



Employee Assistance
Professionals Association

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INTEGRATION OF
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE
&
WORK/LIFE

A Collection of Articles

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INTRODUCTION

To the Reader:

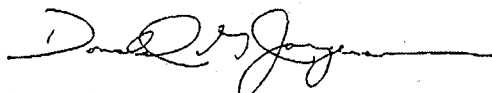
EAPs and work/life programs are morphing at a very rapid rate! They are becoming something that each of us as employee assistance and work/life professionals needs to study. Why? Work/Life and EA programs reach out to the same clients (organizations and individuals) to address the same workplace issues – productivity, recruitment and retention. They assist employees and families to develop problem-solving skills as well as offer solutions for presenting issues and concerns. EAPs and work/life programs have different histories, professional staffing, technologies, scopes of service and methods of evaluation, but really – they have the potential for great compatibility and synergy!

That is why the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) has been tracking the issue of integration of EAP and work/life programs for the past decade. Together with the Alliance for Work/Life Professionals (AWLP), and the Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA), EAPA is in the midst of an ambitious three-phase study of integrated service delivery mechanisms and their impact on the workplace.

The complimentary packet of articles attached will provide you with an introduction to the professional matters being addressed by work/life and EAP practitioners today. Our intention is always to inform others and heighten awareness of issues and trends to be addressed through the workplace.

We welcome your thoughts and comments.

Sincerely,



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Integration of Employee Assistance and Work/Life

A Collection of Articles

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The Integration of EAPs and Work/Life Programs

“Ozzie and Harriet have become demographic dinosaurs.”

Futurework: Trends and Challenges for Work in the 21st Century
U.S. Department of Labor, 1999

As the 2000 U.S. election cycle continues to heat up, so, too, does the talk of senior citizens, children, and traffic. On the presidential campaign trail, George Bush and Al Gore woo voters with vows to “save” Social Security and Medicare and lower the cost of prescription medicines. Candidates for state office trade competing plans to strengthen public schools and expand child care programs. Local politicians, meanwhile, speak of “managing” or “slowing” development to avoid overcrowding and the road congestion it creates.

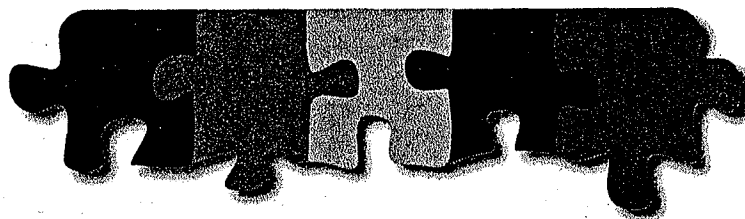
Caught in the middle of these promises are workers who must care for the young and elderly and endure long commutes to and from the workplace. Caught, too, are employers that find they must provide a growing range of services and alternative work arrangements—and provide them efficiently and effectively—to attract and retain talented employees. Many employers are questioning whether they should integrate their employee assistance and work/life programs to better meet workers’ personal needs and the financial needs of the companies they serve.

Such questioning will continue long after the November elections. Already, three in four women with children are in the workplace, as are two in three single mothers with children under 18. Roughly 20 percent of U.S. households provided informal care to a friend or relative over 50 in 1996, and the Families and Work Institute projects that two in five U.S. workers will provide some form of elder care by 2002. And traffic congestion, once confined to large cities, is beginning to afflict small cities as well, more than quadrupling the amount of time commuters spend stalled in their automobiles compared to 1982.

Will integrating EAPs and work/life programs help employers address these and other concerns? The following articles discuss the barriers to and benefits of integration, and remind EA professionals that how *well* EAPs provide services is more important than *how* they provide them or even who provides them.

EAPs and Work/Life Programs Solutions to the Whole Puzzle

by Sandra Turner, MSW, CEAP, and Sally Davis, CEAP



For many years, EAPs and work/life programs each enjoyed success in the workplace as resources to solve the myriad puzzles of human existence that presented themselves in the forms of lateness, absenteeism, errors, accidents, and lowered productivity. EAPs were the first on the scene, helping with the eminently visible problem of addictions and then assisting in later years with relationship issues and mental health concerns. Paralleling the development of EAPs was the emergence of workplace policies, programs, and services that focused on the retention of women, minorities, and workers facing challenges in daily living. These so-called "work/life" challenges included assistance with child/elder care, adoption, legal/financial problems, consumer affairs, and so on.

In recent years, recruitment and retention of workers have become focuses for work/life programs. Employers increasingly have begun to market their work/life programs as benefits to help attract good workers, and have called upon work/life staff to help adapt their workplace cultures to the expectations of younger employees who want more balance in their lives as well as exciting careers and a good paycheck. Work/life programs have responded by offering flexible work arrangements, job sharing, telecommuting, and other non-traditional employment solutions.

Because they share a common goal—addressing issues that hinder or prevent employees from being productive—EAPs and work/life programs would seem to be naturally aligned, like a hand in a glove. But this has not been the case, for at least two reasons. First, these programs often were established in different departments and thus reported to different managers. In short, they held separate "turf" in the workplace. Second, their staff members typically have come from different educational and experiential backgrounds, and their misunderstanding, distrust, and jealousy of each other (not to men-

tion fear of job security) have led to conflict instead of collaboration.

Recently, however, some examples of collaboration between EAPs and work/life programs have emerged in the workplace, driven primarily by companies and unions that want efficient, cost-effective solutions to employees' personal problems. The rise of these collaborative efforts is prompting questions from employee assistance and work/life professionals alike, namely: How do these integrated services work? What outcomes do they achieve? And how are they distinct from their separate, predecessor programs?

Following are three examples of program collaborations:

Case 1: Everything is Gone

It was the couple's worst nightmare. In what seemed like only an instant, their house burned to the ground! Fortunately, no one was hurt, but this family of four escaped with just the clothes on their backs.

Although the fire died out within hours, concerns arose that lingered in the couple's minds for weeks and even months. How would their young children respond to this trauma? How would the family begin the process of rebuilding? To whom could they turn for advice and counsel on these matters?

Working together, the employee assistance and work/life programs were able to offer the employee and his family help they didn't even realize they needed.

Sandra Turner is director of EY/Assist, the integrated EAP and work/life resource and referral service at Ernst & Young. She co-chairs the EAPA Task Force on EAPs and Work/Life Programs.

Sally Davis is the manager of an internal program for Bechtel Nevada in Las Vegas and founded her company's Workforce Enhancement Program. She serves as internal programs director on the EAPA Board of Directors.

A co-worker encouraged the father to contact his employer's EAP and work/life program for help. He did, and found their services to be a source of great comfort. The assistance he received included guidance in handling the insurance adjuster, architect, and contractor in addition to confronting the unique

issues involved in rebuilding after a fire. In addition, the entire family was offered counseling to cope with the trauma, and written materials were given to the couple to augment the counseling with practical advice for supporting their children.

Even co-workers received attention from the EA and work/life programs, as a critical incident stress debriefing was conducted with the husband's fellow employees. By helping the workers deal with their feelings about the tragedy and discussing ways they could support the family, the debriefing reduced their anxiety and energized them to reach out to the family in a variety of practical, emotional, and spiritual ways.

The bottom line for this employee was that the company treated him like family, looking out for him in a time of great need. Working together, the EA and work/life programs were able to offer him assistance he didn't even realize he needed! He certainly didn't know or care about the distinct areas of expertise, staffing, or responsibilities of one program versus the other. All he knew is that the attention given his family addressed the "whole" of their experience.

This case illustrates the combined power of EAPs and work/life programs. Alone, neither service could have provided the full array of personal, emotional, legal, financial, and practical advice and support offered to this family. Without the expertise and input of both programs, the critical incident debriefing for the co-workers would not have been as rich or as complete, and those who attended the debriefing likely would have emerged from the session with fewer ideas and less confidence about their ability to reach out to the family.

The groundwork for this comprehensive and seamless response to tragedy had been laid long before the family's home burst into flames. The EAP assumed responsibility for the clinical areas of intervention, while the work/life program provided insurance, contracting, and construction advice, developed a telecommuting arrangement, arranged for back-up child care services, and implemented the company's leave policies. The employer, meanwhile, didn't care which program provided which service; it just wanted the best job done for this family.

The EAP at this company had been in place since the mid-1970s and had earned the respect of management and employees alike. In the 1990s, several work/life vendors had approached the company with services that did not sound as if they were covered by the EAP, including child/elder care resources, consultation about adoption policies, parental leave following childbirth or adoption, health and wellness programs, and so on. The company contracted for these services and appointed an internal program coordinator.

The EAP and work/life program operated parallel to each other in the company at that time, each reporting to a different department director. Each program was at the same organizational level within the company. After four years of this arrangement, the vice president of human resources asked the two programs to discuss collaboration, consolidation, or the acquisition of one by the other. Why, he wondered, should employees have to call two different numbers for services that seemed so aligned with one another? And how did employees know when to call which program anyway?

This was a blinding flash of the obvious, but it took a

directive from top management to induce the two programs to collaborate wholeheartedly with one another. After several months of open, honest discussion and debate between the program coordinators, the decision was made to recommend a "Work/Life Balance Department" and a combined EAP-work/life resource and referral program to deliver the services that make work/life balance policies come alive. The recommendation was accepted by management, and implementation occurred quickly.

Continuous innovation through ongoing dialogue among EAP and work/life balance staff, in concert with the entire workforce, has moved these services to a central, influential position within the company. The services are not static; they are always changing and growing to meet the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and maintaining the very best workforce of the 21st century.

Case 2: Motorcycle Accident

Joe's troubles began years ago when he was severely injured in a motorcycle accident. Upon returning to work, Joe was referred to the EAP for help in coping with his injuries. He made a successful transition back to full-time employment and worked for a few years before he began experiencing seizures.

While the EAP worked on the clinical issues stemming from the accident, the work/life program tackled the job of searching for an alternative work arrangement that would benefit both Joe and his employer.

The seizures started as occasional episodes when he would "zone out" during meetings, then progressed to more noticeable events and eventually to full seizures. Joe attempted to resolve the problem through medication and then surgery, which proved unsuccessful. He returned to the EAP for assistance in deciding whether to stay in the workplace and for help resolving his feelings of dependence on others and his resentment at being labeled unproductive.

Addressing these emotions and providing advice regarding a possible life-changing decision necessitated the combined efforts of the EAP and work/life program. Like the family whose house burned down, Joe presented a wide variety of needs that neither program alone could have offered.

While the EAP worked with Joe on the clinical issues stemming from the accident and the changes it had wrought in his life, the work/life program tackled the job of searching for an alternative work arrangement that would benefit everyone. That arrangement turned out to be telecommuting and a reduced work schedule, thereby allowing Joe to work from

home (he is a computer technician), continue his regular appointments with a physician on his own time, and eliminate his fear of suffering seizures in the workplace. The EAP then worked with Joe's managers and co-workers to implement the arrangement and ensure that it met everyone's needs, and performed a mini-CISD for employees who had been affected by Joe's illness and/or would be dealing with him in the future. The work/life program made regular checks on Joe's progress at home, helping him with various living arrangements and the minutiae of everyday life.

Working together, the EAP and work/life program helped Joe stay productive, assisted the workforce in stretching the boundaries of acceptable work definitions, and demonstrated to all employees the value of accommodating workers with special needs. The EAP itself had a history of stretching boundaries—it started in the early 1980s as an alcohol and drug rehabilitation referral service, then expanded into a larger, broad-brush program dealing with all aspects of employee concerns within the core functions outlined by the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA). As work/life issues such as dependent care became a predominant request in the EAP, it expanded its focus yet again.

Case 3: Integrated Program Model

A third example of an evolving employee assistance program involves an employer whose director of diversity left that post in the spring of 1999, creating a vacancy to be filled. The EAP manager was asked to cover that position until a decision could be made on where the diversity program would be housed. What emerged was an umbrella program titled "Workforce Enhancement" that includes employee assistance, diversity, work/life, and wellness initiatives.

Each service area has distinct responsibilities, but each can cross over at any time to assist the others. This type of program is considered "one-stop shopping" by managers and employees—they can choose the services that best meet their needs, and have the option of selecting additional services if required. So far, this umbrella program has worked well both with employees, who gain an abundance of services they may not have expected, and with managers, who have reported satisfaction at being able to gather information for the whole employee.

As the employee assistance profession evolves, there will be many such hybrid programs that develop a range of servic-

es to suit particular worksites and employee populations. A 1998 survey sponsored by William M. Mercer and Bright Horizons Family Solutions found that 13 percent of the more than 420 responding employers offered an integrated EAP—what the survey called "life cycle resource and referral services."

Employee assistance professionals are recognizing that work/life issues are becoming as much a focus at work as mental health and recovery issues were when EAPs were launched. In fact, many EA professionals already are engaged in addressing work/life issues. Such concern for tailored services is explained by the intense competition among employers for the best and brightest employees. In a competitive labor market,

Life Cycle Resource and Referral Services	
EAP Services	Work/life Services
Chemical dependency	Academic and financial aid referrals
Critical incident stress management	Adoption issues
Drug-free workplace programming	Child care, parenting, and special needs
Emotional problems	Consultation regarding work/life balance policies
Family concerns	Elder care
Management coaching and consultation	Federal tax controversy assistance
Marriage/relationship counseling	Financial and credit problems
Other addictions	Legal advice
Stress reduction	Organization of personal/family documents
Violence management	Personal care: health and wellness, convenience services, and pet care
	Prenatal care
	Pre-retirement lifestyle planning

added value may influence employee decisions about joining or staying with a company.

EAPs traditionally have been aligned with the business goal of restoring productivity and efficiency after personal or family problems have interfered with employees' lives. Work/life programs meet this same goal with a variety of services that provide personal assistance, such as child or elder care, academic financial aid, career counseling, convenience services, health and wellness consultation, or even pet care. Rick Wald, a principal and national practice leader for Mercer's work/life consulting practice in Minneapolis, thinks the percentage of employers offering integrated EAP and work/life programs will grow dramatically each year.

There are many examples of integration among the EAPA membership in the corporate, union, governmental, and non-profit sectors. The cases cited in this article occur with certain frequency among all employers. Are you prepared to handle the whole picture? ■

issues involved in rebuilding after a fire. In addition, the entire family was offered counseling to cope with the trauma, and written materials were given to the couple to augment the counseling with practical advice for supporting their children.

Even co-workers received attention from the EA and work/life programs, as a critical incident stress debriefing was conducted with the husband's fellow employees. By helping the workers deal with their feelings about the tragedy and discussing ways they could support the family, the debriefing reduced their anxiety and energized them to reach out to the family in a variety of practical, emotional, and spiritual ways.

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EAPs and Work/Family Programs

→ Different Paths, ← Same Purpose?

by Patricia A. Herlihy, Ph.D., R.N.

At the 1995 EAPA Annual Conference in Seattle, Wash., I participated in a panel discussion titled "EAP and Work/Family: A Natural Partnering." Suffering from jet lag and feeling slightly disorganized after learning that our third panelist had the flu, I began my presentation with a Freudian slip about the "garbage" that EAPs bring to the table. I paused at my mistake, and the audience began to giggle and then broke out in genuine laughter.

Having worked in mental health and, in particular, substance abuse for most of my clinical career, I understand only too well the notion of stigma. People have always been uncomfortable with the dark side of the human race and prefer to distance themselves from anything remotely associated with deviance. Therefore, a program such as an EAP that deals with personal "problems" can provoke uncomfortable reactions, while work/family programs, which are marketed as dealing with "life events" such as child care and elder care, tend to evoke a much warmer response. This article will explore the differences and similarities between the two programs, discuss their relationship to one another, and offer some thoughts about what the future holds.

History buffs will remember that occupational alcoholism programs (OAPs) arose from workforce needs during World War II. A shortage of male workers prompted some corporations to recruit workers from the Bowery area of New York, resulting in the hiring of numerous alcoholics. Corporate medical directors postulated that it might be more cost- and time-effective to rehabilitate these problem drinkers than to have a revolving-door employment policy. This led to the emergence of occupational alcoholism programs, which later evolved into employee assistance programs in the early 1970s.

Work/family programs, meanwhile, trace their development to the Great Society, when the federal government sponsored the formation of county-based "child care coordinating

councils." These programs were designed to coordinate child care resources for preschool children so that Head Start centers would be in close proximity to targeted children. The "4-Cs," as these programs were known, were the foundation of the child care resource and referral programs that emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s as more and more women joined the workforce. These resource and referral programs grew and became increasingly popular in the 1980s as they expanded their services to include elder care and other services.

Workplace changes are driving a general movement toward the integration of employee services across the board.

Thus, while both EAPs and work/family programs were developed to address issues "outside of work," they grew up in separate and distinct branches of the workplace. EAPs frequently were housed in the corporate medical department, while work/family programs generally came under the aegis of the human resources department.

In the early 1990s, a few radical souls began to suggest that the two programs collaborate to deliver their services. This idea met with considerable resistance from both the employee assistance and work/family fields. In response, Boston University's Center for Work and Family conducted a national survey of EAPs and work/family programs in 1994 to assess the relationship between the two service providers. Respondents were asked the following question:

If there is a separation between EA and work/family initiatives in your company, which of the following reasons most accurately describes the rationale for that policy?

- Different historical origins
- Different foci
- Confidentiality needs
- Turf issues
- Stigma of EAP

Pat Herlihy is a research analyst affiliated with Boston College's Center for Work and Family, where she was the principal investigator on the national survey of EAPs and work/life programs mentioned in this article. She currently is serving as a subject matter expert on EAPA's Task Force on Employee Assistance and Work/Life Programs. She can be reached by phone at (508) 655-9316 or by e-mail at pherlihy@mediaone.com.

While the quantitative data showed that EAPs and work/family programs overwhelmingly (81 percent) had developed as different and distinct initiatives, the qualitative responses clearly revealed that the stigma associated with EAPs was the leading reason for keeping them apart. One respondent captured the essence of this dilemma by commenting that EAPs are viewed as the "last resort," whereas work/family programs are "more a first line of defense." (Herlihy, 1997)

Overall, there seemed to be a sense of uneasiness within each program at the possibility of joining forces with the other. Three of four respondents claimed no interest whatsoever in working together, opting instead for a separation of services.

Know What Works

Do EAPs and work/life programs still view each other in the same light today? More specifically, what effect (if any) have the evolution of work/life programs and other changes in the work environment had on EAPs and the employee assistance field? Without question, the workplace has changed dramatically since the Boston University survey: Mergers, acquisitions, globalization, and the tightening of the labor market have affected all employee services; employee retention has become a key issue for employers (AON, 1999); and an aging workforce (40 percent of the adult population is 50 or older) is giving rise to new and very different needs (AARP, 2000). These changes are driving a general movement toward the integration of employee services across the board.

In the early 1990s, while the work/family field was mushrooming and gaining national recognition, EAPs were in the fight of their lives with the managed mental health care market. Over the course of the last 10 years, EAPs have learned to capitalize on the notion of integrated behavioral health care and now appear to be looking for additional ways to leverage their services. An example of this is seen at ComPsych, the fourth-largest EAP vendor in the country. Dave Levine, the firm's senior vice president, describes the process as "looking further upstream"—an old quality management concept that focuses the business on picturing the end result and designing comprehensive programs to get there. One way that his company has made the transition from a traditional EAP is by changing the name of their service to Guidance Resources, which embraces a myriad of topics, including work/life issues.

Working Solutions, an EAP vendor that was one of the pioneers of the "one-stop shopping" approach, calls its employee assistance program "Living Solutions" in an attempt to neutralize the stigma surrounding mental health issues. The firm's Web page, "Human Concerns in the Workplace," includes an extensive list of services, including child/family resource and referral, adult/elder resource and referral, chronic medical support services, legal and financial assistance, inte-

grated disability solutions, and, of course, an employee assistance program.

Many Web sites devoted to EAPs and work/life programs are very engaging and informative, and each gives a hint of its corporate culture and main focus. For example, Magellan Health Services, the leading managed mental health care organization in the country and largest EAP provider, emphasize its specialty in the mental health and substance abuse areas. Other vendors use a softer stroke, focusing on life solutions in general. The key for vendors is always to know what forum works for a specific organization and its particular employees.

Another factor in today's marketplace is technology, with dot-com companies revolutionizing the workplace in dizzying fashion. Lifecare.com, which offers both Web-based and telephonic services, and Epotec, which provides Web-based services, are two examples of companies that are capitalizing on the Internet to provide solutions to EAPs for use with their customers. Arguments can be made on both sides of the issue of whether on-line services are effective, but Bruce Davidson, Lifecare.com's manager of work/life consulting and EAP relations, sums up the options quite well. He postulates that today's

Clearly, the signposts are indicating that the marketplace is leaning toward some form of collaboration or integration, but it is important for these services to remain flexible to meet the needs of our ever-changing workforce.

employees want access to educational information and resources in ways that fit both their workstyles and lifestyles. Some will prefer to search for information and resources on the Web; some will use the Web as an initial step, then speak with a specialist; some will want a listening ear on the other end of the phone; and some will absolutely need a face-to-face meeting with a professional. Dale Masi of the University of Maryland-Baltimore recently conducted research regarding telephone consultation versus face-to-face consultation, and her study is a wonderful first step in measuring the effectiveness of different vehicles of service and options for the future.

Powerful Partners

What steps should EAPs and work/family programs take next? For the moment, both the employee assistance and work/family fields seem to be flourishing. EAP enrollment is reported to be up 6.8 percent since last year (Oss, 2000), which translates into more than 62 million covered employees. Work/family issues, meanwhile, continue to be discussed on the front pages of newspapers, even more so as the presidential campaign continues. But some specific examples of what happens when

EAPs and work/family programs collaborate or even integrate their services hint at where these fields are headed.

In 1998, the University of Texas at Houston decided to begin housing its work/life program in the Employee Assistance Department. At the time, the EAP's utilization rate was barely 0.5 percent. With the addition of work/life services, even though as a separate program, the EAP's utilization rate increased to 12 percent, while the work/life program's utilization rate doubled, from 8 percent to more than 16 percent. Sherry Wilson, director of EA and work/life programs at the University of Texas, says that housing the work/life program in the EA Department has fostered a more positive form of collaboration within and amongst the two programs.

A more direct correlation is seen in the banking industry. A major financial house in the Midwest initially had stand-alone employee assistance and work/life services through an outside vendor. The EAP's utilization rate was between 5 and 6 percent, and the work/life program's was 10 to 11 percent. When they integrated their services into a seamless product, the utilization rate increased to 22 percent. Indeed, anecdotal evidence abounds about the tendency of utilization to increase once EAPs and work/life programs combine their services. People report that there is an easier flow of information and services between departments when the two programs are housed under one umbrella.

What does this mean for the future of these two fields? Clearly, the signposts are indicating that the marketplace is leaning toward some form of collaboration or integration, but it is important for these services to remain flexible to meet the needs of our ever-changing workforce. One clinician I spoke to offered some advice in this area. She said people and their needs fall all over the continuum, and the employee assistance and work/life fields need to meet employees wherever they are at any given moment in time rather than focus on the boundaries of their professions.

I think that is where we are headed in today's tight market. People need answers and need them fast. Stigma is less an issue today than it was 20 years ago. Both EAPs and work/family programs have benefited from each other's struggles and meanderings. Now, together, these fields are in a position to be powerful partners. ■

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The Integration of Employee Assistance and Work/Life Programs

A study of employee assistance and work/life professionals assesses the current practices and future directions of both fields and the integration of services.

by Patricia A. Herlihy, Ph.D., Mark Attridge, Ph.D., and Sandra P. Turner, M.S.W.

The Employee Assistance Professionals Association has been tracking the development of the employee assistance and work/life (W/L) fields for roughly 10 years. With the rise of the so-called "New Economy" and the dramatic changes occurring in the workplace, EAPA felt it was time to revisit the issue of whether some form of collaboration or integration of EA and W/L programs and services might be advantageous for both employers and employees. The association thus began a three-phase project to study the issue of integration. This article will focus on the key findings of the first phase of this endeavor.

As the 2001 Employee Assistance and Work/Life Professionals Survey evolved, it became clear that the concept of integration is even more complex than initially thought. EA and W/L programs may be part of the same corporate department or report to the same manager, which is one form of integration. But there is a more subtle and perhaps more powerful form of integration that involves true collaboration of effort, no matter where the programs reside. Capturing the level and type of integration proved to be a daunting task, as the study had to rely on respondents' perceptions and understandings of the concept of integration.

To obtain as clear and broad a view as possible of the level of integration within the EA and W/L fields, EAPA asked the Alliance for Work/Life Professionals (AWLP) and the Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA) to invite their members to participate in a survey. Both organizations agreed, marking the first time the three associations have joined forces on a project of this magnitude. It is important to note that, while professionals from all three organizations participated,

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801 members of EAPA and 70 members of EASNA responded to the survey questionnaire as opposed to 125 members of AWLP. The survey results thus may be skewed toward an employee assistance perspective.

The study concentrated on the programmatic aspects of the EA and W/L fields, paying particular attention to the integration of programs and services in the workplace. Integration was defined in the survey questionnaire as "collaboration among departments to achieve unity of effort."

Professional Identity

Two of the initial questions on the survey asked respondents which professional organization they are associated with and whether they identify themselves as primarily an EA professional, primarily a W/L professional, or both (or other). Approximately one in six survey respondents consider themselves both an EA professional and a W/L professional, and this finding was roughly consistent across members of all three associations.

TABLE 1

Self-Identity	% of Total Sample	Results Within Each Professional Association		
		% of AWLP Members	% of EAPA Members	% of EASNA Members
Work/Life	10%	66	1	0
EA	62%	4	70	70
Both	17%	16	19	24
Other	11%	14	10	6

Provision of Services

The survey also included a list of 30 services that reflect work/life initiatives (Friedman and Wald, 2000) and elements of the EAP Core Technology. Participants were asked to indicate which services are provided by the EAP, by the W/L program, or by another business unit or are not provided in their organizations.

For those who identified themselves as being primarily an EA professional (n=575), each of the 30 services was coded as being offered if "EAP" was part of the response selected (EAP,

EAP and Work/Life, or EAP and Other). Similarly, for those who identified themselves as being primarily a W/L professional (n = 92), each of the 30 services was coded as being offered if "W/L" was part of the response selected. Finally, for those who identified themselves as being both an EA and W/L professional (n = 160), each of the 30 services was coded as being offered if either "EAP" or "W/L" was part of the response selected.

A threshold of 50 percent was used to identify a service as characteristic of the group. The "both EA and W/L professional" group offered the most services (22), followed by the "EA" group (17) and the "W/L" group (12). In general, the "EA" group and the "both EA and W/L" group offer similar services, although respondents who are both EA and W/L professionals are more likely than EA professionals to offer services that are also offered by most W/L professionals (particularly elder care and child care).

Figure 1 (below) helps visualize the above analysis. The circle on the left lists the 17 services that are provided by the EAP as reported by a majority of EA professionals; the circle on the right lists the 12 services provided by the W/L program as reported by a majority of W/L professionals. In the middle, where the two circles overlap, are the six services offered by a majority of both professional groups. The services listed in bold are provided by those who identify themselves as both EA and W/L professionals.

Overall, the survey responses indicate that while EA professionals and W/L professionals offer certain services that are unique to their individual fields, a significant level of collaboration/integration is taking place at the service level. The overlap of services tends to be in the non-core areas of each profession, except among what may be called a "New Breed" of pro-

Key Survey Findings

- Approximately one in six survey respondents consider themselves both an EA professional and a work/life professional, and this finding was consistent across all three organizations.
- There is a significant level of collaboration/integration at the service level. The overlap of services tends to be in the non-core areas of each profession, except among what may be called a "new breed" of professional who seems to provide services across core areas of both professions.
- Respondents generally agreed that collaboration or some form of integration is better for the employee and employer than two separate, focused programs. They expressed ambivalence, however, about the impact of collaboration on professional identity and the identity of each practice field.

professionals who seem to provide services across core areas of both professions.

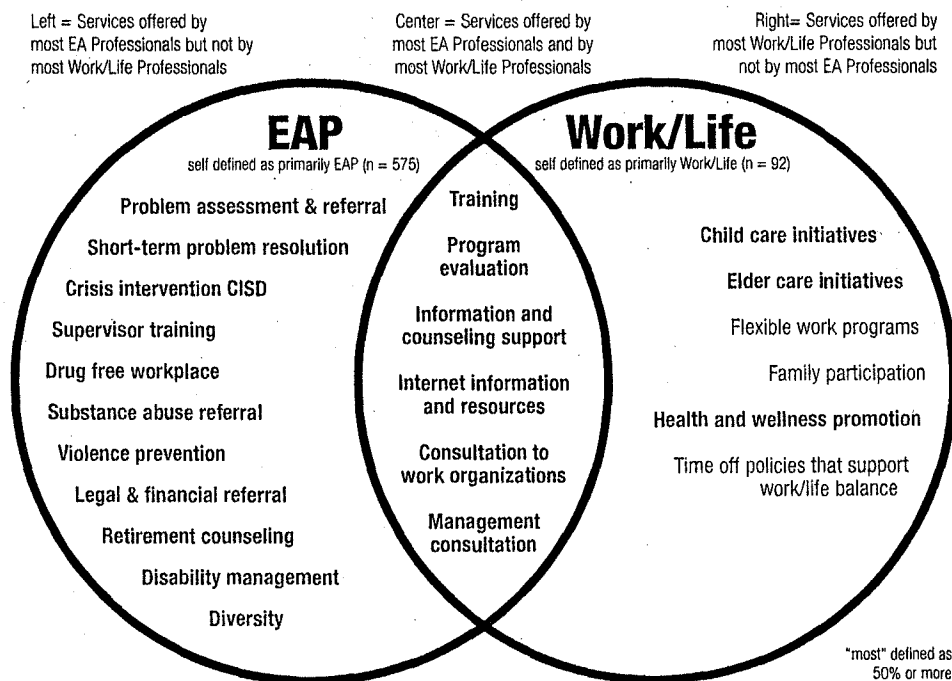
Conceptual Model

The survey also asked five qualitative questions regarding the integration of EA and W/L programs. Respondents' comments revealed a general consensus that collaboration or some form of integration is more beneficial to employees and employers than two distinct programs that operate independently of each other. For employees, integration was perceived to provide the benefits of one-stop shopping, a broader range of services, greater ease of access, less confusion, and seamless continuity.

For employers, the advantages of integration were seen as administrative simplicity, prevention and treatment of more potential problems, cost savings, and consistency of programmatic efforts.

The respondents noted, however, that integration might blur the focus of each program and the identity and integrity of each profession. These concerns were more pronounced among work/life professionals than EA professionals. W/L professionals rarely depicted their programs as integrated with EAPs; instead, they indicated that the two programs are distinct or report to different leaders in the workplace, but overlap to assist employees who have needs in both service areas. EA professionals, on the other hand, were more likely to describe the EA and W/L programs as collaborators on behalf of employees and to view integration

FIGURE 1



as an expansion of EAPs to incorporate and deliver work/life resource and referral services.

Interestingly, respondents that offer both EA and W/L services more commonly described the programs as separate and distinct. They seemed to use the term "integration" to mean offering different services, such as employee assistance, work/life, and wellness, under the broader umbrella of corporate health services.

Another potential disadvantage of integration noted by respondents is that employees might notice a decrease in service quality if too many services are offered together. Respondents also indicated that integration could muddle communications about services and that programs would be less effective if they were not staffed by cross-trained and licensed professionals.

Next Steps

According to economist Roger Cass, "The future is already written. All we need is the confidence to accept it." The results of this survey indicate that integration of EA and W/L programs has already arrived on some fronts.

First and foremost, there appears to be a new breed of service provider who identifies him/herself as both an EA and W/L professional. Second, there is a considerable overlap of services that both EA and W/L professionals provide. And professionals in both fields generally agree that integration is better for both the employee and the employer.

Ambivalence and confusion surface, however, when questions arise about the process of integration, whether integration is an effective service delivery model for all organizations, and the implications of integration for each of the separate professions. The accompanying sidebar offers two examples of companies that have struggled with these questions and found answers that work in their corporate cultures. Clearly a range of models would be valuable, as well as education between the two professions on their core technologies and competencies.

The survey of EA and W/L professionals represents the first of three phases in this research endeavor. Phase II will explore current practices and future directions among the vendor population, while phase III will survey corporate organizations and reveal their views on the issue of integration of services. The third phase will replicate the 1994 National Survey of Employee Assistance and Work/Family Programs conducted by Boston University's Center on Work and Family. All three professional organizations that participated in the survey are committed to further exploration of this topic. **E**

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Two Employers, Two Service Delivery Models

The University of California at Berkeley is the largest employer in the East Bay area of San Francisco, with approximately 15,000 faculty and staff serving 35,000 students. At Berkeley, the EAP and work/life program are part of University Health Services, which is the primary medical and mental health provider for students as well as faculty and staff. Faculty/staff services provided by University Health Services include wellness, ergonomics, vocational rehabilitation, workers' compensation, and occupational health in addition to employee assistance and work/life.

Each of these internal programs is separate and maintains its own identity, but the program managers all report to the assistant vice chancellor, University Health and Counseling Services. Program planning and development are coordinated through a management team structure. While intake for each program and its components is separate, publicity for workshops, brown bag presentations, and all other activities are integrated.

This model of **separated but coordinated services** is designed to preserve the integrity of each program, promote trust in the confidentiality of the EAP, increase awareness and support of all programs, and help prevent overlaps and/or gaps in services.

An **integrated external model** is provided by Humana, one of the nation's largest publicly traded health benefits companies, with approximately 6.4 million enrolled members. In the fall of 2001, Humana decided to integrate its employee assistance and work/life programs to help employees maximize their effectiveness, both on and off the job.

To raise awareness and encourage use of the integrated product, Ceridian's LifeWorks, Humana promoted the program to two distinct audiences: employees seeking EA services and those looking for assistance with the everyday challenges of life. Prior to the launch date, popular songs about finance, child care, and home repair were featured (along with traditional articles about the EAP) on the company's Intranet. The week the program debuted, the accompanying Web site went live and recorded more than 1,200 hits.

By offering EA and W/L services in a single program, the stigma attached to employee assistance has virtually been eliminated at Humana. Employees' perceptions of the EAP shifted from "provides help for an emotional crisis" to "is a resource for anything to help you make life easier." Other benefits soon became apparent as well. Combined on-line and telephonic access resulted in a five-fold increase in utilization during the first two months, and integration resulted in a 35 percent savings over the cost of the two separate programs.

Employee Assistance and Work/Life Core Technologies

Analyses of the core components of the employee assistance and work/life professions shed further light on whether their respective programs lend themselves to integration.

by Patricia A. Herlihy, Ph.D., R.N.

Last summer, the Employee Assistance Professionals Association, the Employee Assistance Society of North America, and the Alliance of Work/Life Professionals collaborated on a survey of nearly 1,000 employee assistance and work/life professionals to determine the extent of integration of their respective programs and services. The survey revealed a general consensus that "collaboration or some form of integration" would benefit both employees and employers, but respondents were ambivalent about how far integration could go before professional identity and practice integrity would be compromised (for additional results, see the EAPA Exchange, Jan./Feb. 2002, pg. 10). The survey also found that members of both professions wanted more specific information about the "other" field.

In an attempt to meet this request and further the dialogue between the two professions, the EAPA Work/Life Committee asked two experts to describe and discuss the core principles and competencies of their respective fields. In the accompanying articles, Ken Collins examines the evolution of the EAP Core Technology, while Mary Ellen Gornick looks at the bodies of knowledge and core competencies that define the work/life profession.

On first read, the articles and their accompanying core technologies appear to be describing two separate spheres: the medical world of treatment and health care costs and the human relations world of benefits and corporate policy issues. But perhaps the 1988 version of the EAP Core Technology captures the essence of these differences with its references to "micro-linkages" and "macro-linkages." A contemporary EAP focuses on linking individuals to resources in the community and providing consultation to work organizations on benefits structures and health care provider contracts; a work/life program similarly provides direct services to individuals, such as life-cycle consultation and child or elder care referral, and also consults with the work organization on broader issues, including enhancing the work environment and developing community relations initiatives.

While both the employee assistance and work/life fields operate at both the "micro" and "macro" levels, their foci are slightly different. Most people would argue that EAPs focus mainly on clinical issues, while work/life programs concentrate

more on what are termed "life events" or non-clinical issues.

If one views employee assistance and work/life through the lens of "micro" and "macro" linkages, there appear to be many opportunities for the two fields to collaborate, coordinate, and consult with each other. For the moment, it seems that most of the collaboration is occurring at the micro, or programmatic, level. But the results of the 2001 Employee Assistance and Work/Life Professionals Survey suggest that not only is there collaboration at the programmatic level, but there are hints at integration emerging in some of the macro areas of both professions.

For example, approximately one in six survey respondents consider themselves both an EA professional and a work/life professional, and this finding was consistent across all three organizations that participated in the survey. The survey also found significant collaboration/integration at the service level in the non-core areas of each profession, except among what may be called a "new breed" of professional who seems to provide services across core areas of both professions.

Adding to Their Menus

Employers seem to be looking at employee assistance and work/life services in a new light, which has given rise to new models of service delivery. The new models are influenced by consolidation among work/life referral vendors, technological advances affecting service delivery, and increased pressure from clients for a more integrated system. EAP vendors are moving quickly to add work/life referral to their menu of services in one of two ways: (1) creating strategic partnerships with work/life referral vendors for the provision of work/life referral services, or (2) acquiring and fully integrating work/life services via a single intake process.

Whether the dominant form of delivery of employee assistance and work/life services will be collaboration or integration remains to be seen. To provide some insight into this and other issues, the EAPA Work/Life Committee will survey vendors in both fields to identify current practices and future trends. The committee will then interview employers (purchasers of employee assistance and work/life services) to put the final pieces into the puzzle of the future relationship between EAPs and work/life programs.

The EAP Core Technology

by Kenneth R. Collins

Comparing the 1988 EAP Core Technology with the current version (approved in 1998) illustrates how dramatically EAP services shifted during the last decade. The 1988 Core Technology focused predominantly on employee substance abuse, while the current iteration references a broad practice scope that includes family members as well as employees, the work environment as well as the troubled employee, and a range of personal concerns that "include, but are not limited to, alcoholism, drug abuse, and mental and emotional disorders." To a large extent this change reflects the enormous influx of mental health professionals into EAP staff and managerial positions previously held by recovering individuals, accelerating the conversion of traditional EAPs into broad-brush programs.

The change in EAP personnel also predestined a shift of emphasis from supervisory referrals to employee self-referrals. Three of the six components of the 1988 Core Technology dealt with supervisory referrals, with the third component explicitly describing how a supervisor should use constructive confrontation to motivate a troubled employee to accept the option of EAP assistance. The current Core Technology, on the other hand, positions constructive confrontation alongside "motivation and short-term intervention" as methods of addressing employees with problems that may affect job performance, implying that it is an EAP tool and not a supervisory tool.

The assumption that self-referrals are preferable to supervisory referrals directly reflects the value that the professional mental health community places on client self-determination. Numerous studies have demonstrated, however, that substance-abusing clients have better outcomes when formally referred and closely monitored.

Finally, the 1988 Core Technology spoke of "micro-linkages" and "macro-linkages" between the EAP, the work organization, and counseling, treatment, and other community resources. At that time, many companies still had internally staffed EAPs, regional EAP providers controlled a significant chunk of the market, and national EAP firms were still privately owned and run by their founders. But dramatic changes were taking place in the health care market that would eventually result in indemnity health care enrollment dropping from 73 percent to 7 percent of the market and, in the process, redefining EAP service delivery.

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Work/Life Core Competencies

by Mary Ellen Gornick, M.A.

Over the last one-and-a-half years, the Alliance of Work/Life Professionals, in partnership with the Boston College Center for Work and Family, has officially defined the bodies of knowledge and core skills required to be a competent work/life practitioner. Work/life professionals do not focus on one area; rather, they work in one or more areas of a continuum that includes consultation to organizations, community support, and direct services to employees and their families.

Work/life practitioners help organizations create work environments that enhance the commitment and investment of employees. In this capacity, their emphasis is on culture change and work redesign. As consultants to management, work/life professionals direct their efforts at changing the way work is done and the culture in which work is performed.

For example, work/life practitioners assist in formulating policies regarding flexible work arrangements (FWAs), leaves of absence, and paid time off. In so doing they help set corporate ground rules and expectations for employees to control their work schedules.

Managers are critical to the success of any work/life effort, as they control work practices. Therefore, work/life practitioners provide managers with tools and strategies to support their missions as they engage in work redesign and the implementation of FWAs.

Positioning work/life services strategically requires that programs be aligned with the overall human resources plan and tied to business drivers. Work/life practitioners direct comprehensive organizational assessments to ensure the strategic alignment of work/life programs with the employer's mission and values.

Focus on Community

As part of their effort to ensure strategic alignment, work/life professionals reach out to communities to facilitate win-win partnerships. The corporate focus on community stems from awareness that strong communities with rich resources support families and workers. Supporting communities also helps create a stable marketplace, which in turn fosters a strong economy.

This role for business is expanding as the need for addi-

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Transformation of the EAP Marketplace

Excessive spending on the indemnity side of behavioral health care and inadequate mental health and substance abuse treatment on the HMO (health maintenance organization) side combined to create the need for a new entity, the managed behavioral health care organization (MBHCO). MBHCOs quickly realized that the network model they were using to provide mental health services could just as readily be used to deliver employee assistance services. Throughout the 1990s, repeated waves of acquisitions and mergers resulted in five MBHCOs controlling more than two-thirds of the EAP market.

MBHCOs have achieved economies of scale that allow them to offer low-cost EAP services and provide additional incentives to customers purchasing both EAP and managed behavioral health care from the same vendor. The cost efficiencies attributable to the network model have resulted in widespread acceptance of EAPs and readily accessible short-term counseling for employees and their dependents. But network model EAPs have disadvantages as well: They do not attain the organizational integration and visibility of worksite-based programs, they have lower overall utilization, they receive far fewer supervisory referrals, and they identify a much smaller number of substance abuse cases.

Historically, EAPs have done a much better job of managing the micro-linkages to treatment programs and individual providers than managing the macro-linkages that might have moderated behavioral health care spending. Although the contemporary EAP Core Technology references EAP consultation to work organizations on benefits design and advocacy for greater employee access to medical and behavioral treatment, in practice this is more the exception than the rule. Apart from the small number of surviving internal and internally managed programs, few EAPs are consulting with employers on effective relations with treatment and other service providers, managing provider contracts, and encouraging work organizations to make medical and behavioral coverage available and accessible for alcoholism, drug abuse, and mental and emotional disorders. ■

Definition of an EAP

An "Employee Assistance Program" or "EAP" is a worksite-based program designed to assist: (1) work organizations in addressing productivity issues, and (2) employee clients in identifying and resolving personal concerns including, but not limited to health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal issues that may affect job performance.

(Employee Assistance Professionals Association, 1998)

EAP Core Technology

The "Employee Assistance Program Core Technology" or "EAP Core Technology" represents the essential components of the employee assistance (EA) profession. These components combine to create a unique approach to addressing work organization productivity issues and "employee client" personal concerns affecting job performance and ability to

tional community-based resources continues to grow and the public and nonprofit sectors find themselves with limited funding and staff. Work/life professionals facilitate community resource development and partnerships by identifying service gaps, bringing together stakeholders, and facilitating opportunities for the formation of partnerships.

Partnerships are tied most frequently to service gaps in the community that negatively affect employees and residents. To assist in closing the gaps, companies are increasingly providing resources—giving money, products, or in-kind contributions; organizing volunteer programs; and initiating community partnerships and collaborations—that either eliminate or alleviate the situation. For example, a business may provide a grant to a local child care agency for the development of second- and third-shift child care.

Focus on Direct Services

Work/life professionals also provide direct services to employees and their families, including managing child care centers, facilitating elder care support groups, managing dependent care financial subsidy programs, implementing lactation support programs, or directing consultation and referral programs (e.g., dependent care, convenience services, and concierge services). To date, the most active area of integration between EAPs and work/life programs has occurred within the realm of the delivery of consultation and referral programs. Work/life professionals who provide these services are experts in specific areas of dependent care, such as child care and elder care. It is in this direct service area where the most common touch points between EAPs and work/life programs, as well as the potential for collaborative efforts, exist. ■

Definition of Work/Life Services

Actions taken by employers and employees to help the workforce effectively handle the growing pressure and responsibilities of both work and personal lives, to live and work up to their full potential, and to achieve both life balance and increased productivity.

(Boston College Center on Work and Family, 1999)

Work/Life Competencies

I. Bodies of Knowledge

- *Context for the development of work/life:* work/life drivers, implications of research, and impact on business and public policy
- *Work/life concepts and resources:* framework, stages of work/life practice, principles of excellence, hierarchies of need, and commitment index
- *Business fundamentals that influence work/life responses:* business realities, trends in benefit practice, industrial and labor relations, and relevant human resources issues
- *Strategic planning and management of work/life initiatives:* model visions, strategies, tools for business case, and assessments to align business issues with work/life responses
- *Work/life responses:* range of programs, policies and

perform on the job. The EAP Core Technology is:

- Consultation with, training of, and assistance to work organization leadership (managers, supervisors, and union stewards) seeking to manage the troubled employee, enhance the work environment, and improve employee job performance; and outreach to and education of employees and their family members about the availability of EAP services;
- Confidential and timely problem identification/assessment services for employee clients with personal concerns that may affect job performance;
- Use of constructive confrontation, motivation, and short-term intervention with employee clients to address problems that affect job performance;
- Referral of employee clients for diagnosis, treatment, and assistance, plus case monitoring and follow-up services;
- Consultation to work organizations in establishing and maintaining effective relations with treatment and other service providers and in managing provider contracts;
- Consultation to work organizations to encourage availability of and employee access to health benefits covering medical and behavioral problems, including, but not limited to, alcoholism, drug abuse, and mental and emotional disorders; and
- Identification of the effects of EAP services on the work organization and individual job performance.

(Employee Assistance Professionals Association, 1998)

practices, and connection of work/life agenda community

- *Measurement and impact of work/life responses:* processes and tools to assess need with employees, the organization and the community, principles and techniques for evaluation, current research findings, interpretation and presentation of findings, and return-on-investment and cost-benefit analyses

II. Core Skills

- *Organizational savvy:* assess organization, formal and informal power structures, motivation, and points of influence
- *Relationship building:* identify key relationships and build partnerships and strategic alliances
- *Strategic diagnosis and action:* analyze external impact on work/life, assess values, culture, and needs, and ascertain the connection between organizational conditions, business priorities, and work/life issues
- *Work/life policies, programs, and practices:* match models and options to organization, communicate initiatives, develop policies to include work/life practices, initiate and foster systemic change of the work culture, and select and manage work/life vendors
- *Measurement and continuous improvement:* determine effectiveness and measure impact of initiatives on employees and organization, conduct benchmarking, present measurement findings, apply research, undertake quality enhancement, and conduct return-on-investment and cost-benefit analyses

Successful Program Integration

An analysis of the challenges and opportunities facing an EAP that integrated with other programs reveals the keys to successfully serving the systemic needs of employees and work organizations.

by David L. Swihart, M.C., CPC, and Darci A. Thompson, M.S.W., CISW

Increasingly, employee assistance programs have become interested in exploring integration of their programming with other fields, namely work/life and wellness. Some EAPs have begun the process of integrating services, only to become uncertain about just what integration is and how to go about it.

"Integration" is difficult to define. In some literature, the definition of the term is assumed; in other literature, it is defined by demonstrating its principles in action. This article will attempt to do both—it will provide a working definition of the term, then demonstrate its application in a specific program, Life & Work Connections (LWC), a unit of the Human Resources Department at the University of Arizona. The article will examine key factors that have been critical to the program's success, discuss the advantages of integration, and identify some challenges that come with it.

Defining Integration

Integration, as defined by Life & Work Connections, involves bringing together, in a synergistic way, the specialized knowledge and trained expertise of professionals in different but related fields in order to better serve the organization and its employees.

"In a synergistic way" means that the positive outcome of two or more programs working together is greater than the sum of their independent actions (in contrast with stand-alone or "silo" programs). Through synergy, fewer resources can be used more effectively to produce a more powerful outcome. "Different but related fields" means programs with distinct content areas, such as employee assistance and child-care assistance, that are related because both have common psychosocial connections and address life-cycle issues of employees that potentially can interfere with workplace productivity.

LWC is an example of an integrated program that meets this definition. It began in 1990 as the Employee Wellness Program, with an emphasis on health promotion. It has since

evolved into an integrated program with five component pieces: Worksite Wellness (WW), Employee Assistance Counseling/Consultation (EACC), Child Care and Family Resources (CCFR), Elder Care and Life Cycle Resources (ECLCR), and Work/Life Support (WLS). This evolution had its roots in a systemic, whole-person, life-cycle approach taken by the professionals in each component area.

A Whole-Person Approach

A system can be conceptualized as a group of people or entities (e.g., offices, academic departments, or state agencies) that have some degree of mutual influence. Visually, one way to depict a system is to view its members as being connected by springs. The mutual influence can be seen as waves that ripple back and forth through the system when one or more members create an influence.

Individuals are part of many systems: their families, circle of friends, workplaces, and so on. When problems occur in one system that exceed a person's ability to keep the problems contained to that system, "spillover" occurs, transferring either negative or positive influences from one system to another. For example, negative spillover from home can affect the work environment, hurting work performance and straining the capacity of the employee—and perhaps that of his or her workgroup—to get the job done. Some types of spillover can be attributed to transitional issues that come and go over the course of a person's developmental life cycle, such as relationships, career development, parenting, grief, health, retirement, and aging.

Understanding the interaction of work, home, and community systems and the effects of developmental life-cycle issues on these systems led the Employee Wellness Program to a greater awareness of how resources could be integrated and more effectively leveraged to meet clients' real-world, whole-person needs. Based on its work with clients and on demographic information about the employee population, the EWP added components and changed its name to Life & Work Connections in recognition of its new role as an umbrella program for the "whole person."

Using this whole-person approach, LWC is able to address clients' problems in creative and unique ways. On a simple

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level, LWC provides case collaboration. For example, an employee assistance professional helping a client with a stressful situation at work discovered that the client was also struggling to care for her father, who was showing signs of Alzheimer's disease. The EA professional described the Elder Care and Life Cycle Resources service and, when the client expressed interest, introduced the employee to ECLCR staff. The information and education provided by the ECLCR service was later augmented by the EA professional, who worked with the client and family members on their relationship dynamics and decision-making process. This collaboration streamlined service delivery and enhanced the client's ability to minimize spillover at work.

Another example of creative innovation is the Worksite Wellness heart health screening. Participants undergo various physical measures of their cardiovascular health, then receive on-site consultations about their test results, fitness, and nutrition. Based on a growing body of whole-person research, WW began using an EA professional in the screenings to address participants' sleep and stress concerns. Participants routinely say this service is helpful and often disclose difficult situations to the EA professional in this setting.

For example, an employee whose job involves driving expressed concern at the screening about his alcohol use and agreed to meet with the EA professional to arrange for further help and referrals. Before the screening, the employee had no plans to seek help. A similar situation occurred when an employee admitted being on the verge of losing control over her domestic situation, which could have resulted in criminal charges. Counseling and referral to appropriate resources diffused the situation. These examples demonstrate the effectiveness of integration in identifying diverse concerns that can affect the workplace and providing early intervention to employees and risk management services to employers.

Key Factors in Effective Integration

Many factors contribute to the success of an integrated program, including leadership. The University of Arizona and its Human Resources Department have been forward-thinking and have supported LWC's pursuit of an integrated vision. The development of LWC's integrated program has been guided by a willingness to take risks, collaborate and receive feedback, draw on the wisdom of colleagues, and think strategically while listening to employee and organizational concerns.

Another key factor is hiring and cultivating a staff with domain expertise, a whole-person perspective, a willingness to trust and collaborate, and curiosity, which brings learning and innovation together. Domain expertise means that professional staff have earned graduate degrees, hold state licensing credentials where applicable, and have years of work experience in their respective fields.

Domain expertise is important because LWC serves a research-oriented academic institution whose employees value a staff with advanced degrees. Domain experts bring an awareness of best practices and current research and a depth of knowledge that fosters more innovation. By keeping current in their fields, LWC professionals also help maintain benchmark-

ing standards and ensure that the program is aware of and utilizes beneficial new research. Expertise is also expected of support staff, who are provided in-service education to complement specialized training and enhance their contribution to the integrated effort.

LWC staff share the whole-person perspective and actively seek information about fields and issues that touch on the periphery of their own expertise. This helps them understand how all systems in their clients' lives affect their work and how the five components of LWC can coordinate their services on behalf of the employee and institution.

The synergy that results when services are integrated provides better leveraging of resources than if the services were independent.

Staff also must be willing to trust and collaborate. The process of integration depends greatly on the component professionals, their attitudes, and the relationships that grow between and among them. There must be both professional and personal trust for integration to succeed. Professional trust comes from knowing that a colleague is knowledgeable in his or her field and can competently serve clients. Personal trust keeps working relationships harmonious and allows for the constructive give-and-take that is important to creativity and innovation. Both kinds of trust effectively eliminate "turf wars" and enhance the value of each component's core technology.

LWC has grown into an integrated program by discovering these key factors through both thoughtful decision-making and trial and error. Along the way, a number of advantages to integration have become evident, as well as some challenges.

Advantages of Integrated Programming

LWC has identified many tactical advantages to being a whole-person, integrated program. First, the program can respond more quickly to client needs without different services working at cross-purposes. Integrating services better fits the real-world, real-time needs of diverse employees.

Second, integration maximizes the impact of services. The synergy that results when services are integrated provides better leveraging of resources than if the services were independent or even joined together but operating independently.

Third, integration increases utilization and enhances market penetration of program components. When an employee uses one service, he or she becomes aware of the others and how they can work together to the employee's benefit. The core technology of each component field is not only preserved, its

visibility and applications are actually broadened by integration. For example, integration has introduced some employees to EA services through wellness programs.

Fourth, integration enables LWC to act more strategically. Through collaborative presentations to workgroups and departments, LWC raises employees' and supervisors' awareness of a broad range of productivity issues and introduces options for assistance that can improve both individual and workgroup resiliency.

Care must be taken to pace the workload and stay within the scope of services so that the integrity of the program remains intact.

Another strategic advantage that integration confers through systemic thinking is a heightened awareness of the local, national, and global issues that could affect the university and its employees. This "future scanning" can reveal emerging issues, such as the coming paucity of skilled workers, the aging of the workforce, and the continued rise in health care costs, that an integrated program can more effectively address in light of the university's concerns about recruitment and retention. Additionally, by conferring with colleagues in human resources and other departments, LWC staff can gather demographic and other information that is helpful in tailoring and delivering services that contribute to the well-being of employees and the university.

Finally, integration offers cost advantages at three levels. First, it is more cost-effective than stand-alone services; second, its synergy allows for better prevention and early intervention; and it adds value to the benefits package, thereby helping make the university more competitive in the market for workers.

Challenges of Integration

Just as integrating programs confers advantages, it also presents challenges. One challenge is pacing the workload. Because issues are viewed systemically rather than individually, integration induces program staff to take on too many projects to meet the myriad issues and concerns that life-cycle development presents. Care must be taken to pace the workload and stay within the scope of services so that the integrity of the program (in terms of quality, timeliness, and content) remains intact.

One way to maximize service offerings within the confines of staff and budget restrictions is by partnering with campus and community resources. For example, the university's health service assists with LWC's wellness screenings, while LWC has co-sponsored and conducted presentations at a "working caregivers" conference along with a consortium of agencies on

aging. A community vendor, meanwhile, provides sick-child care for employees.

Another challenge is developing objective outcome measures. Nationally, each program component field continues to debate the best way to capture outcome information in light of mitigating variables. LWC works to assess outcomes and quality assurance by analyzing utilization data, client satisfaction surveys, annual screening follow-up evaluations (to measure "lifestyle behavior change"), and anecdotal feedback.

These methods are somewhat useful, but they do not completely measure service impact on productivity or spillover. Additionally, context must always be considered when choosing what to measure. For example, absenteeism is often seen as a measure that detracts from productivity, yet time off for an employee can either diminish productivity or enhance it, depending on the context of the situation. The same is true of turnover—sometimes, the best outcome for the organization and the employee is the employee's resignation.

Measuring the effect of synergy is more difficult. Based on self-reports, clients highly value an integrated program: 96 percent of respondents to an EACC satisfaction survey reported that the availability of employee assistance and other LWC components "makes my work experience more positive." Similar results have been obtained from Worksite Wellness surveys, indicating that the availability of integrated programs is beneficial to employees who use the services. Supervisors also have commented on the value of having several ways to expose employee to EA services in addition to direct referrals.

With broad, dynamic social and economic trends challenging some of the ways EAPs function, integration has emerged as a viable step toward the next generation of EA services. EAPs that choose to integrate with other services potentially can provide effective and innovative services and increase utilization (and therefore their value to the organization) while retaining and enhancing their core technology. ■

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