

## EFAP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The EFAP is a benefit to you and your family - it is voluntary, confidential, and there is no cost to you. To familiarize you with how the program works, this Newsletter answers the most frequently asked questions.

### **How does the employee contact the EFAP?**

The employee can contact the EFAP 24 hours a day; their call is not restricted to general office hours. They can choose their most convenient time to contact the program.

**Brown Crawshaw (BCI)** will return every call within 24 hours. When a call is returned, an appointment can usually be booked within a few days. If the situation is urgent, we will respond appropriately the same or following day. Appointments are available in the evening as well as during the day to allow the employee to schedule their appointment outside of their working hours.

### **Who is eligible to use an EFAP?**

Employees (who receive a pay cheque and have a benefits plan), their spouses and dependent children are eligible. For the EFAP, a family member is usually defined as a relative who normally resides with the employee and could be someone other than dependent children.

### **Are employees required to use the EFAP?**

**No.** The EFAP is a voluntary program. The employee or a family member wanting to take advantage of the services contacts the program directly.

At times a concerned co-worker or supervisor may suggest the EFAP to an employee; but it is the employee who makes the decision whether or not to access the EFAP. This decision is a private one, with no one else in the workplace needing to know of their involvement.

### **Who will find out if the employee accesses the EFAP?**

The names and identities of individuals using the program are confidential. The employer will not know who has contacted the program unless the employee chooses to tell them. Information regarding the content of a client's session with the counsellor, or their referral, will not be available to the employer, or any other party, without the client's informed and written consent. If, at some point the employee wants their counsellor to release information to someone else (eg their physician, or a referral source), they will be asked to sign a consent form specifically indicating the information they want released, and to whom.

There are a few special cases where confidentiality may be outweighed by other concerns: such as the need to protect a child at risk or a life at risk. Counsellors, like other professionals (clergy, physicians, and personnel managers) are required to comply with court orders regarding the release of information.

If the employee has any questions or particular concerns about confidentiality, an EFAP counsellor with **BCI** would be pleased to provide them with further information.

### **Can the employee choose their own counsellor & have the EFAP pay the counsellor or reimburse the employee?**

**BCI's** EFAP counsellors are highly qualified to deal with a variety of presenting concerns, and work well with individuals, couples and families. Sessions with these counsellors are covered by the EFAP at no cost to the employee. If the employee wishes to see a counsellor other than a **BCI** counsellor, they will be responsible for any costs associated with their visits to that individual. In rare cases, a client's special needs may justify contracting out services but approval is required before they arrange for those services.

**BCI** has contracted with employers to provide qualified EFAP counsellors. In order for a counsellor to be considered by **BCI** they must:

- have a minimum of a Master's degree (usually in Social Work or Psychology) from an accredited university.
- be registered in the province where they are providing service with an appropriate professional association; preferably a licensing body (eg College of Psychologists, BC College of Social Workers), that requires proof of supervised practice, references, adherence to an ethical code, a criminal record check, and has a form of practice review.
- carry malpractice and general liability insurance.
- work within the EFAP's parameters which emphasize brief, solution-focused therapy techniques demonstrated to have an impact on problem resolution in less than six clinical hours. Problems requiring longer term interventions or other therapeutic modalities will be referred to a community resource (locally or regionally). Referrals that cost money are the sole responsibility of the employee, not the employer or the EFAP.

### **What can the employee talk to a counsellor about?**

EFAP programs are designed to help the employee deal with a variety of difficulties that can be handled using a brief therapy approach. If the employee requires longer term, more in-depth therapies, their counsellor can help make a referral to an appropriate resource or practitioner outside of the program. Similarly, in-depth formal psychological assessments (usually involving testing by a registered psychologist), and particular specialized treatment approaches (body work, biofeedback, drama, music or art therapies, etc) are not covered by the program. Also, vocational and career counselling services are not available as part of the EFAP. The EFAP counsellor can assist the employee with a referral in these areas.

Employees are welcome to discuss stressful or difficult work situations and to explore techniques that can help them to better manage these issues. An employee may find it helpful to talk to a counsellor about difficult relationships in the workplace. Their counsellor can help them discover useful ways to deal with difficult people. The EFAP does not, however, directly mediate between the employee and someone else in the workplace.

### **How many sessions (hours) can an employee have?**

**BCI** makes every effort to provide the best service to clients who access the EFAP. For some programs there are limits to the number of one hour visits with a counsellor per family per calendar year.

### **What if the employee wants access to other services?**

The EFAP counsellor can provide the employee with a variety of helpful referral possibilities and resources located within their community. Their counsellor will try to match their particular needs with his or her knowledge of the referral resource network. If the employee wants to access services beyond, or in addition to, the services offered by the program, they will be responsible for any expenses incurred. In addition, they may choose to take advantage of their extended health benefits.

**For Confidential Assistance,  
Contact your EFAP by phoning 1.800.668.2055 (24/7)**

**Visit us at our website:  
[www.brown-crawshaw.com](http://www.brown-crawshaw.com)**