

COLUMBIA | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IRVING MEDICAL CENTER
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE

Title: Mandated Preclinical Drug Testing in Health Sciences Students as a Non-punitive Practice in Professionalism and an Early Intervention Opportunity for At-Risk Future Prescribers.

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Abstract:

In 2010, Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) became the first school to mandate pre-clinical drug testing for clinical students (medical, dental, physical therapy, occupational therapy, nursing). Born out of site requirements to increase patient safety, the Student Health Services team developed a pragmatic model for drug testing that is supportive to students and non-punitive in nature. Through a non-judgmental, harm reduction approach, this program is designed as a practice in professionalism – as many students will be subjected to ongoing drug testing as professionals – and an opportunity for early intervention for students at risk for substance use disorders. After students complete the drug testing process and receive their results, they are sent a follow-up survey to measure the effectiveness of the process, as well as attitudes and beliefs related to drug testing and substance use among their peers and future professional colleagues. Results indicate that:

- 67% support preclinical drug testing for students
- 59% of students agree with ongoing drug testing in the workplace
- 65% believe they have a responsibility to confront a colleague's substance use in a clinical setting

Students also indicated on the survey that if they are concerned about a colleague's substance use, they are much more likely to speak to their colleague/peer before speaking to a supervisor or external resource.

The mandated drug testing program is an example of utilizing a non-punitive approach to help prepare future healthcare providers to navigate substance use concerns for themselves, their peers and future patients.

Biography:

Stephanie Rozen joined the Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) Student Health Service in 2012 as Director of the Addiction Information & Management Strategies (AIMS)

office. Prior to CUIMC, Stephanie worked with individuals navigating the criminal justice system, engaging in out-patient and in-patient substance use disorder treatment services and supporting macro-level change working with communities and developing policy. Stephanie received her Master's in Social Work and Bachelor's in Psychology from Kutztown University and is currently a New York State Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and a Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC).