

New Brunswick Alcohol Policy Implementation Committee Progress Report July 2003

Structure and Charge

In December 2002, Vice President for Student Affairs Emmet A. Dennis directed that the former Alcohol Policy Implementation Committee be reconstituted as three separate campus-based committees (New Brunswick, Newark and Camden). Each of the campus committees is self-charged, though all use the 1999 Report of the University Alcohol Committee and the subsequent Senate recommendations as to priorities as their guide. There is a newly established Coordinating Committee whereby the chair-people of the three campus committees meet approximately three (3) times per year with Dr. Robert Pandina, Director of the Center for Alcohol Studies. The New Brunswick Alcohol Policy Implementation Committee (the “NB Committee”) began meeting in December of 2002 and has met monthly. See Appendix 1 for a listing of the members of the Committee. Meeting minutes and critical documents are archived at http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/alcohol_committee.shtml. Dr. Lea Stewart chairs the NB Committee.

Issues and Recommendations

Comparison of College-Based Policies Related to Alcohol. The NB Committee received and reviewed a chart comparing the responses of the residential colleges to common alcohol-related acts and behaviors. See Appendix 2. The NB Committee agreed that it would serve as a repository for all college-based policies related to alcohol and that it would periodically review and compare college policies to promote consistency where appropriate.

University Alcohol Policy. The NB Committee has deferred consideration of revisions to the umbrella University Alcohol Policy, though most agree that the Policy needs to be updated to better reflect current structure, programs and norms. Consideration was deferred both due to the evolving nature of the University’s administrative structure and to permit the NB Committee to focus upon the development of campus-specific regulations (an authority granted to each campus under the existing umbrella policy). The NB Committee believes that it can make a more immediate impact through the development of such campus-specific regulations (and programs) and has made such activities a priority over review of the underlying policy.

Response to Acutely Intoxicated Individuals / Referral to ADAPS. The NB Committee conducted a review of the “Rutgers University Protocol for the Care of Acutely Intoxicated Individuals on the New Brunswick Campus” See Appendix 3. A principal concern identified with operating practices under the Protocol was its primary emphasis on response to students living in residence and observed to be acutely intoxicated by residence hall staff. The NB Committee believes that all students who would require

treatment under the criteria set forth in the Protocol should be directed to undergo an assessment with ADAPS. There are a several issues with existing practices related to the Protocol that currently prevent that from happening as follows:

1. The Protocol tends to govern the response of residence hall staff only. To the extent there is response to other campus areas (e.g., lot 8, athletic venues, fraternities adjacent to campus) upon a report of an acutely intoxicated individual, that response is carried out by public safety staff. Report of the incident and referral to ADAPS is inconsistent (i.e. not all students requiring emergency transport from non-residence hall locations are referred to ADAPS¹). It is not clear to what extent Deans of Students offices are consistently notified of the such incidents.
2. While resident students can be influenced to attend an assessment at ADAPS by the potential loss of residence hall privileges, there is no comparable leverage by which non-resident students could be influenced to attend an assessment even were an initial referral to be made.
3. Students other than residence hall staff are not trained in the Protocol.
4. Students report being reluctant to call for emergency response when a peer appears to be acutely intoxicated. Students are generally aware that the first responders will be University Police. It is a widely shared belief among students that police will use their role as first responders to investigate and pursue charges for criminal violations such as underage drinking, possession of stolen property (e.g., street signs), possession and/or use of narcotics and so forth. This serves as a strong disincentive to summon emergency help.

The Committee has several initiatives in various stages of development that respond to these concerns with the reach of the Protocol and referrals to ADAPS:

1. The Committee has undertaken to update the Housing Booklet by adding the following provision with the intent of insuring that all students in housing who require treatment under the Protocol will be referred to ADAPS regardless as to whether the emergency response is to the residence hall or to other locations on or adjacent to campus:

“Any student found to be acutely intoxicated will be evaluated by Emergency Services for possible hospital treatment. Any student requiring hospital treatment will be subsequently evaluated by the Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program and must comply with any mandated education or treatment to remain eligible for housing.”

¹ This conclusion was arrived at by comparing ADAPS assessment counts with the number of emergency transports and noting a significant discrepancy.

2. The Committee recommends to the Vice President for Student Affairs that the Protocol be adopted as a New Brunswick campus regulation under the University Alcohol Policy and that it be amended to require that ALL students requiring treatment under the Protocol, (resident and non-resident alike) be referred for a mandatory assessment at ADAPS.
3. The NB Committee recommends to the Vice President for Student Affairs that, as part of the process of adopting the Protocol as a campus alcohol regulation, it be further amended to support the imposition of registration holds on students who fail to attend an assessment with ADAPS once referred per the Protocol. Timing of the imposition of any such registration hold and conditions for removal of the hold would be in the discretion of the Dean of Students in consultation with ADAPS staff.
4. The NB Committee has charged a subcommittee to develop proposals for training more students in the application of the Protocol. The objective is to have more students aware of the health risks of non-response, familiar with campus resources and programs and prepared to summon emergency assistance for an acutely intoxicated peer. Dean of Fraternity / Sorority Affairs JoAnn Arnholt committed to requiring such training of fraternity and sorority representatives.
5. The NB Committee met with a Executive Director of Public Safety Jay Kohl and several public safety staff people to review student perceptions of the role of university police as first responders. We discussed the concern that student perceptions of police were acting as a strong disincentive to summon emergency assistance in high-risk environments (e.g., fraternity and other properties adjacent to campus where parties typically occur). Mr. Kohl committed to undertake a re-orientation / training of police patrol staff to guide them in the improved exercise of discretion when serving as first responders to a medical emergency. Mr. Kohl will report back to the NB Committee when such training is undertaken. Upon the completion of such training, student affairs staff on the NB Committee have agreed to identify opportunities to facilitate on-going dialogue between patrol officers and students. These efforts will hopefully assist in changing student perceptions of the police and will support review and information sharing relative to incidents giving rise to student or staff concerns.

Programmatic Initiatives. The NB Committee has had discussions around the following programmatic initiatives:

1. **Call-a-Cab:** There is a program available through at least one enterprise (Student Lifeline) by which participants are issued a card that permits them unlimited emergency use of a cab service up to \$100 per ride. There is either no individual fee or a nominal membership fee. Advertising on the card supports some program costs. University of Arizona is participating in such a program. Upon initial exploration, it appeared that students would have to pay the cab up-front and then get reimbursement under the program. The NB Committee is concerned with the

efficacy of a model whereby the student must make an initial outlay of cash. The Committee continues to explore the program and will be contacting participating institutions for their experiences.

2. Marketing / Information Availability: The NB Committee is exploring programs by which we could encourage students to carry emergency contact information with them routinely. We have discussed providing incentives for students to program emergency numbers into their personal cell phones (giveaways from campus vendors, common supplies such as pens upon which the same information could also be printed).

Miscellaneous

Data Collection. The NB Committee has discussed several initiatives with respect to collecting, maintaining and evaluating data on trends related to student alcohol use and impacts from use. Specific initiatives under on-going discussion are as follows:

1. The NB Committee should charge an update of the 1999 review of programmatic initiatives at other institutions that was conducted under the auspices of the University Alcohol Committee.
2. The NB Committee should charge the establishment of an information clearinghouse (web-based) that would make reliable and objective data and program information easily available to students in an effort to lend credibility and objectivity to concerns routinely raised about unsafe alcohol use.
3. The NB Committee will work to develop a specific recommendation as to assessment that should routinely be undertaken through Institutional Research as to alcohol use and related behaviors among Rutgers students.

Drug Policy / Program. One outcome of the January meeting known as “Drugs on Campus” focused on strategies to address drug use on campus was that the development of drug-related programs and policies should be added to the charge of the campus-based alcohol committees. The NB Committee has committed to dedicating one meeting in the Fall 2003 term to these issues. The NB Committee has two concerns with expanding the charge to include drug issues:

- (1) The University community first needs to resolve internal disagreements on whether the primary philosophy shaping program and policy will be “harm reduction” or alternatives that focus more upon use of criminal and judicial sanctions to aggressively punish use; and
- (2) The focus on drug-issues should not come at the expense of progress on alcohol-related concerns.

Drug Free Schools and Campus Act. The Bi-ennial review required under the Act should be coordinated through the campus committees, which should approve a template for the required data elements.

Insurance Issues. The NB Committee has agreed to undertake a future review of the insurance costs associated with emergency transports and other treatment under the Protocol and whether the University can effectively and efficiently provide coverage so that cost is not a disincentive to participation / use of services.