

TIME OUT: Ethics, Substance Abuse and the Legal Profession's Wellness Game Plan

Presented by:
Scott Mansfield, VP, Counsel
Chicago Title Insurance Company



Brought to you by:
NC Lawyer Assistance Program
& LAP Foundation of NC, Inc.



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LAP Origins



➤ Positive Action for Lawyers ("PALS") began 1979 to deal with alcoholism and substance use disorder



➤ FRIENDS program began in 1999 to deal with mental health and emotional issues



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Today



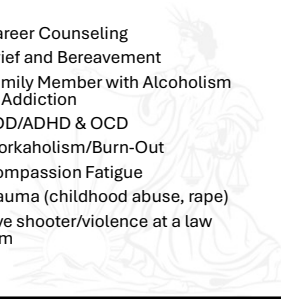
NCLAP
NORTH CAROLINA
LAWYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



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New Logo, Same Program, Any Issue

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Bi-Polar
- Anger Management
- Alcoholism
- Drug Problems
- Process Addictions (gambling, internet pornography & shopping)
- Eating Disorders
- Career Counseling
- Grief and Bereavement
- Family Member with Alcoholism or Addiction
- ADD/ADHD & OCD
- Workaholism/Burn-Out
- Compassion Fatigue
- Trauma (childhood abuse, rape)
- Live shooter/violence at a law firm



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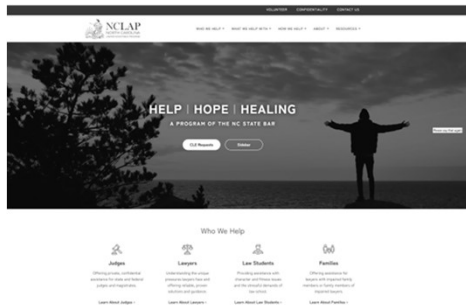
LAP Mission

- Services are FREE, paid for by your State Bar dues
- Completely confidential – Pursuant to Rule 1.6
- Services:
 - Assist
 - Assess
 - Educate
 - Refer
 - Support



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New Website



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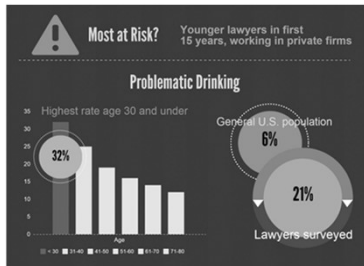
Landmark National ABA Study



- ABA, CoLAP and Hazelden Foundation partnered for the first national study on lawyer mental health in 2015
- Large, reliable data set. Diverse in every way.
- Culled over 2,000 responses to retain only responses from currently employed attorneys.
- Findings published in the peer reviewed Journal of Addiction Medicine

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Problematic Drinking



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Problematic Drinking

- AUDIT-10 revealed 21% at levels considered harmful or dependent
- And the AUDIT-3* revealed:

36%

Problematic drinking based on quantity and frequency alone.
*Physicians came in at 15% using same screening measure.

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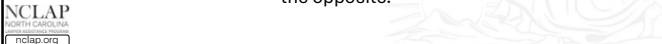
Drug Use

- Number of lawyers who completed the section on alcohol use:

97%
- Number of lawyers who completed the section on drug use:

27%*

* Likely does not indicate "Not applicable to me." Likely indicates the opposite.



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Mental Health


Mental Health Symptoms

Lawyers with alcohol use disorders also had highest rates of depression, anxiety, and stress.


Depression
28%

Anxiety
19%

Stress
23%



Lawyers report depression 4X the general U.S. population




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Over Course of Career

- Percent of lawyers reporting anxiety at some point during their career:

65%
- Percent of lawyers reporting depression at some point during their career:

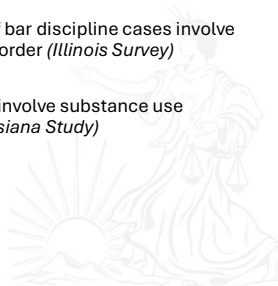
50%



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Relationship Between Lawyer Impairment & Errors in Judgment

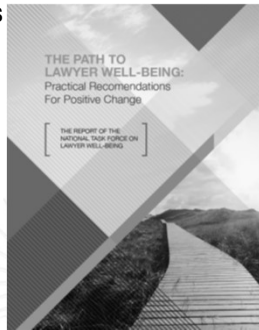
- Depending upon the year, 40 - 75% of bar discipline cases involve a substance use or mental health disorder (*Illinois Survey*)
- 80% of Client Protection Fund cases involve substance use disorder or a gambling disorder (*Louisiana Study*)



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Report & Recommendations

- The Path to Lawyer Well-Being recommended structural changes like:
 - Fully fund a LAP program
 - Mandatory mental health CLE
 - Secured leave rule
- You may notice, NC has all of these things (and has for decades).
- NC considered a leader in this area.



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10-Year Follow-up Study

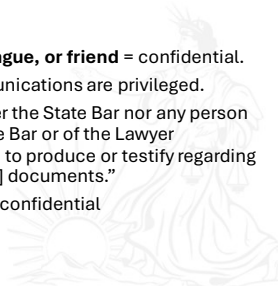
- Researchers from that landmark study launched a ten-year follow-up study last year.
- North Carolina participated. You may have received a survey questionnaire.
- Research results are expected mid-2026.



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Confidentiality – All Encompassing

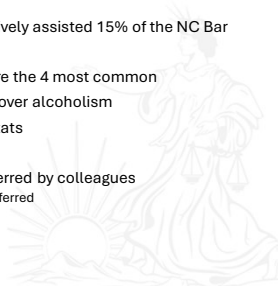
- If **you** call for yourself = confidential.
- If you/anyone calls as **spouse, colleague, or friend** = confidential.
- By **rule** RPC 1.6(d) & 8.3(c) all communications are privileged.
- By **statute** NCGS §84-32.1(d) “Neither the State Bar nor any person acting under the authority of the State Bar or of the Lawyer Assistance Program shall be required to produce or testify regarding the contents or existence of [any LAP] documents.”
- By **2001 FEO 5** = all communications confidential



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LAP is a huge & busy program

- Since LAP's inception (1970's), LAP has actively assisted 15% of the NC Bar
- Currently +/- 350 open & active cases
- Stress, Anxiety, Depression & Alcoholism are the 4 most common
- Psychological issues approaching 3:1 ratio over alcoholism
- See annual report on website for detailed stats
- +/- 200 current volunteers
- Approx 95% of cases are self referred or referred by colleagues
 - Latest annual report: 65% of clients were self referred



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Who We Are & What We Do



Robynn Moraites*
LAP Director



Candace Hoffman
Assistant Director

* Pronounced "More 80's"

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Who We Are & What We Do



Cathy Killian (West)
Clinical Director & LAP Counselor



Nicki Ellington (East)
LAP Counselor



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Contact NC LAP

Cathy Killian
Clinical Director
Western Region
704-910-2310
cathy@nclap.org

Nicki Ellington
LAP Counselor
Eastern Region
919-719-9267
nicole@nclap.org

Robynn Moraites
Executive Director
704-503-9695
robynn@nclap.org

Candace Hoffman
Assistant Director
919-719-9290
candace@nclap.org



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Thank you!

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