



## POLICY ON THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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**Effective Date:** May 5, 2009

**Originating Office:** Human Resources

**Supersedes /Amends:** HR-24/April 22, 2002

**Policy Number:** HR-24

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### SCOPE

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all employees eligible for Concordia Health Benefits, including their immediate family. Spouse and dependent children are excluded from extended EAP services.

### DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following definition applies:

“spouse” means a person who:

- is married to the employee and cohabiting with him/her; or
- has been living in a conjugal relationship with an employee for a period of not less than one (1) year; or
- is living with the employee in a conjugal relationship; and
  - at least one child is born, or is to be born of their union; or
  - they have adopted, jointly, at least one child while living together in a conjugal relationship; or
  - one of them has adopted at least one child who is the child of the other, while living together in a conjugal relationship.

“dependent child” means a child who is financially dependent upon the employee for support. The dependent child may be a natural child, an adopted child, a step-child or a foster child of the employee.

“client” means the user of the EAP i.e. the employee or a member of his/her immediate family.

“Service Provider” means the provider of assessment, counseling, support and consultation services to the employee or a member of his/her immediate family.

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### POLICY

The University maintains an Employee Assistance Program that provides a broad range of services to employees to improve their health and well-being.

#### General Provisions

1. The EAP is a voluntary, confidential counseling and referral service for employees and their families. At no time are any involuntary referrals made.
2. The EAP is separate from all academic and staff functions of the University and is not subordinate to any academic, research, training or administrative activities.
3. At no time may an employee's supervisor or any other member of the University administration use the EAP as a tool for management.
4. The EAP and its extended services provide information, counseling and referral in the following areas:
  - Couple and family: for individuals and families with problems such as communications, marital difficulties, parenting, separation and divorce.
  - Personal and emotional: interpersonal relations relating to work or personal life: stress, anxiety, depression, phobias, emotional and physical complaints.
  - Violence and abuse: individual counseling to provide assistance to people who have experienced a traumatic event.
  - Substance abuse: short-term counseling for problems of abuse with appropriate referral to other community resources if warranted.
  - Bereavement: support and counseling following the death of a family member or significant other.
  - Referral for longer-term counseling: if required, the EAP Service Provider will assist the client to find appropriate community services where available.

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When possible, services which are covered by Medicare or the University's health insurance plan will be used.

- Crisis Intervention/Trauma Response Service provided to the Concordia community with proper initiation.
- The EAP provides a number of extended services including the "I Quit" Smoking Cessation Program, the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Program (DARP), etc.

### Confidentiality

5. The University recognizes that confidentiality is the cornerstone on which a successful EAP is built. It is therefore committed to ensuring that each client's right to confidentiality is honored and safeguarded.
6. Strict confidentiality is maintained and no information is provided by the Service Provider unless requested by the client in writing. This request may be withdrawn at any time by notifying the Service Provider in writing.
7. Because of the nature of confidentiality and anonymity within the EAP, any recommendation for sick leave must be made through the employee's physician.
8. Only statistical information is provided to the EAP Committee for the purpose of auditing the program. No names, employee numbers or other forms of personal identification are used.
9. The following do not constitute a breach in confidentiality:
  - information about the EAP in general
  - release of subpoenaed information
  - information regarding a client's danger to self or others transmitted to the appropriate authorities by the Service Provider as required by the code of ethics of the professional corporations.

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10. To further safeguard the confidential aspect of the program, the EAP counseling services are provided off-campus by a Service Provider who is external to the University.

### Access to the Program

11. Employees may gain access to the EAP services by contacting the Service Provider directly or through the Internal Coordinator.
12. Self-referrals are those in which a client makes direct contact with the provider.
13. Assisted referrals are those in which a client has been assisted in seeking referral by someone else: a family member, a fellow employee, a union representative or a supervisor. However, no employee is under any obligation to use the EAP services after this referral.
14. Assisted referrals may not be used by supervisory or administrative staff for job performance problems which have reached a formal stage of discipline.

### Administration of the Program

15. The Concordia EAP Program is an employee-managed program. To this end, the EAP Committee is made up of association and union representatives that form the majority of the Committee, and of resource personnel appointed by the Committee. Recommendations can be received from the University administration and must be approved by EAP members. The Chair of the EAP Committee will be selected from among its association and union representatives. All representatives and resource personnel serving on the committee must be eligible for EAP services and Health Benefits at Concordia.
16. The EAP Committee is responsible for managing the program and for presenting an annual report to the Vice-President responsible for the Employee Assistance Program.
17. The Internal EAP Coordinator has the primary administrative responsibility for the overall operations of the program.

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18. The University administration, through the Vice-President responsible for the Employee Assistance Program, provides financial support to the program.
19. The quality and effectiveness of the EAP is evaluated on an ongoing basis:
  - anonymous client evaluations are sent to the Internal EAP Coordinator to be reviewed by the Committee and complaints are investigated
  - complaints received directly by the Internal EAP Coordinator or members of the Committee are also investigated by the Committee
  - the EAP Committee receives statistical reports from the Service Provider on a quarterly basis. Statistics include rates of use of service, categories of clients, types of problem, rates of referrals, etc.
  - periodic financial audits may be performed by external and internal auditors if required.