



*Employee
Assistance
Program*

SUPERVISOR'S MANUAL

When an employee brings problems to the workplace, his/her job performance can suffer. Wrestling with personal problems – such as marital concerns, family sickness or death – financial difficulties or career stress, can hamper an employee’s productivity and end up costing employees and employers money.

Today’s competitive marketplace and business community demand high levels of productivity and lower costs. A good solution to handling decreased job performance and helping employees deal with emotional problems is North Mississippi Medical Center’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Our EAP is a cost-effective management tool designed to help employees cope with problems. The program is a short-term, confidential counseling, referral, and follow-up service. Assistance is provided by qualified, experienced, professional counselors.

EAP's Role in Your Company

Is an Employee Assistance Program necessary?

The cost to your company for an employee whose job performance is suffering because of personal problems may surprise you. Absenteeism, mistakes, accidents, increased use of medical benefits, increased costs of health insurance and turnover are a few of the areas that a stressed employee can affect.

Helping an employee to resolve his/her problems and to improve productivity makes sound financial sense for your company.

How does the Employee Assistance Program benefit your company?

The EAP can help reduce an employee's absenteeism and tardiness, as well as improve employee performance and morale. The program can also help you avoid recruiting and replacement expenses in hiring new employees.

What kind of services does EAP provide?

First, we promote the program to all of your employees to generate interest. Second, we provide direction and offer options to employees who elect to use the service. We make available to the employee a wide range of resources, including counseling or referral to other agencies, to help the employee deal with his/her problem(s). We provide counseling to employees in the early stages of difficulty before their jobs and families are seriously affected.

Finally, we maintain follow-up and ensure confidentiality of

all services used by the employee. We have an effective internal management system, rigorous planning procedures, on-going evaluation methods, and quarterly reporting to the employer.

What is the strategy of the program?

Our EAP will:

- Present a promotional program and orientation sessions for all levels of employees through printed materials, presentations, posters and articles in employee publications
- Educate and train supervisors about the program and how to identify troubled employees
- Accept all referrals, both voluntary and supervisory
- Counsel employees at North Mississippi Medical Center's EAP locations
- Continue counseling or refer employees, when necessary
- Maintain confidential records and make quarterly reports to management

How do employees begin to use the service?

Employees may contact the EAP counselor directly and independently; they may be encouraged by their supervisors to contact the service when employees are having problems that do not affect job performance; or they may be referred by their supervisors to contact the service when problems hamper employees' productivity.

How does the company implement the program?

Our EAP will be implemented with a minimum of disruption to your work flow because the service is a self-contained program. The EAP staff will work closely with your company to make the program run smoothly and to deliver the best results.

Your company will appoint one employee to act as coordinator and liaison with North Mississippi Medical Center's EAP. Our staff works with the company to develop a timetable and implementation strategy, as well as to identify specific performance objectives.

How does the EAP work specifically?

There are five steps in the actual assessment, counseling, referral, and follow-up procedures of the program:

- **Entry** – Generally, employees contact the EAP by phone. Experience shows that 90 percent of contacts will be voluntary; the remaining 10 percent are referred by supervisors.
- **Assessment** – The initial interview takes approximately one to three sessions. The counselor documents the employee's concerns and evaluates the problem.
- **Counseling** – After the initial interview, many employees do not need further counseling. If the employee's personal crisis requires more than the company-paid counseling sessions, the employee or his/her group insurance must cover the additional costs.
- **Referral** – Employees may be referred to outside sources – agencies or selected individuals that continue to assist the employee. These costs are paid by the employee if not covered by insurance.
- **Follow-up** – Each case will be brought to an acceptable resolution, whether it is handled by one of our counselors or referred to an outside agency. We believe in planned, efficient and effective care.

What do the reports to management include?

The confidentiality of an individual employee's case is strictly maintained. Reports include only statistical information about overall utilization of the program; number of contacts; number of cases opened, continued, and closed; number of referrals; types of resources used; and information on manager and supervisor consultations and referrals.

How is NMMC's EAP purchased?

North Mississippi Medical Center's Employee Assistance Program is available through an annual contract. The price includes: individual counseling done by EAP staff members, case tracking, promotional materials, presentations, planning,

and quarterly reports. Payments may be made in advance or on a quarterly basis. Additional charges relating to referrals are paid by the employee or his/her group insurance. The company absorbs no extra costs.



Your Role as a Supervisor

Prior to referral...

Supervisors should ask themselves the following questions:

- Has the problem been discussed with the employee in specific terms?
- Is there written documentation regarding the performance problem with concrete expectations and suggested solutions?
- Has the employee been given a sufficient amount of time to remedy the situation once he/she has been made aware of the problem?
- Have you suggested to the employee that it may be helpful to contact the program directly?

The procedure

- If you think an employee should be referred to the Employee Assistance Program, the first step is to call your in-house coordinator for consultation and discussion of the process.
- You may be asked to complete a supervisor's referral form (See page 8). This action gives you an opportunity to reevaluate the written documentation and provides you with additional structure to discuss the problems and suggestions for improvement with your employee. It also aids North Mississippi Medical Center's Employee Assistance Counselor in evaluating the employee's needs.
- Prior to forwarding the referral form, you should meet with your employee to discuss job performance. Let your employee know at this time that the EAP is available and that you intend to refer him/her to the program.
- Should the employee agree to speak with a program representative, the referral can be made by calling the in-house coordinator, who will arrange for the employee to be seen by NMMC's EAP staff. We recommend that the individual be paid for time away from work for the initial interview. A need for subsequent releases from work may occur; when these circumstances arise, releases should be cleared through your human resources department.
- All managers/supervisors making referrals can expect periodic progress reports from EAP. Although your employee's specific problem will remain confidential, EAP will report whether the individual is following recommended treatment or has refused further assistance.
- The Employee Assistance Program will close the case when you indicate that your employee's work performance has returned to satisfactory levels for a documented period of six consecutive months.
- Because participation is voluntary, the supervisor should follow established personnel policies and procedures in taking any further action against employees who decide not to take advantage of the program.

Supervisor's checklist

- Be sure any referrals that you make to the Employee Assistance Program are based solely upon job performance; persons who have problems not affecting their work have access to the program directly.
- Suggest self-referral to your employee when early signs of performance decline occur.
- Stress confidentiality – the referral information will not be part of the personnel record.
- Utilize specific documentation when identifying problem performance areas to employees.
- Call the in-house coordinator if you have any questions regarding the EAP.

Employee Assistance Program
Employee Referral Form
Confidential

This form is to be used as a guide in determining the extent and exact nature of the decline of your employee's job performance. Upon referral, one copy of this form is to be forwarded to the NMMC's EAP clinical manager; and one copy should be retained in your personal files.

Name of Employee _____

Position _____ Department _____

Title _____

Attendance (During last 12 months): _____

Illness

Number of Occurrences _____ Number of Days _____

Reasons Given _____

Personal Absence

Number of Occurrences _____ Number of Days _____

Reasons Given _____

Tardiness

When _____

Reasons Given _____

On-The-Job Absenteeism

When _____

Reasons Given _____

Work Performance

What is the nature of the declined work performance?

Additional Information:

Please use reverse side of this sheet if there is additional information which you feel could be helpful.

Form completed by _____ Department _____

Title _____ Telephone Number _____

Date _____



**NORTH MISSISSIPPI
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