urine drug screening program

REASONS FOR URINE DRUG SCREENING

Some reasons for urine drug screening include:

- An undertaking has been agreed upon and entered into between the Board and the registrant;
- A condition to do so has been imposed on the registrant's registration;
- An order to do so has been imposed; and/or
- A registrant may volunteer to undergo urine drug screening while the Board is assessing their health.

WHY RUN A URINE DRUG SCREENING PROGRAM?

The Boards' primary responsibility is the protection of "vulnerable persons". This includes the public and the registrant.

The Urine Drug Screening (UDS) Program allows registrants who have been diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder to remain in the workforce by providing ongoing reassurance to the Board that they are drug free. It has also been shown repeatedly around the world to be the best rehabilitation tool available in treating health professionals recovering from a substance abuse problem.

Although urine drug screening may seem inconvenient, it is worth remembering that the alternative may be de-registration.

WHO WILL ANSWER MY QUESTIONS ABOUT SCREENING?

The *Urine Drug Screening Protocol* is a written document that informs registrants of their obligations and responsibilities.

Information on urine drug screening can be obtained from the Board on 3405 6013.

HOW DO I COMMENCE SCREENING?

Prior to commencing the Program the registrant will be allocated to a "group" of testing. The Program consists of 6 groups.

Registrants are required to ring the "UDS Hotline" every day, including weekends and most public holidays. The telephone number is 07 3225 2787, and the message on the Hotline will state which groups are required to test that day. If a test is required, the registrant must attend a pathology collection centre prior to 8pm on that day to submit a specimen.

Registrants are responsible for meeting the cost of screening and the results are sent (by the pathology laboratory) to the Board for review.

WHAT DOES THE BOARD DO WITH THE RESULTS?

The results will be reviewed by the Board or relevant Committee so that a registrant's progress on the Program can be monitored.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING PERIODS OF ABSENCE?

It is recognised that urine drug screening can sometimes cause inconvenience when a registrant wishes to travel. However, screening provides proof that a registrant is abstaining from drug use and therefore the granting of leave from screening is based on individual circumstances.

If leave from screening is required, a written request must be submitted to the Health Assessment and Monitoring Unit at least 5 working days before the date of the intended leave. Clearance from screening must be granted to ensure that a missed test is not recorded.

WHAT HAPPENS WHERE THERE IS FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE PROGRAM, OR IF MY RESULTS ARE UNSATISFACTORY?

Some examples of non-compliance with the Program can include not attending for a scheduled test, not complying with the Australian Standard, not applying for a leave of absence or not complying with any aspect of the *Protocol*. Action may be taken where there has been a failure to comply.

Action may also be taken where a screen is positive for a prohibited substance or a screen is so dilute that it is rendered invalid.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

The Program is designed so that registrants are rewarded for compliance with the *Protocol* and satisfactory results. This reward is the progressive reduction in testing frequency, that is moving from one group to another. Although it is not possible to predict how long a registrant will undergo urine drug screening, a registrant will be released from the Program when it is safe to do so.

For further information contact Health Assessment and Monitoring, telephone 07 3405 6013, fax 07 3234 1013 or email healthassessment@healthregboards.qld.gov.au