UNC SOM Substance Abuse Policy

I. The purpose of this policy is to describe the conditions under which UNC SOM students may be required to undergo testing for drug or alcohol abuse and to describe the consequences of a positive drug or alcohol screen. The following conditions are prohibited while at work, on call, on duty, at school, or engaged in University of North Carolina School of Medicine business on or off the UNC SOM premises: unauthorized use of, possession of, or being under the influence of alcohol, and illegal use, abuse, possession, manufacture, dispensation, distribution of, or being under the influence of controlled or illegal drugs. This includes UNC SOM activities at Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) and preceptor offices during the Clinical Skills Development/Clinical Skills Integration Course community weeks.

II. UNC SOM students may be screened for drug or alcohol abuse under the following conditions:
   o Reasonable suspicion that a substance abuse problem exists
   o Drug screen is required by a clinical site (e.g., community preceptor or AHEC site)
   o At the student’s request (e.g., away elective).

III. Drugs searched for during alcohol and/or drug testing may include (but are not limited to)
   o Alcohol
   o Amphetamines
   o Barbiturates
   o Benzodiazines
   o Cocaine
   o Opiates (including various synthetic opiates)
   o Phencyclidines
   o Marijuana

IV. Medical students may be required to undergo screening for drug or alcohol abuse if they exhibit behaviors that raise suspicion of substance abuse. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:
   o The appearance of impairment or intoxication at school or in a clinical setting
   o Unusual or aberrant behavior
   o The existence of collaborative documentation
   o A pattern of abnormal or erratic behavior
   o Arrest or conviction for a drug- or alcohol-related offense
   o Being identified as the subject of a criminal investigation regarding drugs or alcohol
   o Reliable information from independent sources
   o Evidence of drug tampering or misappropriation

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V. Some clinical rotation sites require drug testing as a condition of doing a rotation at their site. Students participating in these rotations will be required to undergo drug screening as per the clinical site requirements. Any student who refuses drug screening for a clinical rotation site may face disciplinary action. The cost of the drug screening will be borne by the student unless it is covered by the clinical rotation site.

VI. Students may request to undergo drug screening. This is most often done for extramural (away) electives. Students undergoing drug screening for away electives should contact the Office of Student Affairs for information about recommended laboratories. Drug screening results for away electives should be sent to either the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or the SOM Registrar for review.

VII. A student with a positive screening test for either drugs or alcohol will be pulled from his or her clinical rotation until the positive test can be investigated. This may result in the student getting a grade of either Incomplete or Withdraw for the clinical experience. The student will be referred to the UNC-Chapel Hill Student Health Service for a medical evaluation and supportive therapy. The situation will also be reviewed by the University Emergency Evaluation and Action Committee (EEAC). Possible EEAC recommendations include requiring the student to undergo further evaluation or additional treatment, placing student on leave, or requiring the student to undergo random or periodic drug/alcohol screening. Students may also be subject to review by the Honor Court or the SOM Student Promotions Committee.

VIII. A drug screen may be positive because the student is taking a legally prescribed medication. This includes drugs prescribed by a licensed practitioner and over-the-counter drugs that have been legally obtained and are being used in the appropriate amount solely by the individual and for the purpose for which the medication was prescribed or manufactured. Students with positive drug screens due to legally prescribed medications will be asked to provide documentation from a physician that they are legally taking the drug(s) in question. Students with positive drug screens due to legally prescribed medication(s) will be cleared to go to or return to their clinical sites.