

Request for Proposals

TPAPN Marketing and Recruitment Plan

Texas Peer Assistance Program for Nurses
Texas Nurses Foundation
Kanaka Sathasivan, Director of Communications
ksathasivan@texasnurses.org

The Texas Peer Assistance Program for Nurses (TPAPN) safeguards patients by providing early identification, support, monitoring, accountability and earned advocacy to Texas nurses who have an identified substance use and/or mental health condition or related incident, so the nurse may return to safe nursing practice.

Participation in TPAPN is an avenue for nurses with substance use disorders or mental health conditions to maintain or regain their license and return to safe nursing practice. TPAPN is a voluntary program funded by nurses' licensure fees through the Texas Board of Nursing.

BACKGROUND

TPAPN helps nurses:

- Receive treatment for substance use disorder or mental health issues.
- Maintain or regain their license.
- Achieve or maintain wellness and recovery.

TPAPN participants can be referred in three ways: from the Board of Nursing, by a third party (such as an employer) or with a self-referral. After they are referred, they have to obtain an evaluation, which will determine the best course of treatment. TPAPN does not provide direct treatment but rather case management and connection to trained peer advocates.

Nurses participating in TPAPN are usually highly motivated to maintain or regain their license. Participation may be an alternative to discipline from the Board of Nursing. In the past, the program was considered rigid and punitive. The newly restructured program is more flexible, supportive and person-centered.

Considering there are over 200,000 nurses in Texas, but only 700-800 participants in TPAPN, we assume that many nurses with substance use or mental health issues are not receiving the support they need. We believe this may be due to a lack of knowledge among nurses about TPAPN.

To improve awareness, increase self-referrals and encourage earlier referrals, TPAPN needs a focused marketing and recruitment strategy.

PROJECT GOALS

INCREASE AWARENESS

In many ways, TPAPN is an invisible resource that nurses only know about through personal experience. We want nurses of all levels, across the state, to know that help is available. We would ideally like to see an increase in web traffic, more Twitter followers, or more peer referrals as a result. Our Twitter profile (@TPAPN_Support) is very new, and we already plan to conduct a campaign to increase followers.

In the past, we had faculty liaisons who taught their students about TPAPN. Our director also does online and in-person presentations on TPAPN to schools and employers.

INCREASE ENROLLMENT

Our main goal is to see more self-referrals to TPAPN. We would also like to see more early referrals by coworkers, friends, family and employers before a major incident. Currently, in most cases, referrals occur after a practice violation due to substance use disorder or mental health issues. However, nurses can often recognize symptoms of substance use and mental health issues well before a practice violation has occurred. By encouraging others to refer and affected nurses to self-refer (and indicating this can help them avoid being reported to the Board of Nursing), we hope they will contact TPAPN before a practice violation and therefore before any risk of harm to patients or peers.

REINFORCE BRAND

TPAPN's brand has been poorly defined in the past. With a brand-new website (tpapn.org) that uses consistent language, images, and colors, TPAPN has started to develop a brand that needs to be applied to all TPAPN materials and outreach.

POTENTIAL AUDIENCES

ALL NURSES

We want nurses in all practice settings, of all education levels, to be aware that TPAPN is an available resource their licensure fee already supports.

EMPLOYERS

We want employers to understand that reporting is mandatory when a practice violation has occurred. Early referral to and participation in TPAPN can be lifesaving.

POTENTIAL TPAPN PARTICIPANTS

We want to help nurses identify signs of substance use or mental health issues in themselves and their peers so TPAPN can provide support before a practice violation occurs.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF NURSES

This is the lowest priority audience but one that could potentially influence nurse opinions and refer nurses.

SCOPE OF WORK

We are looking for a marketing expert or team to:

- Develop messaging
- Create versatile print and digital materials
- Determine distribution channels
- Complete dissemination

As we already track metrics in house, we will continue to examine those after the dissemination of the materials. After the initial design and distribution, future dissemination will be handled in house.

BUDGET AND TIMELINE

The total budget for this project is \$12,000. Please submit an itemized list of expected costs, separating creative costs from mailing, shipping or online ad buys.

The dissemination of materials must be complete by July 31, 2019.

Please submit samples of prior work.

Application due March 15. Contract will be awarded April 1.