

Provider eNews

The EAP: A Bridge to Improved Health and Productivity, Especially in Uncertain Times



By Rich Paul, MSW, CEAP, Vice President, Health and Performance Solutions

A recent New York Times article, "Always on the Job, Employees Pay With Health," stated that: "American workers are stressed out, and in an unforgiving economy, they are becoming more so every day. Sixty-two percent say their workload has increased over the last six months; 53 percent say work leaves them 'overtired and overwhelmed.'"

ValueOptions® has seen the impact that today's economic challenges have had on the employees we serve, as evidenced by increased calls for stress and financial-related concerns. With economic uncertainty and job security on the minds of so many, what can we do to help individuals remain engaged and productive on the job? While individuals present to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with a myriad of concerns—whether for a mental health or substance abuse issue or everyday work/life challenge—rarely do they present with productivity and performance concerns, despite this being an underlying manifestation of their presenting problem.

This is where your role as the EAP provider is so critical. EAP's roots are based on the understanding that prevention and early identification of certain employee problems can ultimately improve the overall productivity of the workforce and create a safer and healthier work environment. With all EAP sessions, we ask that you assess and monitor the impact of an employee's presenting problem on his or her job.

You might consider asking:

- Have you found yourself less productive or engaged because of (the presenting problem)?
- Has a manager or supervisor expressed concern over your performance, attendance or quality of work?
- Have you had any safety violations?
- Have co-workers commented to you regarding your work performance or team contribution?
- Do you find yourself easily distracted during work, thinking of things other than your job?

We have designated on the Case Activity Form (CAF) several areas where you can note the impact that an individual's problems are having on his or her productivity. You can:

- Note Job/School Performance as the assessed problem
- Rate Functional Assessment changes at Case Opening and Case Closing for Job/School Performance

During difficult economic times, excessive concern and rumination over one's job security can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy of job loss because of the resulting distraction and poor work performance. We encourage you, as an EAP provider, to support employees with such concerns. You are the bridge to help them focus on their overall health and productivity.

NEW YORK STATE EMPIRE PLAN: Please Note

Please note that as of 12/31/08, ValueOptions® will no longer manage the mental health and substance abuse benefits for NYS Empire Plan members. If you are currently treating a New York State Empire Plan member and require authorization for services in 2009, you will need to contact OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions at 1-877-769-7447, option #3.

30TH ANNUAL NC EAPA TRAINING CONFERENCE

"EAP: Championing Excellence in the Workplace"

March 11-13, 2009

Embassy Suites Hotel and Conference Center, Concord, North Carolina

For Complete Program Schedule with Speaker Bios, visit: www.eapa.com and click on Conferences and Trainings page

Full Conference and One Day Registrations Available!

Questions? Contact Conference Chair Andy Silberman at andrew.silberman@duke.edu

VALUEOPTIONS® TO BEGIN SERVING THE HOME DEPOT!

The Home Depot has selected ValueOptions® to provide Employee Assistance Program and Work-Life services to The Home Depot associates and family members. The Home Depot EAP, known as CARE/Solutions for Life, will transition to ValueOptions® on February 1, 2009 and will be served out of the ValueOptions® North Carolina Service Center. Providers may contact ValueOptions® with questions about The Home Depot EAP after February 1, 2009 by calling 1-800-397-1630.

PROVIDER REMINDERS: Eliminate Availability Complaints

Look like a hero when you call a member or VO Staff back. Whether you have appointment availability or are no longer taking new patients. A simple provider callback to patients and/or VO staff makes all the difference.

- Make Certain That You or Staff Return Patient and VO Staff Calls
- Notify ValueOptions of any changes to your practice availability for new referrals
- Respond to Patient Messages within 24 Hours
- Update Your Answering Service Voice Message whenever You Plan to be Out of the Office.

CONTACT US

TOP 3 REASONS TO CONTACT VALUEOPTIONS® TODAY!

One: Electronic Funds Transfer

Get paid faster with PaySpan! This new electronic billing process lets you submit claims online and have payments deposited directly to your bank account. All the work is done for you electronically – and it costs nothing! To learn more, please call our electronic billing hotline at (888) 247-9311.

Two: ProviderConnect

Now Available! Use ProviderConnect to request inpatient and outpatient authorizations online, update your provider profile, review and submit claims, and so much more. Visit <http://www.valueoptions.com/providers/Providers.htm> and login to or register for ProviderConnect

Three: Provider Newsletter

Do you want your voice to be heard? We value our providers opinions, suggestions and thoughts. Please send your comments, ideas, and suggestions for future editions of Provider eNews to PRelations@ValueOptions.com