

6.3 What is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) are built on the realisation that a person's life is a totality - not a neat division into "work" and "personal life". Work stresses affect our lives and personal challenges affect the way we function at work. The core of an Employee Assistance Program is free access to professional and confidential counselling for employees. Special providers of these services may either be free or billed to the employer.

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a work-based early intervention aimed at the early identification and /or resolution of both work and personal problems that may adversely affect performance. These problems may include, but are not limited to health, marital/relationships, family, financial, substance abuse or emotional concerns. The specific core activities of EAPs include:

1. expert consultation and training in the identification and resolution of job-performance issues related to the aforementioned employee personal concerns;
2. confidential and timely problem-assessment, diagnosis, treatment or referral to an appropriate community resource;
3. the formation of internal and external linkages between the workplace and community resources not available within the scope of the EAP."

An EAP forms part of a range of strategies to help employers support employee wellbeing, improve employee productivity, manage behavioural risk and enable managers to deal with difficult and sensitive people issues.

The EAP can assist with any personal or work-related issues including:

Conflict and tension	Pressure and stress	Drug and Alcohol problems
Child and Family problems	Work pressure problems	Career Counselling
Separation or Divorce	Relationship Difficulties	Personal Trauma
Grief and bereavement	Health and Lifestyle issues	Gambling and Addictions
Financial/Legal referrals	Anxiety and Depression	Work-Family Issues

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