515 Employee and Family Assistance Program, All Staff

Revised: September 2019

From time to time, employees may find themselves in need of confidential, professional counselling for personal, family, relationship, and wellness issues adversely affecting work performance or threatening to do so. The purpose of the University's Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is to help meet these needs.

Eligibility for EFAP counselling has been expanded to encompass not only regular full-time employees, but also temporary full time and part-time employees with appointments greater than 6 months and workloads greater than 35%, along with their immediate family members. For the purpose of this Policy immediate family members are defined as a spouse and/or dependent children living at home. Normally, the University will absorb the costs of up to six hours of counselling per client per 12 month period. If a counselling appointment is missed or cancelled without 24 hours notice, the client may be charged.

Access to counselling is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week through the University's EFAP provider, Homewood Behavioural Health Corporation (HBH) [1] at 1-800-663-1142. Assistance can also be arranged through Occupational Health Services at extension 52133. Clients will be referred to a broad range of diversified counselling specialists and may choose to consult with either a male or female professional. Services are available in many languages and are provided at numerous locations to enhance client privacy and convenience. Whenever possible, appointments will be arranged outside of normal working hours.

Confidentiality is an essential feature of the University's EFAP. HBH and its counselling professionals will not compromise the anonymity of EFAP participants or disclose details of counselling sessions without clients' written consent. Correspondence and invoicing from HBH to the University will not include names or employee identification.

Voluntary employee referrals to EFAP counselling are those through which an employee seeks to resolve difficulties in a discreet manner, often before job performance is an issue. They may also include situations in which a supervisor encourages an employee to seek counselling for a social/health issue identified by the employee as a factor contributing to declining job performance.

Involuntary (mandatory) referrals are those through which an employee is required to participate in EFAP counselling as a condition of continued employment with the University. In such cases, the University reserves the right to confirm the employee's regular attendance at counselling sessions.

Employees receiving EFAP counselling are expected to maintain job performance and attendance at levels acceptable to the University.

Supervisors should: be alert to changes in employees' job performance; encourage employees to seek EFAP counselling where appropriate; and advise employees of their rights and responsibilities with respect to EFAP participation and ongoing performance expectations. In situations calling for performance management, supervisors are encouraged to consult their Human Resources Consultant [2].

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Links
[1] https://homewoodhealth.com/corporate [2] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/hr-services-about-human-resources/human-resources-consultants