

EAP ASSOCIATION

# Exchange

The Magazine of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association

## Acquisitions, Mergers, and Organizational Change

The Deciding Factor During Corporate Change

Lessons Learned Through an EAP

The Union of the 21st Century

INSIDE: 1999 EAPA MEMBER NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS



1999 Public Policy Conference Highlights



# Contents



The Magazine of the EAP Association • May/June 1999 • Volume 29 No. 3 • www.eap-association.com

## Feature Stories



Keeping the EAP Spirit Alive Page 10

### Employee Response During Organizational Change: The Deciding Factor Page 8

Few companies achieve their goals and objectives during mergers. This author explains why.

### Keeping the EAP Spirit Alive: Lessons Learned Through My EAP Career Page 10

This EAPA member describes his experiences during multiple corporate changes during the past 20+ years.

### A Union for the 21st Century Page 14

Find out how an upcoming merger will create a "super union" of nearly two million members.

### EAPA Members Speak Out Loud and Clear Page 16

This 1999 Needs Assessment Survey explains what products and services are valued by EAPA members.



EAPA Members Speak Out Loud and Clear Page 16

### Occupational Psychiatry and the Employee Assistance Program (Part 3) Page 20

Read about those behaviors or symptoms that require a referral to a specialist.

### EAPA Measurements Subcommittee Requests Member Feedback on Proposed Utilization Definitions Page 26

Join in taking this first step towards creating similar ways of measuring EAP performance.

### EAPA Members Build EAP Power on Capital Hill Page 32

Highlights of the 1999 Public Policy Conference

### Minutes of the Spring 1999 EAPA Board of Directors Meeting Page 42

## Departments

**New EAPA Awards—see pages 34 and 38.**

- **Front Desk Page 2**  
Mergers, Acquisitions, and Change
- **President's Page Page 4**
- **Index to Advertisers Page 4**
- **From the COO Page 6**  
Annual Conference Will Be a Month Earlier This Year
- **Constructive Confrontation Page 28**  
ADA and Its Provisions on Substance Abuse
- **International News/EAPA Extracts Page 30**  
A look at the EAPA chapter in Australia
- **Letters to the Editor Page 31**
- **Infotracks Page 38**
- **Certification Update Page 40**  
CEAP—A Credential for the World
- **On the Labor Front Page 41**  
When Knowledge Is Not Enough
- **EAPA Staff Phone/E-Mail Directory Page 44**
- **Conferences and Workshops Page 44**

# Front Desk

This month's issue was coordinated by EAPA Exchange Advisory Committee Member Tamara Cagney, CEAP.

## Mergers, Acquisitions, and Change

EAPs, like all other areas of the corporate world, are feeling the impact of mergers, acquisitions, and change as companies search for "synergy." Mergers and acquisitions in telecommunications and in large health care systems are the rule rather than the exception. Local, regional, and national EAPs are being consolidated during these mergers. Committees on best practices in employee assistance are becoming more common as these new companies strain to develop their new corporate EAP identities.

Providing EAP services from within an organization that is itself reorganizing calls for special effort. The challenges include:

- determining how to deliver services in recently merged companies (we, like everyone else, are watching to see who is left standing);
- combining diverse internal EAPs with varying philosophies and diverse employee populations;
- and, most importantly, retaining the EAP vision during all of these changes.

In this issue of the *EAPA Exchange*, we:

- explore the transition in EAP service delivery over the last 20 years;
- describe the challenge of providing effective EAP services to employees whose companies are undergoing vast organizational change;
- explain why proactive planning and creative thinking have ensured that the EAP vision will live on in the workplace.

Among the "don't miss" items in this issue are

- the results of the 1999 Needs Assessment Survey of EAPA members (see pages 16 through 19);
- information on the new Quality Award for EAP Excellence, sponsored by EAPA and the *EAP Digest* (see page 34);
- a new opportunity for EAPA chapters to present an award to a local employer that has shown leadership in supporting employees with depression (see page 42).
- information about EAPA's ground-breaking *Tech-Know Expo* to be held October 20 in conjunction with the annual conference in Florida (see page 36.)

Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely,



Tamara Cagney  
Member  
EAPA Exchange Advisory Committee

## EAPA ASSOCIATION Exchange

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### Coming in the next issue:

*Policy Violations and Grievances:  
How to Handle Workplace Offenders*



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# President's Page

## *EAPA Is on the Move!*

by Gregory P. DeLapp, CEAP



GREGORY DELAPP, CEAP  
EAPA President

In these past few months, I have been encouraged by the number of EAPA members who have stepped forward with ideas, comments, and offers of their energy and support. I am also pleased to know that so many people have been reading this column, which has included challenges to get involved, a push for you to advocate for your profession and professional association, and a constant call for all of us to find the common ground where we can communicate.

I have had the recent good fortune to meet and converse with fellow members from the Wisconsin Chapters, the Long Island Chapter, and a group from the New York City Chapter. Once again, I continue to be impressed by the feedback about our positive direction and genuine enthusiasm about ways to advocate for the EA profession and EAPs. The attempts to find a common ground have also been uplifting. My compliments to all.

While the level of activity is brisk, a good deal of effort is underway toward developing an aggressive and proactive strategic plan for the Association. As we move closer to the plan development stage, I will be asking for your opinions and your support. Your Board of Directors and the EAPA staff are working hard on your behalf. We need to take that hard work and make EAPA fly!

EAPA activities, while exciting, are tempered with the reality of what we do as professionals. Working with employers, organizations, individuals, and families caught up in the many issues related to downsizing and organizational changes are but a few of the examples of reality. Reality is where our profession resides, and we certainly

ly have a role in preparing for and responding to downsizing (or as our peers in the United Kingdom would say – “redundancy services”). As you read through the excellent articles in this issue, take note of the variety of roles filled by EA professionals in response to downsizing. We need to focus on the employee assistance roles and responses as well as on services that support individuals and the organiza-

*As human resource issues continue to emerge through an ever-changing workplace, positioning the employee assistance function for flexibility and utility are key survival strategies.*

nization going through downsizing, and less on whether downsizing is/is not the right approach.

As a veteran of a downsized environment, I caution you to render compassionate professional services, but avoid becoming involved in the negativity of the process itself. There are few examples more telling of the flexibility of EA than to simultaneously work with the organization and remaining employees (survivors), while providing service to the former employees and their families. These are just some of the ways to further demonstrate the value and utility of employee assistance.

EAPs have maintained a historically defined role, while positioning themselves to address issues that do not neatly fit elsewhere in an organiza-

tion. As human resource issues continue to emerge through an ever-changing workplace, positioning the employee assistance function for flexibility and utility are key survival strategies. And, it can be done in the context of our core functions.

EAPs meet organization and individual needs, and EA professionals need to be prepared to respond to those ever-changing needs. Your Association is active in developing ways to better equip EA professionals to respond. Your support has been appreciated as we move toward a strategic plan to position EAPs for broader acceptance, EA professionals for personal and professional growth, and the Association to be the vehicle for these changes. Keep your seat belt on ... lots of movement straight ahead! ☺

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### Index to Advertisers

Adcare .....	19
CARF .....	44
Ceridian Performance Partners .....	23
Cook Consolidation .....	35
DCC, Inc .....	29
Desert Canyon .....	35
DuPont Company .....	25
John Wiley .....	38
Medcomp .....	7
Motivision .....	5
Office Automation Group .....	5
Performance Resource Press ....	39,24
Pride Institute .....	23
SASSI .....	29
Sundown M Ranch .....	3
United Behavioral Health .....	35
Xpression Products .....	19