Mental Health in the Workplace:

“How to Implement and Make the Most of an Employee Assistance Program.”

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The presenter discloses he is employed by Reliant Behavioral Health.
Agenda

• What is an EAP?
• What services are provided?
• Effectiveness.
• Cost, Value, ROI.
• Choosing an EAP.
• Implementing an EAP.
• How to ensure an EAP gets used most effectively.
What is an EAP?

“Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are [employer sponsored programs] designed to help identify and resolve productivity problems affecting employees who are impaired by personal concerns.”

*from U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, Issue Brief #9 For Employers, SMA 08-4350 – 2008*
What is an EAP?

• An EAP provides employees and their household members with resources that help restore work-life balance in the wake of life problems / events.
  1. Confidential Counseling
  2. Discounted Legal Services
  3. Assorted Other Resources...
What is an EAP?

• HIPAA Compliant
• Confidential!!!
What is an EAP?

• A suite of comprehensive resources for Employ-ERS !!!!!!
What is an EAP?

- Evidence Based.
- Effective.
- Affordable.
- Invaluable.
Services for Employees & Household Members: **COUNSELING**

- Confidential Counseling...
  - Limited number of free counseling sessions (e.g., 4 sessions per issue per 12 months per member)
  - Masters degree, licensed, credentialed counselors.
  - Face-to-face visits; telephonic; online.
Services for Employees & Household Members: **COUNSELING**

- Counseling for any number of issues:
  - Marriage/relationship, grieving, parenting, job stress, co-worker conflict, addictions, anxiety, short-term depression, bullying, school–related issues, etc.
- **24/7 Crisis Counseling**
Services for Employees & Household Members: **COUNSELING**

- Counseling is *short-term, solution-focused* cognitive talk-therapy.
- Not intended to address conditions requiring long-term treatment (e.g., severe depression & other biologically-based mental illnesses, addictions assessed as requiring higher-level of treatment, autism, etc.)
- EAP counseling *can be* a starting place for assessment and referral in absence of a previously diagnosed condition.
Services for Employees & Household Members: **COUNSELING**

- Some statistics from the *U.S. Department of Labor*:
  - Up to 67% of “sickness” absences are due to family issues or stress.
  - Depressed workers utilize 1.5 to 3.2 times more short term disability.
  - Employees with alcohol or drug issues use three times the normal level of sick benefits.
Services for Employees & Household Members: **COUNSELING**

- **2011 American Psychological Association: Stress in America** survey of 1226 adults found the following prevalence of physical symptoms resulting from stress:
  - Irritability or anger (42 percent);
  - Fatigue (37 percent);
  - Lack of interest, motivation or energy (35 percent);
  - Headaches (32 percent);
  - Muscular tension (24 percent), and upset stomachs (24 percent).
  - A smaller percentage report having a change in appetite (17 percent) and sex drive (11 percent).
Services for Employees & Household Members: **LEGAL**

- Second most utilized employee EAP benefit.
- Must use a network attorney.
- Initial consultation is free.
- If retained, attorney’s fees are reduced by 25%.
- Applicable for all legal issues except for work-related matters.
- Majority utilization is for family law issues.
- Mediation benefit also available.
Services for Employees & Household Members: **FINANCIAL**

- Free consultations (except for CPA).
- Debt-counseling and consolidation.
- Budgeting.
- College Planning.
- Retirement Planning.
- Tax issues (CPA)
Services for Employees & Household Members: **OTHER BENEFITS**

- Identity-theft recovery assistance.
- Will preparation.
- Child and Elder Care referral assistance.
- Home ownership information.
- Website and online resources.
Services for Employers

• Supervisor / Management Consultations.
• Management Referrals.
• Critical Incident Response.
• Onsite Trainings (e.g., Reasonable Suspicion; Change Management; Diversity in the Workplace; Overcoming Burnout, etc.)
• Employee & Supervisor Orientations.
• Promotional Materials and Monthly e-Newsletters.
• Drug and Alcohol Workplace Policy Consultation.
• Utilization Reporting.
• Account Management.
How Effective are EAPs?

- Dozens of applied research studies show that EAP services can produce positive clinical change, improvements in employee absenteeism, productivity and turnover, and savings in medical, disability or workers’ compensation claims.

-EAP Effectiveness and ROI, EASNA Research Notes, volume 1, Number 3, October 2009
How Effective are EAPs?

• Improved employee productivity and reduced work absence:

  - 57% of cases had improvement in ability to work productively after use of the EAP.
  - 50% of cases had improved absence and/or productivity at work.
  - 64% of cases with work issues as primary problem had improvement after EAP use; 46% of all types of cases had improved work productivity.

EAP Value

- More productive employees
- Less absence among employees
- Reduced overall health care claims costs
- Reduced disability claims costs
- Better job climate and organizational morale
- More engaged employees and supervisors
- Less inter-group conflicts and team problems
- Better preparedness for critical events
- Less turnover of employees
EAP Costs

• Most value of any Employee Benefit?
  - Depending on the size of the employer group, costs can range from $1.25 to $4.00 per employee per month (PEPM).
  - “Free” EAPs embedded in other employee benefits (much more limited in scope than a direct contract EAP, however.)
Return-on-Investment

- Between $3 and $10 dollars in return for every $1 dollar invested.
- General conclusion from EAP ROI evaluations from companies such as Campbell Soup, Chevron, AOL, Marsh & McLennan, McDonnell Douglas, NCR Corp., U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Federal Government.

EAP Effectiveness and ROI, EASNA Research Notes, volume 1, Number 3, October 2009
EAP Models

• Direct Contract
  - Employee Benefits: counseling; legal; finance; ID theft recovery; online resources, etc.
  - Employer Benefits: orientations; onsite trainings; critical incident response; supervisor consults; promotional materials, account mgt.
  - Network; Staff Model; Hybrid.
  - Direct contract with EAP.
  - PEPM cost.
EAP Models

• “Embedded” EAPs
  - Included with some group Life and/or Disability benefits
  - Limited in scope: employee benefits only, counseling not always face-to-face.
  - Little to no program promotion, account management.
Choosing an EAP

• Contact an EAP directly.
• Ask your insurance broker to issue an RFP to several EAPs.
• Seek referrals from other businesses who have an EAP they are happy with.
• Check to see if you already have an embedded EAP in a group Life or Disability program.
Choosing an EAP

• Determine what session model you want.
• Determine how important employer benefits would be for your organization: e.g., CISDs, onsite trainings, orientations, supervisor consults, management referrals, etc.
• If employer benefits are desired, determine which of them are included as a core benefit vs. which are a fee-for-service benefit.
Choosing an EAP

- Network vs. Staff Model counselors.
- Telephonic vs. face-to-face counseling.
- What credentials does the EAP require of its counselors?
- Any overlap of EAP’s panel with that of your Health Plan’s panel?
- How much account management do you anticipate needing?
- Cost.
Implementing an EAP

• EAP implementation is EASY.
  - No enrollment forms.
  - No group application.
  - Employer determines eligibility.
  - Simple Contract / Services Agreement.
  - Employee Orientations.
  - Supervisor Orientations.
Ongoing Promotion

• Keeping the program visible and top-of-mind is key to ensuring it gets used!
  - Annual Orientations
  - Payroll stuffers
  - Monthly newsletters
  - Rotate posters
  - Onsite trainings
  - Supervisor Orientations
  - Utilization Review
Make use of Employer Benefits!

- CISDs.
- Supervisor Consultations
- Management Referrals.
- Review Utilization Reports to help target problem areas.
- Onsite Trainings.
- Online Trainings.
- Benefit or Wellness Fairs.
Questions?
Thank you!