

2003 Edition

**EAPA STANDARDS
AND
PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES
FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

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EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

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EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of these *Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programs* is to:

- Define employee assistance programs and the EA profession;
- Promote the highest quality employee assistance programs;
- Provide the foundation for program accreditation and licensure;
- Describe the scope of EAP services;
- Educate the community regarding EAP services;
- Operationalize program standards, guidelines and definitions; and
- Serve the needs of the EAPA membership and other professionals.

This document identifies a coordinated set of policies, procedures, and activities. When designing its EAP, each organization applies these standards and professional guidelines based on its own unique mission, operation and culture.

B. ORGANIZATION

The *EAPA Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programs* are organized in the following format:

STANDARD:

The Standards are the fundamental elements for an effective employee assistance program. A comprehensive EAP will meet all the standards described in this document.

INTENT:

The Intent describes the role each standard plays in an effective EAP.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

Essential components must be present for an EAP to meet the standard.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:

Recommended Components are desirable in an EAP but are not necessary to meet the standard.

EXAMPLES:

Examples, when included, illustrate one or more specific applications of the standard or one of its essential or recommended components. Examples are not requirements, nor are they intended to represent a recommended approach to meeting a standard.

C. HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The Standards for Employee Alcoholism and/or Assistance Programs were originally drafted in 1981 by a joint committee representing these national groups:

- The Association of Labor/Management Administrators and Consultants on Alcoholism (ALMACA)
- The National Council on Alcoholism (NCA)
- The Occupational Program Consultants Association (OPCA)
- The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
- The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

In 1981, there were approximately 8,000 programs and 2,800 EAP professionals belonging to ALMACA. By 1991, ALMACA had become the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA), the number of individuals providing employee assistance services had increased substantially to an estimated 20,000, and the EAPA membership had grown to more than 7,000 professionals and 80 chapters.

In 1988, EAPA recognized the need for more detailed standards reflecting advancements in the EAP field. EAPA appointed a Program Standards Committee to develop revised program standards. The Committee began a five part development process.

Part One, *EAPA Standards for Employee Assistance Programs*, published in 1990, set forth specific program standards, each of which was accompanied by a statement of intent. These program standards identified the core ingredients of employee assistance programs. They were organized into six fundamental areas:

1. Design
2. Evaluation
3. Implementation
4. Management and Administration
5. Direct Services
6. Linkages

Part Two, *EAPA Standards for Employee Assistance Programs, Part II: Professional Guidelines*, originally published in 1992, incorporated the 1990 Standards and added essential and recommended components. EAPA recognized the variability among programs, organizations, and national structures. These guidelines focused on a U.S. service delivery model.

Part Three was the publication of the *EAPA Glossary of Terms* in 1994. Part Four, also published in 1994, was the development of the *EAPA Program Self Evaluation Tool*

Part Five was the 1996 publication of the *EAPA Guidelines for International EAPs*, developed by representatives of 14 countries. The work team for this project was representative of EAPA's worldwide membership and marked the first time that an international group had gathered to formulate employee assistance guidelines which are applicable in a variety of international cultures and settings.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

C *History and Background (continued)*

In 1996, the EAPA Standards Committee undertook a comprehensive review and revision of the standards and professional guidelines. The revision builds on the accumulated experience gathered since 1988 by the Committee and reflects important changes in the delivery of employee assistance services and health care and in the legal and regulatory requirements affecting the workplace.

D. CURRENT STANDARDS

This latest version of the *EAPA Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programs* begins with the legal definition of an employee assistance program as approved by the EAPA Board of Directors in April 1997. The standards, themselves, are organized into seven major sections:

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. Program Design | V. Drug Free Workplace/Substance Abuse Professional Direct Services |
| II. Management and Administration | VI. Strategic Partnerships |
| III. Confidentiality and Regulatory Impact on Protective Rights | VII. Evaluation |
| II. EAP Direct Services | |

It is important to note several word usage conventions that have been used throughout this document to make it more readable.

“*Organization*” refers to the organization (e.g. company, union, or other type of organization) whose employees or members are eligible for the EAP services. It does not refer to a vendor or provider organization.

“*Employee*” refers to those employees or members of an organization who are eligible for EAP services.

“*Leadership*” means supervisors, managers, executives, union representatives and officials, and others with leadership responsibilities within the organization.

This document reflects the combined efforts of many dedicated EA professionals. The members of the EAPA Standards Committee devoted hours of diligent effort to review the previous documents and draft significant new language. EAPA Chapters, individual members, and members of EAPA’s Board of Directors reviewed the drafts and made numerous valuable suggestions. Special acknowledgment goes to Tamara Cagney who, as chair of the Standards Committee from 1994 to 1996, initiated and led the revision effort so ably. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the dedicated staff support the Committee has received from Joni Reed Cooley, Kimberly Willis, and other members of the EAPA staff.

Bernard Beidel, CEAP
Co-Chair
EAPA Standards Committee

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Co-Chair
EAPA Standards Committee

DEFINITIONS OF AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) and EAP CORE TECHNOLOGY

"Employee Assistance Program" or "EAP" is a worksite-based program designed to assist: (1) work organizations in addressing productivity issues, and (2) "employee clients" in identifying and resolving personal concerns, including, but not limited to, health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal issues that may affect job performance.

"Employee Assistance Program core technology" or "EAP core technology" represents the essential components of the employee assistance (EA) profession. These components combine to create a unique approach to addressing work-organization productivity issues and "employee client" personal concerns affecting job performance and ability to perform on the job. EAP core technology is:

- (1) Consultation with, training of, and assistance to work organization leadership (managers, supervisors, and union stewards) seeking to manage the troubled employee, enhance the work environment, and improve employee job performance; and, outreach to and education of employees and their family members about availability of EAP services;
- (2) Confidential and timely problem identification/assessment services for employee clients with personal concerns that may affect job performance;
- (3) Use of constructive confrontation, motivation, and short-term intervention with employee clients to address problems that affect job performance;
- (4) Referral of employee clients for diagnosis, treatment, and assistance, plus case monitoring and follow-up services;
- (5) Consultation to work organization in establishing and maintaining effective relations with treatment and other service providers, and in managing provider contracts;
- (6) Consultation to work organization to encourage availability of and employee access to health benefits covering medical and behavioral problems, including, but not limited to, alcoholism, drug abuse, and mental and emotional disorders; and
- (7) Identification of the effects of EAP services on the work organization and individual job performance.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES

I. PROGRAM DESIGN

A. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STANDARD:

Program design shall be based on an assessment of organization and employee needs.

INTENT:

The assessment is intended to help determine the most appropriate methods and models of providing EAP services given the unique characteristics of the organization's structure and culture.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. Program design must take into account organization issues, including:
 - a. Type of organization
 - b. Types of jobs/work products
 - c. Organizational mission
 - d. Size and demographic makeup of workforce, including racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity
 - e. Number and dispersion of work sites
 - f. Collective bargaining agreements
2. Program design must take into account the needs of the organization's employees.
3. Program design must take into account the needs and goals of the organization's leadership.
4. Program design must take into account laws and regulations that impact the organization and/or its employees.
5. Program design must be consistent with other policies of the organization which, in some cases, may require modification.
6. The assessment process must be continuous so that program design evolves to meet changing needs.

B. ADVISORY FUNCTION

STANDARD:

There shall be an advisory process within the organization which provides for the involvement of representatives of all key segments of the workforce.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

B. ADVISORY FUNCTION (continued)

INTENT:

The advisory process is intended to assure program acceptance and support throughout the organization.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The advisory process must include representation from:
 - a. The organization's leadership
 - b. Line employees
 - c. Key departments or other segments of the organization
 - d. Union leadership in companies with labor unions
2. The advisory process must reflect the gender, ethnic and cultural diversity of the employee population.
3. Those who participate in the advisory process must be educated in the scope, purpose and operation of the EAP so that they are able to communicate this information effectively to others in the organization. There must be a mechanism to ensure that this happens.
4. The advisory process must provide advice and suggestions regarding:
 - a. EAP goals and objectives, design, development, implementation, planning, operations and evaluation
 - b. Utilization of EAP services
 - c. EAP confidentiality issues and limits of confidentiality
 - d. How to take into account the unique characteristics of the organization and its employees
5. The advisory process must advocate for the allocation of sufficient resources to enable the EAP to meet its goals and objectives.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENT

1. Where it is not inconsistent with the organization's culture, the advisory process should be accomplished by a formally identified advisory committee.

C. SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

STANDARD:

Employee assistance program services shall be provided through a distinct, identifiable delivery system.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

C. SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS *(continued)*

INTENT:

An EAP delivery system that is distinct from other organizational processes and functions, such as the department of human resources, helps to assure that EAP service delivery does not occur through inappropriate organizational channels.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The service delivery system must reflect the unique needs of the organization and its employees.

EXAMPLES:

- A large corporation uses an internal service delivery system where EAP services are provided by EA professionals employed by the organization

- A large multi-site corporation uses an internal service delivery system at its headquarters but contracts with local EA providers at each of its other locations

- A medium-sized corporation contracts with an EAP firm to provide services

- A union provides EA services for its members who work for various employers

- A unionized employer uses a combination of a company-based and union-based service delivery system, as negotiated in the collective bargaining agreement

- Several small organizations form a consortium to contract for EA services from an EAP firm

- A medium-sized company contracts with a qualified provider to deliver both EA services and managed behavioral health care services which are integrated into a seamless service delivery system

2. The service delivery system must facilitate equal access to services by all segments of the organization.

3. The service delivery system must be designed to complement and eliminate duplication of services with related programs such as managed behavioral health care.

4. The service delivery system must be allocated sufficient resources to allow the EAP to meet its goals and objectives and the essential components of the EAPA program standards.

5. The EAP service delivery system must be designed with an understanding of the regulatory and legislative implications it has for the organization.

EXAMPLES:

- A program that provides short-term problem resolution is likely to be defined as an ERISA program (Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974).

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

C. SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS *(continued)*

- A program, whether providing services within a single state or multiple states, reviews, considers and adheres to all relevant state laws and regulatory practices regarding the delivery of employee assistance services and the operation and/or licensing of the program.
6. Organizations using external service delivery systems must identify an organization representative as liaison to the external provider.
 - a. The EAP liaison function should be an explicitly defined element of this person's position description.
 - b. The EAP liaison monitors EAP performance, including but not limited to, reviewing utilization data, identifying EAP-related training and education needs within the organization and encouraging supervisors and managers to utilize EAP services to assist in the management of troubled employees.

D. ADDITIONAL SERVICES

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall remain alert for emerging needs and may add new services when they are consistent with and complementary to the employee assistance program (EAP) core technology.

INTENT:

EA professionals and programs are most useful to organizations and their employees when they are proactive in identifying and responding to emerging needs. Services to meet these needs may be incorporated into the EAP as long as they do not reduce the effectiveness or perceived neutrality of the EA professional and program. The EA professional may assist in the design and location of services for which a need has been identified but which are better housed outside of the EAP.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENT:

1. When considering the addition of any new services, the EAP must first determine that the new services are consistent with and will not damage the core EAP functions, goals, and objectives.

EXAMPLES:

- Before adding the Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) role to an existing EAP, the EAP advisory committee, EAP staff and organization leadership analyze and attempt to predict the impact that the new role will have on both supervisory and self referrals, employee perception of the EA professional and/or program, and the resources of the EAP. If there are no predicted negative effects, the new role is added. If the new role might damage the perception of the EAP as a safe place to seek help, the EA professional can arrange for the SAP role to be performed by someone who is not part of the EAP.
- After careful analysis, an EAP *adds* child and elder care information and referral services, *supports* the organization's disability management efforts, and *advises* on safety related issues.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

E. ORGANIZATION EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICY STATEMENT

STANDARD:

The organization shall adopt a written employee assistance program policy which defines the employee assistance program's relationship to the organization, describes the program as a confidential resource, and states the scope and limitations of the program's services.

INTENT:

The intent of a written policy statement is to assure understanding of the EAP and consistency of its application throughout the organization, and to provide a clear definition of its role and function. The policy statement should not be confused with operating procedures or contractual agreements. Because operating procedures may need to be adjusted in response to emerging needs, they should not be incorporated into a policy document that may be difficult to modify.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. Program implementation must be preceded by the development of a policy statement clearly communicating the organization's rationale for instituting an EAP, the protections inherent in the EAP, and the areas of EAP operations. The policy statement must include at least the following concepts:
 - a. The organization recognizes that mentally and physically healthy employees are an organizational asset and that the availability of appropriate EAP services is beneficial to both labor and management.
 - b. Alcohol and other drug abuse, emotional, marital, family and other related problems may affect job performance, health, and quality of life. Such problems are the legitimate concern of the organization when they impact performance, productivity, or safety.
 - c. Employees may voluntarily seek EAP assistance, or they may be referred to the EAP through constructive confrontation. Job security will not be jeopardized as a consequence of seeking or using EAP services, except where mandated by law. However, employees who use an EAP are expected to adhere to the job performance requirements of the organization.
 - d. All EAP client records will be kept confidential and will not be made part of any other record of the organization, including employee human resource files. Legal and policy-based limits of confidentiality must be clearly delineated.
2. The policy must delineate the EAP related roles, responsibilities and rights of the organization, its leadership, and its employees.
3. The EAP policy must be consistent with any other pertinent organization policies, such as those addressing disciplinary actions, Workers Compensation and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

F. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

STANDARD:

An implementation plan shall outline the actions needed to establish a fully functioning employee assistance program and set forth a time line for their completion.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

F. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (continued)

INTENT:

An implementation plan is needed to assure that all of the essential components outlined in the Standards and Professional Guidelines are addressed and to articulate the responsibilities of the organization and the EAP. It should include realistic objectives and criteria for ongoing evaluation and, if necessary, program modification. Successful implementation encourages “ownership” by all sectors of the workforce. Special provisions may be needed for program implementation in work sites geographically distant from the organization’s headquarters.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The implementation plan must define the responsibilities of all parties in the implementation process.
2. The implementation plan must address all of the essential components outlined in the Standards and Professional Guidelines.

II. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

A. EAP ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

STANDARD:

Written procedures for employee assistance program administration and operation shall be developed based on organization needs, program objectives, and the organization’s employee assistance program policy statement.

INTENT:

Clearly defined written procedures help assure consistent and effective delivery of services.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP procedures must describe all important program processes, such as:
 - a. The access routes to obtain EAP services
 - b. The problem identification/assessment, referral, and short-term problem resolution processes
 - c. EAP participation in treatment planning, liaison with treatment providers, termination of care, follow-up, monitoring, and reports of non-compliance
 - d. EAP participation in the disciplinary process, if any, and procedures for supervisory referrals
2. The EAP procedures must include position descriptions which clarify roles, define responsibilities and tasks to be performed and summarize the qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge required.
3. Procedures must clearly delineate the scope of work for administrative and operating duties, including both qualitative and quantitative aspects (what, when, why, and how, activities are performed as well as how much of each activity is expected.)

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

A. EAP ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING PROCEDURES (continued)

4. Procedures must be regularly reviewed and updated.

EXAMPLES:

- An organization's EAP procedure requires that, at every step of the disciplinary process, a supervisor informs the employee of the EAP, provides the EAP's phone number, and documents that this discussion occurred.
- An organization's EAP procedures delineate the role and interaction of the EAP in all drug-testing programs.
- An organization's EAP procedures define the respective responsibilities and relationship between the EAP and any managed care functions.

B. STAFFING LEVELS

STANDARD:

An adequate number of employee assistance professionals shall be available to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the employee assistance program.

INTENT:

EAP staffing patterns, and the number of professionals, vary according to the type of program and the scope of services provided. Whether the EAP is internal or delivered by external contractors, the number and qualifications of EAP professionals should match program needs.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The following factors must be considered when determining the necessary staffing level for an EAP:
 - a. Size and distribution of the workforce
 - b. Diversity of the employee population
 - c. Benefits type and structure
 - d. Scope and design of the EAP
 - e. Unique events, such as catastrophes, major downsizing, plant closings, etc., which temporarily impact the organization

C. STAFF AND AFFILIATE CRITERIA

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall retain professionals qualified to perform their duties.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

C. STAFF AND AFFILIATE CRITERIA (continued)

INTENT:

Professional competence is critical to program success. Depending upon the specific services provided, various levels of experience, education, certification, credentialing and licensure may be required. Individual EA professionals are responsible for knowing and recognizing the limitations of their competence and making certain that all work is performed within those limitations. Those individuals who are called upon to provide services for which they are not yet fully trained and experienced should be supervised by a person who is qualified in those areas.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. All individuals, including affiliates, who provide EAP services, must have training in and understanding of EAP practice, alcohol and other drug problems, mental health issues, human resource and labor relations issues, and organizational dynamics.
2. The immediate supervisor of every EA professional must conduct a periodic performance evaluation based upon established individual and program goals and objectives.
3. The EAP must establish referral procedures and return to work guidelines for impaired EA professionals.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP Director confronts an EA professional on documented job problems, takes appropriate job action, and refers the professional to an outside EAP for problem identification/assessment and referral.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:

1. At least one individual within the EAP should be a Certified Employee Assistance Professional (CEAP®).
2. All other individuals, including affiliates, who are providing EA services and are not currently CEAPs, should demonstrate progress toward such qualification.

D. AFFILIATE MANAGEMENT

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall assure that all affiliates understand and accept the policies, procedures and responsibilities associated with their role in the employee assistance program.

INTENT:

Affiliate providers often do not identify themselves as employee assistance professionals, but rather as therapists. They may be trained to perform only a portion of EAP services. Affiliates should be utilized only in roles for which they are qualified.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must assure that all affiliates understand and accept the policies, procedures, and responsibilities associated with their role in the EAP.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

E. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CONSULTATION AND CASE SUPERVISION

STANDARD:

Every employee assistance professional who provides client services shall receive consultation and/or case supervision.

INTENT:

Whether providing problem identification/assessment, motivational interviewing, short-term problem resolution, or any other client service, EA professionals exert a potentially profound effect on their clients. Consultation and supervision help protect the client's interests, assure the quality of client services, and improve the EA professional's skills. Consultation and supervision also help to reduce isolation.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. Consultation must be provided on a regularly scheduled basis by a person or group who is familiar with the parameters of the EAP.

EXAMPLE:

- Several EA professionals agree to meet monthly to discuss case management.
- An EAP brings in a contract clinician familiar with the EAP to provide weekly group clinical supervision for the staff.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:

1. Consultation should be provided at least monthly by a CEAP in accordance with the needs of the EAP staff or affiliates.
2. Individuals with administrative EAP responsibilities should have access to consultation, whenever possible.

EXAMPLE:

- An external EAP hosts quarterly meetings for internal EAP contacts from different companies.
3. Access to legal counsel should be available to the EAP.

F. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall support employee assistance professionals' efforts to maintain and upgrade their knowledge.

INTENT:

Participation in EAPA enhances the knowledge and skills of EA professionals and helps assure that they are aware of new developments in EAP service delivery, evolving health care delivery systems, and human resource and performance management techniques. Participation also provides EA professionals with support and collegiality, which contributes to the prevention of professional burnout.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

F. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (continued)

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must encourage all EA professionals to belong to and participate actively in EAPA and other EAP-related organizations.
2. The EAP must encourage EA professionals to attend EAP-related professional conferences and training programs.
3. The EAP must encourage EA professionals to maintain contact and interaction with other EA professionals.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP should encourage EA professionals to become involved in professional organizations for personnel working in the following disciplines: human resources, risk management, training and organizational development, benefits, and occupational health and safety.

EXAMPLES:

- An EA professional routinely reads publications of the American Personnel and Management Association (APMA), the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).
- An EA professional hosts a human resource manager at an EAPA chapter meeting; the human resource manager hosts the EA professional at a SHRM meeting.

G. RECORD KEEPING

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall create and maintain client records that are consistent with the employee assistance program service delivery system, organization policies, program procedures, and applicable legal requirements.

INTENT:

EAP case records facilitate problem identification, action planning, service consistency, continuity of care, and program evaluation.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must maintain retrievable documentation of all direct services and recommendations.
2. EAP records must be maintained in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
3. EAP records must be maintained for the minimum period of time required by law or organization policy.
4. The storage, transfer and destruction of records must be handled in a manner to assure confidentiality.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

F. RECORD KEEPING (continued)

5. Every effort must be made by the EAP to prevent the involvement of EAP records in arbitration, litigation, or any other dispute
6. EAP records must be kept in a secure location and be available only to authorized EAP personnel. Files or file rooms must be locked and computerized records must be maintained in a secure environment.

EXAMPLES:

- Paper client files are kept in a locked file cabinet in the EAP offices.
 - Computerized client files are protected by being stored on a non-networked computer with limited password access.
7. The EAP must make every effort to assure the confidentiality of information sent by mail, fax, modem, E-mail, or other electronic communication technology. A limit of disclosure statement must be included in all transmissions.

EXAMPLE:

- “Documents accompanying this transmission contain confidential and legally privileged information belonging to the sender. The information is intended for the use of the individual or entity named above. If you have received this in error and are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking of any action in reliance on the contents is strictly prohibited. Please notify our office immediately of any transmission error.”
8. Ownership of EAP records must be clearly delineated through policy or contract language.
 9. The content of EAP records must be consistent with the scope of the service delivery system.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP should conduct periodic chart audits to review EAP records for adequate documentation of service delivery and outcome.

H. RISK MANAGEMENT

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall take all reasonable precautions to limit their risk for exposure to liability.

INTENT:

An EAP is best able to accomplish its goals when it adheres to professional standards and operates in such a way that its exposure to liability is limited.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. All EAPs and EA professionals must have adequate professional and other appropriate liability coverage.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

H. RISK MANAGEMENT (continued)

2. The EAP must establish procedures necessary to respond to legal challenges.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP manager consults with counsel before responding to a subpoena of client records.
3. The EAP must comply with government regulations, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Workers Compensation laws, and Equal Employment Opportunity regulations.
 4. All EA personnel must operate within the scope of their training and/or licensure or certification.
 5. The EAP must operate in accordance with these Standards and Professional Guidelines.
 6. EAP documents such as release of information forms, statements of understanding, and permission for treatment must be standardized and consistently used.

I. ETHICS

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall require that all employee assistance personnel adhere to the *EAPA Code of Ethics*.

INTENT:

Adherence to the EAPA Code of Ethics helps assure that programs and professionals are responsible for the consequences of their actions and act in a professional manner, thereby protecting the consumer, the community and the profession.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must assure that all program personnel have read, understood, and agreed to adhere to the EAPA Code of Ethics.
2. The EAP must assure that all program personnel who are CEAPs have read, understood, and agreed to adhere to the EACC Code of Professional Conduct.

NOTE: The EAPA Code of Ethics and the EACC Code of Professional Conduct are provided in the appendix to these Standards.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY AND REGULATORY IMPACT ON PROTECTIVE RIGHTS

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall prepare and implement a written policy of confidentiality that reflects professional standards and ethics and clearly elucidates all limits of confidentiality.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

III. CONFIDENTIALITY AND REGULATORY IMPACT ON PROTECTIVE RIGHTS (continued)

INTENT:

Program success and credibility hinge on employee confidence that the EAP respects their privacy and will protect the information that they disclose.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must maintain the confidentiality of clients and fully disclose conditions that limit confidentiality such as company policies, statutes, regulations, or court orders.

EXAMPLES:

- When designing an EAP, the EAP and the organization's leadership determine the implications for confidentiality of:
 - a) State mandated reporting
 - b) Labor agreements
 - c) Danger to others
 - d) Company policies
 - e) Drug testing regulations
 - f) Applicability of regulations (e.g., federal regulation, 42CFR does not apply to EAPs who are not directly federally funded)
 - An EAP reports utilization trends to the organization using aggregate data that does not identify individuals.
 - The EAP policy limits the release of information following an employee claim, such as Workers Compensation or ADA, unless the employee requests the release in writing.
 - An EA professional who is serving as a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) clearly explains the differences in confidentiality as they apply to each role.
2. The EAP must explain EAP confidentiality to employees and organization leadership during EAP promotional activities and through written materials.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP routinely distributes the EAPA publication "What Every Employee Needs to Know about Confidentiality" to employees who use the EAP.
3. The EAP must request that all clients who are seen in person by the EAP read and sign a "statement of understanding" that describes limits to confidentiality. Clients whose only contact with the EAP is by phone must be told of the limits of confidentiality and this must be documented in the client's EAP record.
 4. The EAP must inform clients when their confidentiality or other protective rights are impacted by statute or regulations or organization policy.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

III. CONFIDENTIALITY AND REGULATORY IMPACT ON PROTECTIVE RIGHTS (continued)

EXAMPLE:

- An EA professional operating as a Substance Abuse Professional informs an employee who has tested positive for Department of Transportation prohibited drugs, that she may not be covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act and is not eligible for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act.
5. The EAP must clearly state in policy and procedure what, if any, information organization leadership will receive from the EAP following a referral to the EAP based upon declining job performance.
 6. The actual EAP offices must be located and designed so as to protect client privacy.
 7. The EAP must regularly instruct all personnel, including affiliates, in techniques for protecting confidential information.
 8. The EAP must operate in conformance with statues and regulations pertaining to the protection of personal information and EAP confidentiality.
 9. Information obtained through the EAP's consultative role in the organization, such as supervisory or critical incident stress debriefing consultation, must be guarded and shared only on a limited and clearly defined "need to know" basis.
 10. The organization's proprietary information must be guarded and treated with professional discretion and integrity.
 11. The EAP must consult with organizations to avoid, whenever possible, situations where EAP communications, even if released with proper authorization, may be inappropriate and/or detrimental to the EAP client or program.

EXAMPLES:

- An organization seeks to determine from the EAP, with employee authorization, whether an employee is eligible for protection under the Americans with Disability Act for a mental disability. The EA professional encourages the organization to seek information from the employee or through an independent evaluation.
- An organization asks the EA professional to testify in an arbitration or legal proceeding. The EA professional discusses the potential impact of such testimony on employee perception of EAP protection and neutrality.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DIRECT SERVICES

NOTE: Employee assistance programs deliver direct services to three target groups:

- a) *Employees and eligible family members*
- b) *Organization leadership*
- c) *The organization as a whole*

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

A. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION/ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall identify and/or assess problems of the client, develop an appropriate plan of action, and when necessary, recommend or refer the client to an appropriate resource for problem resolution.

INTENT:

The intent is to match the individual and the identified problem to the appropriate type and level of care. Problem identification and /or assessment and appropriate referral results in problem resolution, improved job performance and increased employee well-being.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must utilize problem identification and/or assessments to identify, document and evaluate the client's strengths, weaknesses, problems and needs and to develop an appropriate action plan. Basic elements of an assessment include:
 - a. Client statement of presenting problems
 - b. Level of risk to self and others
 - c. Any precipitating events
 - d. Impact on job performance
 - e. Past history of the issue
 - f. Alcohol and drug use/abuse history
 - g. Mental status
 - h. Corroborating data
 - i. Relevant family history
 - j. Initial impression
2. The EAP must determine referral recommendations and selection of resources based on the unique needs of the client as revealed in the problem identification/assessment process and on the availability of and access to treatment.

EXAMPLE:

- An EA professional in a program offering a maximum of five sessions determines in the first session that the client requires treatment at a level beyond the scope of the EAP. The appropriate treatment referral is made at that time.
3. The EAP must develop and keep current a listing of available referral resources.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP maintains a list of clinicians and treatment programs that accept insurance reimbursements as well as a listing of low fee community based resources that are available to seasonal and temporary workers.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

A. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION/ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL (continued)

4. The EAP must act as a client advocate to assure access to the appropriate type and level care.

EXAMPLE:

- An external EA professional contacts a primary care physician to alert her to an emergency situation.

5. The EAP must utilize outside expertise, when needed, to assist with assessments and referrals.

EXAMPLE:

- A union peer counselor refers a worker's son to a licensed psychologist for specialized testing and evaluation of a suspected learning disability.

B. CRISIS INTERVENTION

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall offer responsive crisis intervention services to employees, eligible family members, and the organization.

INTENT:

The EAP must be prepared to respond to emergencies and urgent situations in a timely fashion to ameliorate or minimize the impact of the crisis on the organization and employees.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must establish procedures for 24-hour availability of crisis intervention services and response by qualified professionals.

EXAMPLE:

- The EAP has a 24-hour a day, 7 day a week answering system with an on-call professional available at all times.

2. The EAP must provide for the availability of critical incident response services to the organization and its employees.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP conducts an on-site critical incident debriefing following a fatal worksite accident.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

1. The EAP should consult with and train organization leadership in advance regarding how to handle crisis situations in the workplace.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

C. SHORT-TERM PROBLEM RESOLUTION

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall establish procedures to determine when to provide short-term problem resolution services, and when to make a referral to professional and/or community resources.

INTENT:

The consistency of EAP services is enhanced when procedures are in place to discriminate between those problems which may respond to short-term problem resolution and those which require referral to an outside resource.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. Based upon the parameters of the EAP service delivery system, organization policy, and the qualifications of EAP personnel, the EAP must develop a protocol to distinguish between cases that are appropriate for short-term problem resolution and cases that should be referred to outside resources.
2. The EAP must require EA professionals to develop a written individualized plan of action that establishes mutually agreed upon goals and time frames whenever short-term problem resolution services are provided.

EXAMPLES:

- A supervisor who is an adult child of an alcoholic has difficulty handling conflict among his work group. The EA professional meets with the supervisor for several sessions to provide management coaching.
 - An employee who is having difficulty with child rearing issues receives support and education during several sessions with a peer counselor.
3. When the EA professional determines that referral is appropriate, he or she must provide motivational counseling and support to encourage the client's acceptance and follow through with referral recommendations.

EXAMPLE:

- An employee describes a long history of participation in dysfunctional family systems. The EAP protocol suggests that short-term problem resolution will not be appropriate. The employee is referred to an outside clinician.

D. MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall establish procedures to assure appropriate follow-up and/or monitoring of client progress.

INTENT:

The EAP is in a unique position to monitor and review the progress of referrals and adherence to quality assurance standards. Providing follow-up services demonstrates a commitment to the well-being of EAP clients and the organization.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

D. MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP SERVICES (continued)

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. For clients referred to treatment resources, the EAP must maintain regular contact with the client and resource during the treatment period to support the goals and objectives of the treatment plan.

EXAMPLES:

- An EA professional attends a case conference at a treatment facility after the initial phase of treatment to participate in discharge planning.
 - An EA professional calls a client to discuss her progress and satisfaction with the treatment to date.
 - An EA professional conducts “back to work” meetings with each employee who has missed work due to residential treatment.
2. When a client is referred to the EAP based upon declining job performance, the EAP must maintain a continuing dialogue with the referring party throughout the EAP service delivery process, subject to confidentiality constraints.

EXAMPLES:

- An EA professional contacts an employee’s union representative to discuss support of the employee upon his return from treatment.
 - The EAP establishes a policy to follow up with referring supervisors to obtain feedback on current performance, six months after each job performance-based referral.
3. The EAP must establish parameters for case management and follow-up of EAP clients
 4. The EAP must document all monitoring and follow-up activities in client’s EAP records.

E. TRAINING OF ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall provide training for organization leadership to communicate program purpose and procedures and to explain their role in the program.

INTENT:

The intent of training is to provide role clarification and skill in early problem recognition, timely intervention, and appropriate referral to the EAP.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must provide ongoing training of organization leadership which includes:
 - a. Understanding the EAP: The impact of employee problems on job performance; the management of troubled employees.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

E. TRAINING OF ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP (continued)

- b. Consultation: The recognition of an employee's need for assistance; methods of referral to the EAP; barriers to confrontation and referral.
 - c. Program Operation: The relationship of EAP to personnel actions; confidentiality; reintegration of the employee into the workplace; relationship of EAP to regulatory requirements.
2. The EAP must conduct evaluations of and document training sessions.

F. CONSULTATION WITH ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall provide individual consultation to organization leadership regarding the management and referral to the program of employees with job performance or behavioral/medical problems.

INTENT:

The intent of such consultation is to assure that the EAP provides support and policy-based advice to organization leadership charged with monitoring job performance and taking appropriate action in dealing with problem employees.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must encourage organization leadership to consult with the EAP regarding troubled employees.
2. The EAP must provide coaching for organization leadership on how to approach troubled employees; the use of fair, consistent intervention strategies; the use of other appropriate organization resources, documentation requirements; and the implications of labor contracts.
3. The EAP must encourage the organization's leadership to support employees throughout the EAP service delivery process.

EXAMPLE:

- An EA professional consults with a supervisor who is concerned about coworkers' reaction to an employee's scheduled return to work following treatment.

G. ORGANIZATIONAL CONSULTATION

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall provide consultation to the organization regarding issues, policies, practices and events that may impact employee well-being.

INTENT:

The intent of this standard is to ensure that the EAP functions as an integral part of the organization and adds its unique contributions to the realization of the organization's mission and goals.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

G. ORGANIZATIONAL CONSULTATION (continued)

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must respond promptly to requests to address organizational issues and needs.

EXAMPLE:

- An organization requests that the EAP train supervisors on employees' potential emotional reactions to company downsizing and how to respond to them.

2. The EAP must, whenever possible, provide input and participate in planning regarding organization issues that may impact employee well-being.

EXAMPLE:

- The EAP assists the organization in developing policies to respond to potential violence in the workplace.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP should take a proactive approach to minimize the impact on the organization and its employees of changes and events such as relocation, downsizing, changes in benefits, or reorganization.

H. PROGRAM PROMOTION AND EDUCATION

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall coordinate the development, availability and use of promotional materials and activities which encourage the use of the program by employees, eligible family members and organization leadership.

INTENT:

EAP services need to be highly visible and presented in a positive light to encourage early intervention and prevention. Employee education is an essential part of program promotion and should emphasize primary prevention and self-care.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must promote program services through a variety of methods, such as employee orientation programs, organization bulletin boards, web pages, literature on prevention and self-care, newsletters, and meetings with employee work groups.

EXAMPLES:

- An EAP designs an insert for pay envelopes each quarter explaining the services and inviting employees to contact EAP.
- An EAP conducts seminars for the employees on the types of occupational stressors common to some work environments.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

V. DRUG FREE WORKPLACE/SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROFESSIONAL (SAP) DIRECT SERVICES

A. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall assist the organization in the development and implementation of policies, procedures, programs and services that advocate and support a drug-free workplace.

INTENT:

This standard is intended to emphasize the critical role EAP services play in supporting an organization's commitment to a safe, healthy, productive and drug-free workplace, even when not mandated by law or regulation.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must assure that all EA professionals are knowledgeable of the regulatory and non-regulatory issues surrounding alcohol and drug use and abuse in the workplace and familiar with the appropriate community resources for dealing with such issues.
2. The EAP must provide consultation and education to the organization and its leadership concerning the need for and the development of policies, procedures, programs and services which address the regulatory and non-regulatory issues surrounding alcohol and drug use and abuse in the workplace.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP, in cooperation with human resources, legal, safety, medical, the union, and other appropriate parties, develops policies and procedures that set forth organization rules, regulations and sanctions concerning alcohol and drug use in the workplace. As a regulated organization, the policies, procedures and services are in compliance with the appropriate statutes and corresponding regulations.
3. The EAP must advocate for and assure that education and training is provided to the organization's leadership and employees concerning the issues involving alcohol and drug use and abuse in the workplace and their impact on performance and safety.

B. SAP DIRECT SERVICES

STANDARD:

Employee assistance professionals who perform the role of Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) shall be knowledgeable about and comply with the Department of Transportation (DOT) drug testing regulations of the specific governing agency under which they provide Substance Abuse Professional services.

INTENT:

For those EA professionals who perform the SAP role, this standard is intended to provide guidelines to support the delivery of appropriate and quality services in this distinct service area.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

B. SAP DIRECT SERVICES (continued)

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must establish procedures to assure that EA professionals who also perform SAP functions understand and adhere to all SAP responsibilities and activities as detailed in the DOT regulations and related implementation guidelines and procedures.
2. The EAP, which performs SAP functions, must educate the organization leadership and designated sensitive employees about the DOT regulations and procedures.
3. The EAP must clearly identify to organization leadership and employees the differences between the SAP and traditional EAP roles.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP educates employees on the differences between the SAP and EAP roles regarding confidentiality, record keeping, and reporting requirements.
4. The EAP must assist the organization in assuring that EAP and SAP policies and procedures are coordinated with each other and with other organization policies and procedures.

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS:

1. When the SAP assessment and case follow-up activities are performed by different SAPs, they should consult with each other to assure continuity of services.

VI. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

A. INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall be positioned at an organizational level where it can most effectively communicate and have influence with the executive level of the organization.

INTENT:

The EAP is most useful to the organization when it is fully integrated with internal organizational activities. Close involvement and collaboration with the executive level of the organization improves EAP visibility and increases its ability to have an impact. Partnerships within the organization maximize program effectiveness and decrease potential liabilities. Adaptations may be necessary in response to changes in organizational dynamics.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must establish working relationships with a variety of organization departments and functions, such as:
 - a. Executive senior management
 - b. Human resources

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

A. *INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)*

- c. Union
 - d. Security
 - e. Risk management
 - f. Legal
 - g. Benefits
 - h. Training
 - i. Safety
 - j. Organizational development
 - k. Equal employment opportunity
 - l. Employee relations
 - m. Medical
2. The EAP must promote itself as a resource to other organization functions and encourage appropriate utilization.

EXAMPLES:

- A Human Resources manager frequently initiates calls to the EAP to consult about problem employees and difficult supervisor situations.
- A benefits staff understands the role of the EAP and invites EAP participation in decisions involving mental health/substance abuse benefits and managed care considerations.

3. The EAP must assure that all EA personnel understand or have access to the mission, relevant policies, environment, and culture of the organization.

EXAMPLES:

- An EAP is aware of the EEO resources within an organization and refers an employee for internal problem resolution.
- An EAP is familiar with an organization's sick leave and disability policies and refers an employee to the appropriate department for assistance.
- An EAP is familiar with the essential provisions of an organization's labor contracts and the union representatives' responsibilities to members. The EAP refers a union member to her union representative for support.

4. The EAP must establish appropriate boundaries within the organization to protect EAP neutrality, define the EAP role, and facilitate teamwork.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

A. INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP clarifies its relationship with the organization physician regarding confidentiality, consultation responsibilities and authority for case management.
5. The EAP must promote case finding activities throughout the organization to encourage appropriate and early referral to the EAP.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP consults with the Employee Relations Department in drafting a statement advocating referral to the EAP in conjunction with all written notices of administrative or disciplinary action. Referral to the EAP also is suggested routinely to employees in at least the following situations:
 - a. Employees on long term disability
 - b. Victims of sexual harassment
 - c. Employees who have been disciplined for harassment
 - d. Employees receiving an unsatisfactory job appraisal
 - e. Employees involved in critical incidents

B. INTEGRATED EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND MANAGED CARE SYSTEMS

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall collaborate with all managed behavioral health care (MBHC) systems which provide services to the organization to establish and define the relationship between the employee assistance program and the MBHC systems, and to delineate their respective roles and responsibilities.

INTENT:

The role difference between EAPs and managed care organizations (MCOs) must be clearly distinguished for the organization and the employees. The primary focus of the EAP in an integrated model is the relationship between the EAP and the workplace. The primary focus of the MCO in an integrated model is the relationship between the MCO and the treatment provider.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must strive to establish and maintain a constructive working relationship with all MBHC systems serving the organization to facilitate employees' ability to access needed treatment resources.
2. The EAP must assist the organization in defining the distinction between EAP roles and responsibilities and MBHC roles and responsibilities and must assist in communicating that information to employees and organization leadership

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

B. INTEGRATED EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND MANAGED CARE SYSTEMS (continued)

3. The EAP must consult with the organization regarding the planning, implementation and maintenance of MBHC benefits.
4. The EAP must serve as the primary resource for consultation to the MBHC systems and the organization on such issues as reintegration to the workplace following treatment, reasonable accommodation for behavioral health problems, and follow-up of job performance based referrals.
5. The EAP must maintain a working knowledge of the provider networks of all MCOs serving the organization and its employees.

C. EXTERNAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall identify, utilize and continually evaluate health care delivery systems and other community resources which provide quality assistance to employees, eligible family members and the organization.

INTENT:

Delivery of quality services responsive to the needs of the employees, eligible family members and the organization requires that the EAP develop and maintain relationships with managed care organizations, their primary care physicians who act as gatekeepers, and their approved specialty providers. The EAP also maintains a network of effective professional resources, health care providers and self-help groups. The EAP operates at its optimal level when it maintains constructive working relationships with these resources.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must consult with primary care physicians and other gatekeepers to assure timely and appropriate employee access to healthcare services.
2. The EAP must identify, evaluate, and select potential resources, using criteria such as:
 - a. Availability
 - b. Confidentiality
 - c. Willingness to coordinate with EAP
 - d. Services offered
 - e. Accessibility
 - f. Geographic location
 - g. Knowledge of work environments
 - h. Professional qualifications
 - i. Responsiveness
 - j. Cost and payment systems
 - k. Protection of client rights
 - l. Coverage under insurance or managed care plan

C. *EXTERNAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES (continued)*

EXAMPLES:

- An EA professional consults with her peer network and other reliable professional sources for references and recommendations regarding community resources.

 - An EAP disseminates a written questionnaire to potential resource providers based on comprehensive predetermined criteria.
3. The EAP must act as an advocate for employees in accessing needed treatment resources.
 4. The EAP must maintain direct contact with appropriate health care providers and community resources.

EXAMPLES:

- An EAP periodically visits area service providers to gather current information about facilities, types of services, staff or affiliates and provider quality assurance.
 - An EAP meets with private practitioners on either an individual or group basis to assess such factors as personal presentation and knowledge of specialty areas.
 - An EAP attends open meetings of self-help groups and visits community recovery centers and fellowships.
 - An EAP arranges for meetings with providers available to clients through managed care systems.
5. The EAP must develop mechanisms which facilitate ease in the matching of client needs and provider capabilities.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP implements an information system that provides comprehensive data on the special areas of need that service providers are capable of addressing such as ethnic issues, language, gender identity, codependency and sexual abuse.

D. EXTERNAL AGENCIES

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall maintain awareness of the activities of external bodies which may impact the employee assistance program. External bodies include regulatory agencies, legislatures, courts, advocacy groups, business groups and academic centers.

INTENT:

By keeping abreast of the implications of regulations, legislation, economic and business trends and other emerging issues, EA professionals can take a proactive stance when EAP activities and employee well-being may be affected.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must identify external bodies which may impact EAP activities.

EXAMPLE:

- An EA professional in an organization with safety sensitive positions (e.g., nuclear workers) identifies the regulatory agencies which have oversight responsibilities and familiarizes himself with their requirements.

2. The EAP must arrange for the effective collection of accurate information from relevant external bodies.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP professional establishes a means of being informed when court decisions or arbitrations change case law in areas such as: harassment, discrimination and accommodation of persons with disabilities.

3. The EAP must provide consultation to the organization regarding compliance with EAP related laws and regulations.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP provides consultation to an organization regarding Drug-Free Workplace requirements and Department of Transportation drug testing regulations.

VII EVALUATION

STANDARD:

The employee assistance program shall evaluate the appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficiency of its services and operations. Measurable objectives shall be stated for both program processes and outcomes.

INTENT:

Meaningful evaluation of an EAP depends on having measurable program objectives and data collection mechanisms. These should be developed early in a program's planning process. In addition to guiding the implementation and operations of the EAP, measurable objectives allow the organization to judge the program's progress and usefulness and to identify the need for program modifications. The procedures for achieving each objective should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the objectives are achievable. Data that measure program

VII EVALUATION (continued)

Effectiveness should be gathered routinely and analyzed to evaluate progress toward each objective.

A review of the daily operations of the program does not necessarily measure its total impact on the organization and the effectiveness with which it fulfills its mandate. Therefore, a well run EAP continually reassesses the needs of the organization with respect to specific EAP services.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:

1. The EAP must develop a written evaluation plan which includes at least the following:
 - a. A statement of the program's goals and objectives
 - b. Description of the evaluation methodologies that will be used to determine if the program has met its goals and objectives. Methods should generally be accepted, valid, and reliable.
 - c. Timetable and action plan for completing the evaluation at least annually.
2. The EAP must conduct the evaluation at least annually in accordance with the evaluation plan.
3. The EAP must review and update the evaluation plan at least every two years.
4. As part of the ongoing evaluation, the EAP must collect data on all program components and services.
5. The evaluation process must include mechanisms to obtain feedback about the program, its services, and organization and employee support for its goals and objectives.
6. The EAP must develop a mechanism to incorporate the results of all program evaluation efforts into a continuous improvement process.

EXAMPLE:

- An EAP produces and distributes a report of the results of the evaluation annually. The report includes:
 - a) A summary of the year's goals and objectives for the program
 - b) A description of the evaluation methods used during the year
 - c) Results of the evaluations
 - d) A follow-up plan of action based on the evaluation results, including specific steps to be taken to enhance program processes and outcomes

VII *EVALUATION (continued)*

RECOMMENDED COMPONENTS

1. The EAP should build in an evaluation component to measure the impact of the program on work and cost indicators, including:
 - a. Health care claims and costs
 - b. Absenteeism
 - c. Accidents and injuries
 - d. Workers' Compensation claims
 - e. Job performance

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

ADDENDUM

TOWARD THE STANDARDIZATION OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE MEASURES

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) field has existed for fifty years and has experienced significant change and maturation. The early focus was to identify, intervene with, and assist alcoholic employees. Early intervention, by observing, documenting and confronting individuals on the basis of job performance, became the most effective means of solving a very costly problem for employers. The "job performance/early intervention" paradigm has evolved into a service greatly demanded by employers and unions because it is a fair and neutral way to address a wide variety of human issues in the workplace.

Today, EAPs address not only alcohol and drug problems, but also emotional issues, depression, stress, relationships, marital difficulties, compulsive gambling, career issues, financial and legal concerns, child and elder care, health and wellness, critical incidents, violence, and many other contemporary problems. The vast majority of Fortune 500 companies and a growing number of small to medium sized employers have established EAPs.

As demand for services has grown, so too has the variety of service delivery models available. EAP services are provided by as many as 10,000 individuals who are employed by organizations such as community mental health centers, managed care companies, hospital corporations, labor unions, specialty EAP vendors, and Employee Assistance Professionals working directly for employers. Employee Assistance professionals are represented by membership organizations such as the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA - the largest, with over 7,000 members), the Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA) and the Occupational Program Consultants Association (OPCA). About 5,000 individuals have earned the designation Certified Employee Assistance Professional (CEAP) through EAPA. Program and provider accreditation processes have been undertaken by the Council on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), the Council on Accreditation (COA) and EASNA. States, such as Tennessee and North Carolina, have begun to explore and legislate licensure processes for EAP professionals and services. The profession has become highly sophisticated and has proven to provide a very positive impact on the productivity of employees, resulting in savings to employers and improved lifestyles for employees.

Employee Assistance Programs have assumed an important role in the North American workplace and EAP concepts are rapidly expanding throughout the world. Thus, it is amazing, that in this age of quality process improvement, there are no universal definitions for measuring significant aspects of EAP activity. At present, there is no standard definition of EAP utilization, yet employers see utilization as one of the most critical measurements in determining the effectiveness of the EAP services for which they are paying. External EAP vendors are selected and evaluated and internal EAP effectiveness is measured on the basis of program utilization, yet there is no standard definition by which the profession operates.

EAPA STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

It is hoped that through the work of this Committee and the support of both employers and vendors standard definitions for key terms can be accepted and used nationally and internationally.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

The traditional definition of EAP utilization is the number of new EAP cases opened during a given time period, usually 12 months, divided by the total number of employees eligible for EAP services. However, utilization measurement in the EAP field is inconsistent. Lacking standard definitions, each Employee Assistance Program itself must answer the following:

What constitutes a case? Are an employee and his family members counted as one case or several cases?

Is a case opened at the point of first telephone contact or at the point of receiving in-person service?

When is a case closed?

When is a case reopened?

If an EAP client comes three different times during the year for three different problems, is that one case or three?

These and similar ambiguities in definition have resulted in widely varying utilization rates, making it impossible to compare programs and conduct benchmarking surveys. The issue is more complicated when one considers the importance of many EAP activities which are not case-related, such as supervisory consultations, training sessions and contacts during which information is provided but for which a case is not opened. As EAPs have expanded into areas such as health promotion, childcare and eldercare and legal and financial counseling, questions have arisen as to how to include these services in a utilization rate.

EAP activity must be counted accurately and fully so that both employers and EAP professionals can understand the value of their Employee Assistance Programs. **UTILIZATION CANNOT BE SUMMARIZED INTO ONE NUMBER.** Moreover, utilization rates are not the sole measure of EAP activity. Several different activities must be measured simultaneously.

Employers and EAP professionals need to discuss the variety of standard measures and select which ones will be used to assess any given EAP. This process should begin at the stage in which the employer selects the EAP model to be used (internal/external/combo) and develops program descriptions and/or Requests for Proposal from vendors. In the latter case, all prospective vendors could be asked to provide the same standard data based on the measures

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described below. Once the EAP is established, the EAP stakeholders must determine at the beginning of each evaluation period exactly which activities they want to measure and agree on the units of measurement.

DEFINING THE ACTIVITIES: DIRECT SERVICE TO INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

EAP direct service activities fall into three categories:

EAP Information-only contact - The participant or user requests information, but receives no assessment.

EAP Life management contact - The participant receives information about, and possibly referrals for, services that include but are not limited to childcare, eldercare, financial, wellness and other services. A minimal level of assessment is involved.

EAP case - A documented record of contact between an EAP counselor and an eligible user that includes a comprehensive assessment according to EAPA Standards, a plan of action, including, but not limited to advice, information, short-term counseling and/or referral(s) and a follow-up plan.

An EAP case record is opened for the family unit, that is, one case may contain information about several individuals in that family. Exceptions might be made to open separate cases if it is clinically indicated (for example, in cases of divorce, possibility of abuse). Regardless of how the record is kept, for definitional purposes, an EAP case involves services to a family unit. If two or more members of a family unit are employees of the same organization, each may be counted as a case in utilization calculations.

An EAP may count the number of individuals served as a separate statistic. For example, a large family may constitute one case but nine individuals served. See section below on population definition for further explanation.

A case may present multiple problems and result in multiple referrals. This should be reflected in program statistics to give 'credit' for the level of EAP activity and to assist in monitoring an EAP's internal operations. However, for the purposes of determining utilization, multiple problems and multiple referrals do NOT constitute multiple cases. In fact, in an annual report, the number of problems identified may well exceed the number of cases.

Finally, for the purpose of utilization, a family unit is counted once in a reporting year. Someone seeking assistance at three different times of the year is not counted as three different EAP cases, regardless of the problems presented each time. The nature and extent of this "repeat business" should be counted by the EAP in a separate statistic but not be included in the utilization rate.

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The criteria for opening a new case must be clearly documented and agreed to by all stakeholders in the EAP. The following defines the EAP case status. In each annual reporting period, an EAP case can be counted only once.

New Case

A case never opened before, regardless of reporting period.

Closed Case

The EAP counselor and the user agree that all clinical and follow-up services have been offered and/or used and no further services are needed or unsuccessful attempts at follow-up have occurred over a period of no less than one month.

Reopened Case

A previous user contacts the EAP for assistance with a new or reoccurring problem. A reopened case must meet the criteria of an EAP Case.

Active Case

A case that had some activity during a given annual reporting period. In some cases, such as addiction treatment, a case may remain opened for long-term follow up. A case should be considered active unless it was closed during a previous reporting period. A case closed during a given annual reporting period will be counted as both active and closed.

For the purpose of calculating utilization, a case closed and reopened in the same annual reporting period is only counted once.

The goal is to have a non-duplicated account of active cases as a basis for determining utilization.

DEFINING THE ACTIVITIES: DIRECT SERVICE TO THE ORGANIZATION

The above definitions apply only to EAP utilization by individuals. Many of EAP's most valuable services are provided to the organization rather than to individual employees and family members. These services have been historically undercounted. While they should NOT be included in the utilization formats that follow, such important services to the organization need to be defined and measured nevertheless. The following are examples of organizational services.

Workplace Consultation - Specialized technical consultation provided to a supervisor(s), work groups, union official(s) or other appropriate individuals in the organization regarding employee performance issues, recommended approaches to specific situations, progress toward achieving objectives with specific cases, etc.

Policy Consultation - Specialized technical consultation provided to the work organization regarding developing organizational policies to address human factors in the workplace.

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Examples include policy regarding threats of violence, drug testing, the psychology of self-directed work teams and managing an aging workforce

Training - Skill building for groups of supervisors, managers, union officials and executives on topics such as conflict management, managing performance, communication skills, DOT regulations, AIDS, preventing violence in the workplace and diversity

Information and Education Activities - Sharing information proactively with the covered population through brown bag seminars, employee orientations, home mailings and e-mails

Critical Incident Management - Response to a traumatic event may include the following services: situation assessment, debriefing, defusing, family information management

Special Situations - This could include a package of services offered during a downsizing or merger, attendance at a health fair and participation in company or union celebratory events.

Program Implementation and Management - EAP professionals often manage programs provided by other staff and/or vendors. They promote the efficient, cost-effective implementation and ongoing operation of EAP and relate workplace activities.

The topic of direct services to the organization represents the second of the two major branches of EAP service. While recognizing this as a central component of service, the measurements subcommittee has thus far focused on defining the first, direct services to the individual, as the remainder of this document evidences. Work on further defining the second branch remains to be done.

POPULATION DEFINITION

The next point of clarification is to define the population. As noted above, the traditional definition of EAP utilization was calculated by dividing the number of EAP cases by the number of eligible employees. Problems arose when the numerator (cases) included family members counted individually, but the denominator did not.

It is also possible to divide by the number of employees and their covered family members (covered lives). In this case, one would use the number of individuals seen (not cases) as the numerator.

“Covered lives” refers to the total number of individuals who are eligible for EAP services. Each employer and EAP may have different criteria for EAP eligibility, thus it is imperative to define eligibility for each EAP contract.

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One cannot assume that “eligibility” is defined as “employees and dependents enrolled in the organization’s health benefit plan(s)”. Eligibility for EAP benefits may be very different than for health benefits. For example, part-time employees or significant others may not be eligible for health benefits, however may be eligible for the EAP.

Once eligibility is defined, a “real” number of total covered lives can be obtained. If a “real” number is not obtainable, (i.e. the employer does not maintain a list or actual number of individuals eligible) a multiplying factor needs to be defined in order to provide an “estimated” number of covered lives. Typically, this factor ranges from 2.3 to 2.5 times the number of “eligible” employees.

In order to compare utilization consistently, both the numerator and denominator used to achieve the percentage must be defined and applied consistently.

UTILIZATION FORMULAS

One of the most important points in measuring EAP activity is that **more than one** utilization rate can and **should** be used for evaluation purposes.

We hope that the following six utilization measures will be accepted as standard throughout the field and that those responsible for managing and implementing EAPs will at last have common measures for EAP utilization.

Having defined “EAP Cases” as well as two other types of EAP activity, “EAP Information Only Contacts” and “EAP Life Management Contacts”, utilization can be calculated for each of these activities. In addition, utilization can be calculated for each of the two population groups identified above.

Category A:

Utilization = activity by employees or employee family units divided by the number of eligible employees.

$$U = \frac{\text{activity by employees or employee family units}}{\text{number of eligible employees}}$$

Category B:

Utilization = activity by employees and family members counted individually divided by number of covered lives.

$$U = \frac{\text{activity by employees and family members counted individually}}{\text{number of covered lives}}$$

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Within each category, the Committee recommends three definitions, one each for EAP Information-Only Contacts, EAP Life Management Contacts and EAP Cases. Thus, the Committee recommends the adoption of six standard measure of utilization as follows:

Definition A.1

Utilization = EAP Information Only Contacts by employee family units divided by number of eligible employees.

$$U = \frac{\text{EAP Information Only Contacts by employee family units}}{\text{number of eligible employees}}$$

Definition A.2

Utilization = EAP Life Management Contacts by employee family units divided by number of eligible employees.

$$U = \frac{\text{EAP Life Management Contacts by employee family units}}{\text{number of eligible employees}}$$

Definition A.3

Utilization = Active EAP Cases divided by number of eligible employees.

$$U = \frac{\text{active EAP Cases}}{\text{number of eligible employees}}$$

Definition B.1

Utilization = EAP Information Only Contacts when employees and family members are counted individually divided by number of covered lives.

$$U = \frac{\text{EAP Information-Only Contacts (employees and family counted individually)}}{\text{number of covered lives}}$$

Definition B.2

Utilization = EAP Life Management Contacts when employees and family members are counted individually divided by number of covered lives.

$$U = \frac{\text{EAP Life Management Contacts (employees and family counted individually)}}{\text{number of covered lives}}$$

Definition B.3

Utilization = Active EAP Cases when employees and family members are counted individually divided by number of covered lives.

$$U = \frac{\text{active EAP Cases (employees and family counted individually)}}{\text{number of covered lives}}$$

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Not all six measures are necessarily used. For example, an EAP may choose not to capture information-only contacts.

The following chart summarizes the six utilization measures described above.

UTILIZATION MEASURES

	EAP Information Only Contacts (1)	EAP Life Mgt. Contacts (2)	Active EAP Cases (3)
Employees (A)	A1	A2	A3
Covered lives (B)	B1	B2	B3

Finally, the case status of each of these cells must be defined. The most inclusive and representative ratio is for active cases to be counted during a standard 12-month period. However, the number of new and reopened cases also has meaning when analyzing the EAP activities and different reporting periods, such as quarterly reports, can provide useful information. Once again, it is vital that purchasers and providers of EAP services agree in advance on the definitions and terms to be used.

PROBLEM CATEGORIES

Since the primary objective of this Committee was to focus on utilization, we only touched on the issue of analysis of problem type or inquiry type. We noted previously that the number of problems or reasons for contacting EAP may well exceed the number of family units and may even exceed the number of total individuals contacting EAP, if several problems are recorded per person. We have not proposed a standardized list of problems nor a method for counting them, but we do offer the following general observations.

There are several ways to measure and analyze presenting problem and referrals:

- a) Cumulative for the period. This method may present more than one problem or referral per case.
- b) Request counselors to list primary and secondary (possibly tertiary) presenting problems and/or assessed problems.
- c) Audit multiple problem/referral cases to determine trends and program improvements.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The EAPA Measurements Subcommittee proposes the above definitions as six possible methods for measuring utilization. Each EAP purchaser and vendor would be responsible for identifying which of these and other measures would be used for the purposes of program analysis and evaluation. Our objectives are to encourage purchasers and providers of EA services to use of the above formulas and definitions to achieve more universal and specific indicators of calculating EA utilization rates.

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