

Texas Physician Health Program Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, September 27, 2010**

Contact: TXPHP, 512-305-7462
333 Guadalupe, Tower 2, Suite 520, Austin, 78701
www.txphp.state.tx.us

New program assists health professionals with impairment issues

A new, statewide program aims to protect the public by encouraging health professionals to seek early assistance with drug or alcohol-related problems or mental or physical conditions that present a potentially dangerous limitation or inability to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety.

The Texas Physician Health Program, or TXPHP, is a confidential, nondisciplinary program for physicians, physician assistants, acupuncturists and surgical assistants licensed by the Texas Medical Board or who have applied for licensure.

TXPHP, launched in February 2010, was created by Senate Bill 292 of the 81st Legislative Session that went into effect September 1, 2009. It is modeled on other states' programs and was a joint effort of the Texas Medical Association, the Texas Osteopathic Medical Association, and the Texas Medical Board. TXPHP is self-funded through user fees. The cost for participation in the program is \$1,200 per year.

TXPHP accepts self-referrals as well as referrals from the Texas Medical Board, concerned colleagues, hospitals and others. The program is overseen by experts in mental health and substance abuse issues. TXPHP recommends treatment for physicians when clinically indicated, and monitors their ongoing recovery. A monitoring program may include random drug screens; written reports from counselors or therapists; self reports provided by the physician in recovery; and written verification of attendance at self-help or support group meetings.

Individuals are not eligible to participate in the program if they have violated the standard of care as a result of drugs or alcohol, committed a boundary violation with a patient or patient's family or been convicted of a felony.

TXPHP is administratively attached to the Texas Medical Board, but overseen by an 11-member governing board. Governing board members, recently appointed by TMB President Dr. Irvin Zeitler, are:

Brady Allen, M.D., of Dallas; Eugene Boisubain, M.D., of Houston; Mary Boone, LCSW, LCDC, of Austin; Ronald Brenz, D.O., of San Antonio; Judy Googins, M.D., of Tyler; John Jackson, M.D., of Fort Worth; Alison Jones, M.D., of Austin; Helaine Lane of Houston; Anand Mehendale, M.D., of Kerrville; Melinda Moore, PA-C, of Sugar Land; and Russell Thomas Jr., D.O., of Eagle Lake. The Medical Director of the TXPHP is Lloyd Garland, MD.

