



SPAN

STATEWIDE PEER ASSISTANCE FOR NURSES ■ NYSNA

FALL 2026

"SPAN"ing New York State

Information for and about
nurses in recovery

SUPPORT, ADVOCACY, EDUCATION

In this issue:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| ● Recovery Month & Peer Support | p. 1-2 |
| ● Nurse Wellness Matters! | p. 2 |
| ● Meet SPAN's New Staff | p. 3 |
| ● Support Group Locations & Regional Coordinator Territories | p. 4 |



**SEPTEMBER
NATIONAL
RECOVERY
MONTH**

Reach out.

Speak up.

Be the light.



Call or text
988 or chat
988lifeline.org.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!



Statewide Peer
Assistance for Nurses



**FOLLOW US ON
INSTAGRAM!**

statewidepeerassistance4nurses

Recovery Month Matters for EVERY Nurse & Peer Support is the Connection!

While Recovery Month is often associated with substance use recovery, its message extends far beyond addiction. Wellness & health co-exist in a cycle of prevention, illness, repair and recovery. SPAN supports every nurse and every stage.

Nurses know that recovery is universal....and this is reflected in its evolving definitions.

The World Health Organization promotes recovery emphasizing wellness as a whole; it encompasses mental health, physical health, resilience, purpose, connection, and the ability to thrive both personally and professionally.

Nurses also know that recovery is not something that happens in isolation.

Recovery is strengthened through connection, understanding, and support from others who have shared similar experiences. In the nursing profession, where compassion for others is a daily expectation, peer support has emerged as one of the most valuable tools for preventing mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety and associated

Continued on page 2

Recovery Month Matters for EVERY Nurse

continued from p. 1

burnout as well as use of alcohol or other substances to cope with emotions and stress.

Are you or the nurses you know getting enough peer support? Are your organizations promoting peer support resources where it matters?

Positive peer connections help nurses build resilience and emotional capacity. Those who engage in peer support report longer periods of sustained wellness and deeper feelings of thriving both personally and professionally.

Wherever your organizations offer peer support, SPAN can help. Or, if you don't have a pathway to peer support, reach out. SPAN can help create one.

- **Add SPAN to educational competencies for those leading your peer support efforts**
- **Highlight SPAN as a resource in peer support groups and activities**
- **Promote SPAN as a free resource in debriefing events**
- **Keep SPAN promotional materials on-site**

Rather than focusing solely on problems, recovery-supportive organizations create environments where seeking help is encouraged, wellness is prioritized, and employees feel valued and supported. Knowing that nurses are at increased risk for substance use, these workplaces promote psychological safety, reduce stigma, provide access to resources, and foster a culture of hope and inclusion with clear pathways to recovery, peer support & treatment. Having an organizational relationship with SPAN is one of those pathways.

Consider building a relationship with your SPAN Regional Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator to explore hardwiring our resources into your organization. Help-seeking pathways will be clear for a nurse who needs to reach out and colleagues who may need to intervene.

Call Our Confidential Helpline:
800-457-7261



SEPTEMBER'S NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH

offers healthcare organizations an important opportunity to celebrate recovery, reduce stigma, and foster a workplace culture that supports the health and well-being of all employees, especially nurses. Hear how Recovery Supportive Workplaces are growing across New York State & how SPAN can help your organization do the same:

- **Share SPAN wellness sessions with your nurses**
- **Invite SPAN to meet with your organization to learn about our services and how we can help**



Celebrate Your Wellness in Recovery Month & Beyond with **Free** Wellness Activities for Every New York Nurse!

SPAN invites every New York Nurse to sign up for a Wellable Account and participate in our free Wellness Program!

- [September 1st 2026 - A Focus on Gratitude](#)
- [October 6th 2026 - Improving Productivity](#)
- [November 3rd 2026 - Social Wellness](#)
- [December 1st 2026 – Healthy Aging](#)

SPAN has partnered with Wellable to offer a variety of supports to fit your own schedule including free videos on physical health topics like stretching & HIIT classes, meditation, mindfulness series, a recipe library, sleep stories and more. Create a Wellable account and explore your options!

CREATE A WELLABLE ACCOUNT

Meet SPAN's Newest Staff!



WESTERN NEW YORK REGION: AMY VITKUS RN, BSN

Hello New York State Nurses! My name is Amy Vitkus, I'm a Registered Nurse and the Regional Coordinator for the 11 Counties of Western NY. I am passionate about SUD Recovery and thrilled to be of service to Nurses in Recovery along all points of the spectrum of SUD. I'm excited to support others along this journey while allowing them the dignity of living with their decisions. A life of Recovery can be Happy, Joyous and Free and I hope to carry this message.

I will be doing SPAN Outreach and tabling the following events for Overdose Awareness Month/Recovery Month, anyone and everyone is welcome to join!

- **8/26, 5pm-8pm** "Not One More" Veteran's Memorial Park, West Seneca
- **8/27, 3pm-7pm** "Scotty B Overdose Awareness Day" International Plaza, 828 North Clinton Avenue, Rochester, NY 14621
- **8/29, 10am-1pm** "8th Annual Color Run/Walk 4 Recovery 5K" 45 Maple St, Dansville, NY 14437
- **9/3, 9am** "Stomp out Stigma" New York State Fair
- **9/12, 9am-1pm** "Rise for Recovery" Canalside Buffalo
- **9/13, 9:30-12:30pm** "12th Annual ROCovery Run/Walk and X-Challenge!" Stewart Lodge @ Mendon Ponds Park, Mendon, NY
- **9/26, 12pm-4pm** "Smash out Stigma" MHA/NAMI Rochester, Village Gate, Rochester, NY

LONG ISLAND REGION: TEMI BRANCO, APRN, AGPCNP-BC

Temi Branco, APRN, AGPCNP-BC, is an Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner with extensive clinical experience caring for adults with complex medical conditions, including individuals affected by substance use disorders. She brings a strong passion for recovery-oriented, compassionate care and has worked across diverse clinical settings, supporting patients through both medical and behavioral health challenges. Temi is currently pursuing advanced training in psychiatric and mental health care while also completing her doctoral studies, reflecting her commitment to lifelong learning and professional growth. In her role with SPAN, she looks forward to supporting nurses through advocacy, peer support, and education, while helping to strengthen pathways to recovery and well-being. Temi can be reached through SPAN for collaboration, support, and outreach opportunities.



METROPOLITAN REGIONAL COORDINATOR HALIMA DORRIA RN, BSN

My background is in ICU nursing, but I have a goal to become a Psych NP with addictions focus!

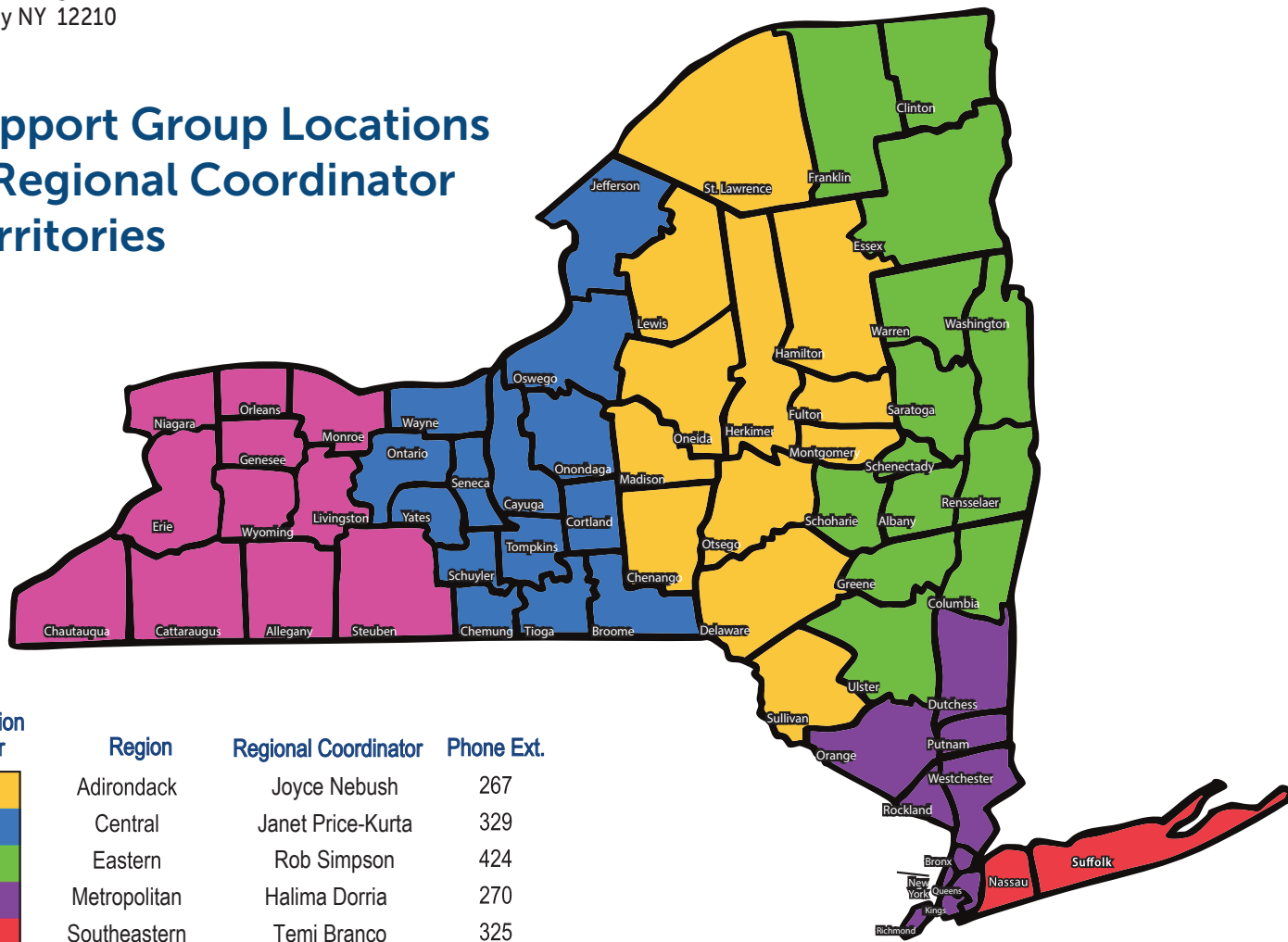
Nurses come to SPAN quite often in their scariest and most vulnerable times. It takes a lot of trust to ask for help as a nurse. I am advocating through SPAN for more compassion in the way we deal with the issue of substance use disorder, and I get really excited about the global impact we will make on this!





155 Washington Avenue, 4th Floor,
Albany NY 12210

Support Group Locations & Regional Coordinator Territories



Region color



Region	Regional Coordinator	Phone Ext.
Adirondack	Joyce Nebush	267
Central	Janet Price-Kurta	329
Eastern	Rob Simpson	424
Metropolitan	Halima Dorria	270
Southeastern	Temi Branco	325
Western	Amy Vitkus	355
Outreach Coordinator	Deborah Koivula	262

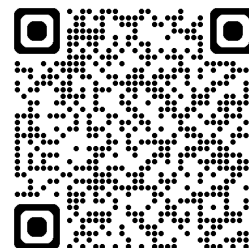
Updated 5/22/2026

212-785-0157 OR 800-724-6976



Want to try our SPAN support group?

SPAN offers confidential on-line or in-person support. Our groups are free and SPAN is open to any licensed nurse in New York State impacted by alcohol or substance use. Call or email to connect with your regional contact. We look forward to hearing from you!



During #RecoveryMonth2026, focus on your well-being. Sleep, healthy eating, exercise and connections are vital. For more tips: [samhsa.gov/find-support/how-to-cope](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-support/how-to-cope) #Wellness and reach out at [statewidepeerassistance.org](https://www.statewidepeerassistance.org)