

Making the Most of Your Employee Assistance Program

Often, medical and mental health benefits are utilized improperly or not at all by employees because they don't realize the value of such programs. As well, particularly with mental health benefits, employees assume that something will or will not be covered and find themselves financially stressed. Make the most of your EAP by doing the following:

- **Understand your employee benefits** before you need them. Examine what expenses are covered and what percentages you will have to pay. By educating yourself, you may be able to alleviate financial stress during an already challenging time.
- **Be Proactive.** Seek help before a situation becomes a crisis. By contacting your EAP when you notice initial problems, you can prevent utilization of your maximum benefits. Often, counseling and intervention at early stages is less intensive and less expensive.



- **Document all relevant information** as a crisis occurs. While this may seem challenging at the time, it can save you time and money later. As well, such documentation may help you see the seriousness of a situation early on.

- During your initial call to the EAP, **give as much information as possible.** This assists phone counselors who will work hard to specifically meet your needs.



- **Keep all counseling appointments,** except for true emergencies. Problems can't be solved if you don't get to the professional who's able to help. If you absolutely have to break an appointment, be considerate and give as much advance notice as possible.

- **Be honest** with your counselor and the other EAP professionals. Hiding, downplaying or exaggerating situations only complicates the process, which prevents counselors from doing their job. As well, your benefits are utilized without progress. A counselor can only be as effective as a patient is honest. Remember, that your counselor and the other EAP professionals only want what's best for you and your family. Our goal is for you to be healthy and happy.
- **Follow-up and complete** any and all plans established by your health care professional. This is the point at which many people stumble. If your doctor gives you medicine and you don't take it, you won't get well. The same applies to your treatment plan. The quickest way to recovery is by following the steps outlined by your counselor.
- **Refer other colleagues to the EAP.** Utilization of the program is in everyone's best interest for overall health and well-being, whether at work or at home.