

The Wellness Exchange



A Publication of
BUSINESS HEALTH SERVICESSM
Solutions for a Healthier WorkplaceSM

For more information call 1-800-765-3277 or visit www.bhsonline.com



Addiction and Recovery: How Your EAP Can Help

Important Facts

In 2006, 19.2 million workers said they had come to work at least once under the influence of alcohol

The amount of money saved by offering programs to treat substance abuse exceeds the cost by a 12 to 1 ratio

It only costs 1% more to provide comprehensive insurance vs. only covering a \$10,000 limit

September is National Addiction and Recovery Month. It is estimated that substance abuse and its subsequent treatment cost the nation \$276 billion every year. A large majority of that figure is the result of lost productivity in the workplace and increased healthcare spending on addiction recovery. It may be surprising to find out that 76% of alcohol and drug addicts are employed. Given that statistic, it only makes sense that employers feel a need to ensure their employees have access to cost effective treatment. That is where your employee assistance program (EAP) comes into play.

Increased Healthcare and Insurance Cost

- Employees with drug and alcohol problems incur insurance premiums that are double the average worker
- Employees who abuse drugs and alcohol are three times more likely to be involved in a workplace accident

Reduced Productivity

- Employees who use drugs, drink alcohol at work, or drink large amounts of alcohol away from the workplace are more likely to experience withdrawal symptoms in the workplace, spend time on non-work activities, take longer breaks, leave early, or sleep on the job
- Those employees who drink heavily once they get off work are more likely to be hungover, show up late, feel sick, perform poorly, and argue with co-workers

Increased Turnover

- Employees who have drug and alcohol problems normally report they have worked for several employers in a given year
- It is estimated that the cost of replacing one employee can cost between 25-200% of the employee's salary

How Employers can Promote Recovery

- Being flexible-provide allowances for treatment related activities
- Respect the confidentiality of employees in recovery
- Offer affordable and comprehensive insurance for substance abuse disorders
- Make sure EAP services provide education, screening and follow-up services

How the EAP Can Help

- Reduce Medical Cost
- Improve Job Performance
- Reduce Absenteeism
- Screen for risky alcohol and drug behaviors
- Provide education about drug and alcohol use
- Refer employees for appropriate treatment
- Provide support throughout the recovery process



Business Health Services is a free and confidential program provided by your employer for you and your household members. BHS can help resolve personal and professional problems. For additional information call BHS today.

www.samhsa.gov

1-800-765-3277



Mental Health vs. Mental Illness

Determining the difference between mental health and mental illness may not be as easy as once thought. In some cases, a person may hear voices or think they can become the President of the United States with no political experience. But what if you have a fear of flying or a fear of public speaking? What if you feel sad from time to time? Does this mean that you suffer from a mental illness? The answer may not be a simple yes or no. Some of these symptoms are normal reactions to stressful situations or events, as well as everyday life, and do not classify as a mental illness.

Mental Disorders

What makes the determination between mental health and mental illness so difficult is the lack of a simple test. Some believe that the cause of mental disorders is biological in nature; however, there is currently no proof for this theory. So how do clinicians and mental health professionals make this determination? They base their decisions on signs and symptoms and how they affect the daily lives of their patient's. Some of the things that mental health professionals explore are a patients behaviors, feelings and thoughts, as well as physical signs and symptoms.



Mental Illness

In order to help make their determination, mental health clinicians, evaluate your signs and symptoms, your own perceptions, and the perception of others.

Signs and Symptoms- Mental health professionals are trained to look at your signs and symptoms in comparison with a set of written guidelines describing the sign and symptoms of known mental disorders. When there are clear signs and symptoms diagnosis can be easy, but that is not always the case. In some instances, they may not be as clear and can make diagnosis difficult. Additionally, not everyone presents with the same symptoms and they can change over time.

Your Perception- One of the most important ways to determine if you are suffering from a mental illness is to look at how you view your thoughts and behaviors. What is normal for you, may not be normal for others. You may even realize that you are not completing everyday task or do not enjoy the things that used to make you happy.

Perception of Others- It may not be enough to explore your own perception, it may be necessary to look at the perception of those closest to you since they can provide an objective view. What we may perceive as normal may not be viewed that way by others the same way. They may see your behavior as strange or destructive to your well being.

Diagnosis

Once a mental health professional has evaluated your thoughts, feelings and actions they more than likely have all the information needed make an accurate diagnosis. At this point, most consult the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual published by the American Psychiatric Association. The manual classifies and describes over 300 different mental disorders. Since it is difficult to determine the difference between mental health and illness, you may be asking yourself why a diagnosis is even necessary. The main reason is for insurance purposes. Insurance companies use the codes in the manual

to determine coverage and benefits. It is also a way for them to make sure you are receiving the appropriate level of care.

The Role of the EAP

In today's world, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to balance work and family. The EAP is a resource to help with these issues. The EAP provides employees and their household members with access to free and confidential counseling. The goal is to address problems that are occurring in an employee's life or the actual workplace before they start affecting their home life and work performance. Since EAP services are normally short-term in nature the goal of the counselor is to assess the client's needs and provide them with the most appropriate recommendation. This can include continued EAP sessions or a referral for long-term therapy.

Common EAP Issues

Crisis Intervention

Family Issues

Stress and Anger Management

Emotional Well-being

Relationships

Substance Abuse

Grief and Loss

Work-related Problems

For more information please visit:
www.mayoclinic.com

Master's Level Clinicians are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call us today!

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