

EAP ASSOCIATION

EXCHANGE

JULY 1994

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The Revolution Begins...

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Co-Conspirators &
Hosts of the EAPA
23rd Annual
Conference*

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Let's Have a Revolution"



by Sandra Turner, CEAP
EAPA President

The June *Exchange* has traditionally featured EAPA's upcoming Annual Conference. This year we return to Boston as the conference site. Tom Amaral and John Hooks have captured everyone's imagination with their theme, "Let's Have a Revolution." Perhaps they recall our last meeting in Boston (1985) when the ALMACA (now EAPA) membership authorized the Association to pursue professional certification. Tom O'Connor was President then. Jack Hennessy was the first Chairman of that illustrious founding Commission. Both thought they nearly had a revolution on their hands that year!

The fear expressed by non-degreed EAP practitioners was that certification would eventually exclude them. They feared for their jobs. After much heated debate, the Association made a commitment that certification would measure knowledge, not skill or competence, and would require experience, not academic qualifications, as the threshold for test-taking. That commitment remains today, despite the fact that all 15 of the founding members have rotated off the Commission.

There has been much discussion about specialty certificates or leveling of the CEAP in recent months. Just two months ago the Employee Assistance Certification Commission (EACC) polled the EAPA membership via the *Exchange* regarding the Commission's proposal of educational requirements for certification. In my response to the EACC, I reminded the Commissioners of their "contract" with the membership regarding the premise of certification. Our profession includes members from a variety of disciplines, educational backgrounds and experience. We do not come into this profession from a common academic experience. As a matter of fact, there are few colleges offering degrees in employee assistance programming.

Employee assistance programs that provide short-term counseling must abide by State laws that mandate the qualifications of counselors. Higher education degrees will be required for those practitioners. But that higher education degree should be in addition to the CEAP, not part of the CEAP.

We must be careful to remember the definition of an employee assistance program, "...a worksite-based program designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns including, but not limited to: health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance." The specific core activities of EAPs include: 1) expert consultation; 2) problem-assessment services; 3)

referrals for diagnosis and treatment; 4) formation of linkages between the workplace and community resources; and 5) follow-up services for employees using the EAP. Nowhere are counseling, therapy, mental health services, treatment, etc., identified as a role for employee assistance practitioners.

This issue of higher education is a critical issue affecting the licensure/credentialing of employee assistance programs and practitioners across the United States. The EACC is correct in facing this dilemma. But they should be encouraged not to act too quickly.

What do you think? It is not too late to relay your opinion to the EACC. They meet this month to deliberate the facts and emotion of this issue. Let's encourage the EACC not to move too quickly. Let's have an open forum in Boston...not another revolution!



EAPA Responds to WSJ

On May 18, the *Wall Street Journal* published an article, "Open Secrets: Medical Data Gathered by Firms Can Prove Less than Confidential," which suggested that EAPs are releasing confidential claims. According to the article, "the explosion in EAPs and managed-care programs is creating a flock of new databases, which aren't as secret as employees think."

EAPA officers and staff reacted immediately to develop a letter, printed on the inside back cover of this edition, which sought to clarify the inaccuracies and innuendoes in the article. Our thanks to the many members and staff whose contributions made this effort possible.

EAPA STAFF CHANGE

Kay Springer has joined EAPA as Editor of the Exchange, replacing Beverly Foster who has joined her fiance in Philadelphia. The August Exchange will be her first issue as Editor. Kay comes to EAPA by way of the Center for Corporate Health and the American Red Cross National Headquarters. A graduate of Virginia Tech, she brings to EAPA 23 years of publishing and public relations experience in health, science and education issues.

Report from the EAPA BOARD TRANSITION TASK FORCE

by Jon Christensen, CEAP, Chair of the Task Force



The decision to restructure the EAPA Board of Directors has widespread and varied implications. The Transition Task Force, formed to consider issues arising from the restructuring and to recommend to the Board new approaches to conducting Association business, includes Carol Irons (312) 856-2915; Linda Sturdivant (412) 647-3296; Carole Stevenson (818) 782-2219; Tamara Cagney; Mary Schmidt; and Bob Challenger. During this process, the Task Force encourages your comments, questions, ideas and suggestions. You can reach me at (414) 886-6575.

An example of the issues is that the size of the Board has been reduced, but the work has not; therefore, it becomes necessary to reapportion responsibilities. Another issue is that although EAPA committees no longer will be directly represented on the Board, their important work and voices must continue to be heard.

It is anticipated that the reduced size of the Board will make it easier to conduct business. An assignment of the Task Force is to consider possibilities for items such as how reports to the Board are made; how inquiries are handled; and how best to pass information back to the membership.

As mentioned in the June edition of the *Exchange*, four new "special directors" have been added to the Board as elected positions — in addition to the ten regional representatives and other elected executive committee positions. Please let committee chairs, who are working with their committees in the nomination process, hear your suggestions and concerns: Jack McCabe, Labor, (202) 543-5978; Rick Wall, Program Managers, (703) 846-

4320; Dan Smith, Consultants, (314) 469-9181; and Gary Maltbia, Ethnic & Cultural Concerns, (913) 573-7327.

As the Association restructures its Board and elects new positions, the Task Force is considering a new process for inauguration of these positions; ways to strengthen the chapter officers' training; development of a committee training process; and a general review of the manner in which we look, act and share with one another.

May 19-20 Meeting

During a May 19 and 20 Task Force meeting, held in Chicago in conjunction with the Illinois Chapter Conference, two priorities emerged. First, whatever the Task Force puts forward should help the Board to be more effective and efficient for the Association. Second, communication throughout the Association is critical to our future success.

The Task Force has spent considerable time working to ensure a smooth transition as new Board members or committee chairs assume their responsibilities, thereby facilitating timely and organized Association functions. Critical areas that were reviewed and recommendations put forward include:

- The nominating process, including the selection of candidates for the positions of special directors, the Eligibility Lists for all Board positions, and, for the first time, a campaign guideline;
- Position descriptions for the Executive Committee, committee chairs, regional representatives and special directors;
- Training and orientation at the International Conference for the Board, committee chairs and chapter officers;
- Board meeting process: agenda building, motions, committee reports, classification of committees and staffing;
- Creation of an investiture or inauguration ceremony to highlight the passing of responsibility and ac-

knowledge the service of past leaders;

- Board structure, including reporting, linkages, committee assignments, relationship of committees to regional representatives and to local chapters and staffing;
- Establishment of a communication flow chart which shows linkages and areas of responsibility to help facilitate the sharing of information throughout the Association. 

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