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DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

October 4, 1988

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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DRUGS IN THE WORKPLACE PROJECT

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The Regional Drug Initiative has developed the Drug-Free Workplace Project to provide assistance to small business operators in the development of useful substance abuse policies and employee assistance efforts. This literature review has been undertaken to establish a base of training information for the project.

Workplace Drug Problems

The cost to the business sector in the United States resulting from substance abuse problems is estimated to be between $40 and $100 billion per year. These figures include productivity problems, theft, and additional health care costs as well as accidents. It is estimated that 75% of substance abusers are employed and that 15% of the current workforce are involved in substance abuse.

It is estimated that one in ten Americans has a substance abuse problem, and that one in four families is afflicted with the difficulties of living with a substance abuser. The interpersonal problems which substance abusers create in their families is also reflected in the workforce. Troubled employees are not necessarily substance abusers. They may be struggling with effects of substance abuse in their home life and the reduced productivity caused by family stress.

A recent publication of statistics by the HEALTHLINK Hospital Network in Portland, Oregon reports that substance abusing employees:

o   Use 3 times more health benefits

o   Have 3 times more accidents

o   Are 37% less productive

o   Are 27% more likely to steal from their employers than non-substance abusing employees.

Some recent studies have revealed some hopeful information for employers and labor representatives concerned with the impact of substance abuse on the work force.   A study of employees insured by Aetna Life Insurance Company was conducted by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in 1985. The study revealed that health care costs for workers in recovery go below the average for the total work force.   The study found:

"On the average, alcoholic families used health care services and incurred costs at a rate about twice that of similar families with no known alcoholic members..."

"After alcoholics start treatment, their health care costs drop significantly and eventually reach approximately the level that existed several years prior to treatment..."

"Using a variety of forecasting techniques, the project estimated that the average alcoholic's treatment cost could be offset by reductions in other health care costs within 2 to 3 years following the start of treatment." ("Alcoholism Treatment Impact on Total Healthcare Utilization and Costs," NIAAA, Rockville, Maryland 1985)

Several writers on workplace substance abuse policy have pointed out that it is less expensive for employers to bring a troubled employee into treatment, recovery, and back into productivity than to terminate employees and train new staff. This information confirms both the need for the value of substance abuse policies and employee assistance programs.

"A well developed program...will net the company large and long-term gains in conversation of trained manpower, lower absenteeism, reductions in fringe benefit payments, and smoother operations." ("Alcoholism - An Employee Health Problem," National Council on Alcoholism, NY, NY 1962)

Kinds of Workplace Substance Abuse Problems

Six distinct substance abuse problems are discussed in the current literature:

1. The on-the-job user may represent as many as 10% of all employees. On-the-job substance abuse may include clandestine use directly in work locations, in the parking lot of the work site, or lunch hour/break time substance abuse. This form of substance abuse may range from hard narcotics abuse to three martini lunches.

2. The on-the-job dealer presents a very serious problem to the employer. These dealers are promoting criminal behavior at the work site and can significantly increase the utilization of drugs and the deterioration of a healthy organizational culture. In addition, they increase the vulnerability of employers to liability suits regarding negligence or work related accidents.

3. Workers whose abilities are impaired due to use during off hours can present some far-fetching personnel problems for employers. Many employers are reluctant to intrude into the off-hour activities of their work force, however, the long and short term impacts of substance abuse by workers can have harmful effects on productivity and have been shown to correlate with higher accident rates.

> "Last year, according to Dr. Robert Wick, Corporate Medical Director for American Airlines, a computer operator who was high on marijuana failed to load a crucial tape into a major airline's computer reservation system. Result: the system was out of service for some eight hours, costing the company about $19 million. Says Wick: 'That was an awfully expensive joint by anybody's standards.'" ("Drugs in the Workplace," Janice Castro, Time Magazine, March 17, 1986)

4. Employees struggling with interpersonal problems resulting from substance abuse by family members present unique difficulties for their colleagues and supervisors. Often these employees are struggling with issues of co-dependency. In other words, they are involved in rescuing or covering up for the problems of a loved one. This distraction can be a source of employee depression or reduced productivity.

5. Poly-drug abusers have entered the work force in more significant numbers during the last ten years. Poly-drug abuse means use of several drugs in combination. These drug abusers may be involved in cocaine abuse in combination with barbituates, alcohol, or marijuana. Such drug abuse results in a quicker deterioration of health and performance. These individuals also are more difficult to diagnose and treat.

6. Employees impaired due to use and/or abuse of legally prescribed drugs are often neglected when substance abuse issues are examined. Often such abuse results from prescriptions due to injuries or emotional problems. Occasionally a chronic ailment will result in addiction or abuse of prescription drugs. Supervisors and family members frequently ignore these problems because they result from legally prescribed drugs. However, this form of drug abuse can result in very serious performance and health problems which must be addressed.

Special Considerations Regarding Employees With Substance Abuse Problems

A review of relevant literature pointed out the growing diversity of today's work force. It is critical for employers to be aware of the needs of special populations within the work force when planning for a comprehensive substance abuse and employee assistance program. Among these considerations are:

1. The baby boom generation which grew up in the drug culture of the 1960's has become a significant part of today's work force. As this generation enters management level positions there must be a recognition that they may have a more permissive value system regarding drug use. Special attention needs to be given to organizational culture and to supervisory expectations to assure that baby boomers recognize the impact of substance abuse upon work performance.

2. Women often are under-referred to employee assistance programs. It is critical to recognize that women play a major role in the work force. Often substance abuse problems of female workers are neglected because

supervisors are unable to recognize performance or interpersonal problems as substance abuse related. For some unenlightened supervisors this may be the result of sexual stereotyping.

> "In addition to the difficulty in identifying the female problem
> drinker, the lower supervisory referral rate for women appeared to be
> related to a constellation of attitudes and expectations that are
> detrimental to women. A review of the research literature supported
> the conclusion that culturally derived stereotyping leads to unvoiced
> beliefs that women should not participate in the organization in the
> same way as men do - that they are not essential and that they are not
> worthy of special consideration. If a women's work is poor, it is
> attributed to her gender rather than to problems that can be solved.
> As a consequence, supervisors who adhere to the stereotype do not tend
> to view the EAP as a means of managing female employees with job
> problems. The reverse is also true, based on the MHRA data. The
> research literature showed that supervisors with equalitarian
> attitudes toward women did identify and refer more women to EAPs."
> ("Affecting Attitudes and Assumptions About Women and Alcohol
> Problems," Walter Reichman Ed.D., Alcohol Health and Research World,
> National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Rockville,
> Maryland, Vol. 7, #3 Spring, 1983)

3. Many treatment programs are oriented toward white male patients. Employee assistance programs must be prepared to address the needs of minority clients and women. This responsiveness must also include a recognition that treatment services should be provided in a culturally sensitive manner.

4. Employers must have standards for hiring and supervising employees who are in recovery. People in recovery are legally considered a handicapped population and are thus protected from discrimination under Equal Employment Opportunity legislation. However, the risk of relapse and resulting productivity problems still present legitimate concerns for employers.

"The Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. ... prohibits employers who receive federal funds from discriminating against handicapped persons. Although the Act includes prior drug abuse or alcoholism in its definition of 'handicap,' it was amended in 1978 specifically to exclude current usage if it impairs job performance.

Therefore, the Act not only provides legal rights for past drug or alcohol abusers, it also provides legal rights for current drug and alcohol abusers, unless their substance abuse detrimentally affects job performance or presents a danger to themselves or others." (Drug Abuse in the Workplace: An Employer's Guide for Prevention, Mark A. de Bernardo, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 1987)

5. Upper level managers must also follow the same employee assistance and substance abuse policies as the general work force. Failure to apply policies across all levels of an organization may result in inconsistent implementation or employee morale problems.

"If a drug abuse policy is unclear, goes against the grain of longstanding employee relations practices or is not well communicated

to all employees, company officials should not expect a high degree of detection of policy violations. ("The EAP in Formulating a Company Drug Policy," David J. Hay, the ALMACAN, July 1986)

6. As has been discussed earlier, it is more cost effective to bring substance abusing employees into recovery and back to productivity than to simply terminate them. This has been shown to be particularly valuable when senior employees and employees with strong family bonds have been confronted with their substance abuse problems. Although it is important to provide employee assistance opportunities to all individuals with substance abuse problems, it is heartening for employers to recognize that the long term investments they have made in senior employees do not have to be lost when substance abuse problems occur.

Defining Drug Abuse

The most critical factor for defining a substance abuse related problem from the vantage of the employer is on the job performance. If employees are frequently absent, have poor productivity, are accident prone, are unhealthy, or exhibit other signs or behavior consistent with substance abuse, it is reasonable to raise questions regarding substance abuse. It is important that employers understand the traditional definitions of substance abuse as they encounter this problem.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association, psychoactive substance dependence can be defined by:

"A. At least three of the following:

1. Substance often taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than the person intended

2. Persistent desire or one or more unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control substance use

3. A great deal of time spent in activities necessary to get the substance (e.g., theft), taking the substance (e.g., chain smoking), or recovering from its effects

4. Frequent intoxication or withdrawl symptoms when expected to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home (e.g., does not go to work because hungover, goes to school or work "high," intoxicated while taking care of his or her children), or when substance use is physically hazardous (e.g., drives when intoxicated)

5. Important social, occupational, or recreational activities given up or reduced because of substance use

6. Continued substance use despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent social, psychological, or physical problem that is caused or exacerbated by the use of the substance (e.g., keeps using heroin despite family arguments about it, cocaine induced depression, or having an ulcer made worse by drinking)

7. Marked tolerance: need for markedly increased amounts of the substance (i.e., at least 50% increase) in order to achieve intoxication or desired effect, or markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount

Note: The following items may not apply to cannabis, hallucinogens, or phencyclidine (PCP):

8. Characteristic withdrawal symptoms...

9. Substance often taken to relieve or avoid withdrawal symptoms

B. Some symptoms of the disturbance have persisted for at least one month, or have occurred repeatedly over a longer period of time."

Establishing a Policy

"An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a cost-effective, confidential, early intervention system designed to help employees with alcohol-related and other problems that interfere with their ability to perform satisfactorily on the job. An EAP may serve to identify and assist employees whose job performance is impaired by alcoholism, alcohol or other drug abuse, emotional problems, mental illness, or other human problems.

There is considerable evidence that the development of an employee assistance program is beneficial both to employers and unions. The EAP provides both the employer and the union with an effective mechanism for identifying employees with job performance problems that may be related to

12

alcohol or other drugs. The EAP thus demonstrates the employer's concern for the health and welfare of employees; union involvement demonstrates the desire of union representatives and officers to help the membership keep their jobs, health, and families intact." ("Employee Assistance Programs," National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, author unknown, Rockville, Maryland, May, 1987)

The process for the development of a comprehensive substance abuse policy is perceived by many writers to be as important as the product. A process which clearly identifies the organization's needs, builds a team approach, and is sensitive to the labor relations and legal concerns will provide a policy which truly can promote organizational change and lead to a substance abuse free work site.

Intervention

Two models currently are used by employers to intervene regarding substance abuse problems. The first, Drug Testing Initiatives, (DTI), focuses primarily on efforts to determine whether drugs are present in the employee's body and is frequently perceived as heavy handed. The second, Employee Assistance Programs, (EAP), provides an opportunity for employers to confront performance problems by making referrals to confidential treatment organizations without placing the employers and employees in an adverserial relationship. Drug testing in this context is perceived as a relatively minor tool in a repertoire of intervention and prevention strategies. The Employee Assistance Program model and the fundamental organizational change which this model requires are clearly favored in the current literature.

13

"More than 35% of the country's largest companies have DTI's, and the number if growing fast. This overwhelming response may be seen as a clear indication that business is ready to tackle the problem. Nevertheless, I believe these programs are based on a number of questionable assumptions, many of which were proven false by programs instituted as long ago as the 1940s to deal with alcoholism. Drug-testing initiatives assume:

That we can adequately train supervisors to recognize the telltale signs and symptoms of substance abuse.

That supervisors will find reasonable suspicion an adequate basis for referral.

That supervisors can be motivated to make such referrals.

That testing will be accurate.

That the positive tests will be accurately interpreted.

That the imposition of treatment or disciplinary action will be appropriate and that employees will respond appropriately to whichever course is pursued.

Alcohol, our national legal drug of choice, has been with us practically forever, and, with 11 million alcoholics and another 7 million alcohol abusers, it is by far our most serious chemical dependency. Employers who recognized the problems that alcohol creates in the workplace have tried a number of remedies over the past 45 years. Employee assistance programs

14

have been the most effective." ("Beyond Testing: Coping with Drugs at Work", James T. Wrich, <u>Harvard Business Review</u>, Jan. - Feb. 1988, #1)

Needs Assessment

An important first step in establishing a workplace substance abuse policy is an assessment of the needs to be addressed by the policy. It is this step in the process which assures that the workplace policy will bring about the desired changes in an effective and orderly manner. A comprehensive needs assessment should include the following elements:

1. Data regarding employee productivity -- in many cases employers may not have a formal system for measuring employee productivity. The absence of productivity information makes it difficult to confront employees with substance abuse related problems.

2. Data regarding health care utilization should be examined in recognition of the fact that substance abusing employees and their families use approximately three times more health benefits than non-substance abusing colleagues.

3. Employee absenteeism and tardiness should be examined in view of potential substance abuse problems as well. Repeated Monday morning or after-holiday absences are particularly noteworthy.

4. Accidents can be a strong indicator of substance abuse. Many industries have established policies which require substance abuse evaluations after each accident. Examination of accident rates can give

personnel managers or employers an indication of the level of risk of substance abuse in their work force.

5. Information from supervisors and key staff is critical to employers as they determine the needs which must be addressed while establishing substance abuse policies and programs. Often the perceptions of supervisors and staff members will provide more insight about organizational culture problems than empirically gathered data. In any case, the involvement of supervisors and key staff in the needs assessment process is critical to increasing the level of interaction and discussion required to develop an effective policy.

Creation of A Policy Development Team

The development of a comprehensive substance abuse policy and employee assistance program is appropriately a concern of both management and labor. While managers frequently are concerned with issues of productivity and safety, labor is frequently concerned with issues of fairness and confidentiality. These mutual concerns must be addressed in a forthright manner if a useful policy is to be established. A staff policy development team is recommended throughout the available literature on workplace drug policy development. Such a policy team should consist of management and labor representatives as well as personnel and health staff if the organization is large enough to permit such specializations.

"EAP's can be a voice of reason in developing drug awareness strategies, especially as industry lashes back at illicit drug use through drug screening and disciplinary measures. EAP practitioners should seek to

assist managers and other company officials in the legal, security, medical, executive management, public relations and other departments. Labor representatives from unionized companies should also participate." (Hay, 1986)

Policy Components

The following components have been recommended widely in the current literature:

1. Statement of values -- A statement of values regarding the establishment of a drug free and healthful work place is the first step in the development of a comprehensive policy. The health and safety component of this statement is viewed as essential to maintaining a sound labor relations stance.

2. Prevention and education programs -- Emphasis on sharing accurate information regarding the problems of substance abuse and their impacts on workers' health and safety is useful in providing a common base of information for labor and management. This component is fundamental to a strategy of long term organizational change.

3. Pre-employment screening -- pre-employment drug screening as a component of health examinations is becoming more commonplace. It is frequently being implemented to reduce access to employment for active substance abusers and to send a clear message to the work force about the standards of the employer.

4. Performance standards -- development of quantifiable and measurable
performance standards for each employee is desirable. It is an important
element of a system for identifying work related problems and mitigating
those problems before they are out of control.

5. Reasonable suspicion options -- the standard for intervention with
substance abusing employees is reasonable suspicion. The following
options are available to employers as strategies when reasonable suspicion
exists.

    A. Constructive confrontation is a technique used by supervisors to
    identify performance problems and solicit cooperation from employees
    regarding the acceptance of assistance.

        "The constructive confrontation strategy calls for supervisors to
        hold a number of discussions with troubled employees. In
        unionized facilities, these discussions generally are held in the
        presence of the employees' union stewards. During the
        discussions, supervisors confront affected employees with evidence
        of their impaired performance and, in a constructive manner, offer
        assistance for rehabilitation, without making diagnoses, other
        than of job performance.

        "Employees are given feedback on the specifics of unacceptable
        performance and warned that continued unacceptable performance is
        likely to lead to formal discipline. The supervisors remind
        employees that counseling is available through the EAP if
        employees wish to use it.

"If performance still does not improve, a supplementary tactic called _crisis precipitation_ is added. Employees are formally disciplined for continued poor performance, initially with a written warning, then with a series of temporary suspensions, and finally with discharge. At each step in crisis precipitation, employees are urged to seek help.

"...when supervisors constructively confront employees before their job performance seriously deteriorates, employees are likely to show marked improvement in their performance." ("Constructive Confrontation and Counseling," Harrison M. Trice, Ph.D. and William J. Sonnenstuhl, Ph.D., _EAP Digest_, March/April 1985)

B. Referral to a treatment or employee assistance program is frequently used to provide employees with an opportunity to receive counseling and other assistance in a confidential setting.

C. Drug testing is frequently used when employees are unable to break through their own denial when substance abuse is a clear and present danger to their health, safety, and productivity. Drug testing programs must take into account concerns regarding confidentiality, secure chain of custody, and verifiability of results.

"Remember, the aim of a drug testing program is not to 'catch' a drug abuser and punish him or her; the primary objectives are to eliminate the presence of drugs in the workplace and rehabilitate employees who need help overcoming drug problems." ("Drug Testing

19

a Step-by-Step Approach," Carlton E. Turner, Security Testing, March 1988)

D. Investigations are at times appropriate if drug dealing is suspected at the work site. Under these circumstances clearly developed standards for such investigations must be developed to minimize negative labor relations impact and liability.

These standards should provide the business person with the ability to respond to the following questions:

"1) What facts are documented so far?

2) What additional facts is the investigation intended to cover?

3) How will the investigation be conducted?

4) What steps will the investigator take to see that the information he gathers can be used against the wrong doers?

5) What is a reasonable period of time to devote to the investigation?

6) At what point will the information gathered be considered sufficient to conclude the investigation?

7) Who will make the decision?

8) What independent evidence will be needed to support the agent's findings?

9) After the investigation concludes, will the agent be identified to employees?

10) Will the agent's safety be jeopardized if he is identified?

11) Will the agent be required to testify in civil or criminal proceedings?" (Drug Abuse in the Workplace, Henry J. Balevic, Self Pub. Greensboro, N.C. 1985 PAGE 110)

E. Last chance agreements or probation agreements are frequently used to provide leverage to assure employee participation in recovery programs.

F. Termination is appropriately perceived as a last resort if employees have not been able to enter recovery or if recovery does not result in a return to productivity. It is critical that the employer focus on employee performance in cases of termination.

6. Standards for company social functions -- provision of alcohol and/or acceptance of substance abuse in the context of company social functions is often omitted when policies are developed. Concerns regarding consistency of organizational culture changes and host liability have required many organizations to develop specific standards regarding company social functions.

Legal Issues

A wide variety of legal issues surround the problems of substance abuse in the workplace. Fear of legal reprisal frequently makes employers reluctant to initiate policy development or to act on an adopted policy. However, the risk of litigation or liability for negligence if no policy exists is frequently a motivator for effective policy development.

Liability is an appropriate concern for employers in the pursuit of a substance abuse policy. If a worker is confronted with a substance abuse problem in the absence of a written and uniformly enforced policy, the employer is vulnerable. Additionally, recent court decisions regarding host liability when alcohol is served at social functions requires a well thought out policy. A clearly stated policy protects the rights of both the workers and the supervisor when a problem occurs.

Right to privacy issues are often raised when substance abuse problems are confronted. The right to abuse drugs is not, however, constitutionally protected. Employers who develop and use clear performance standards and have developed agreements with workers regarding substance abuse investigation procedures are often able to avoid problems in this area.

As has been mentioned earlier, investigation standards must be clearly developed to assure positive results when drug dealing is being confronted. Frequently local law enforcement is an excellent resource to assure that rules of evidence are followed.

Confidentiality is also critical to the success of a substance abuse policy. Employees who are confronted about substance abuse/performance problems and

referred to Employee Assistance Programs or terminated must have their right to confidentiality protected.

Legal advice should be sought as policies and programs are developed. This investment at the outset of the policy development process can save costly litigation as implementation occurs.

Labor Relations

The development of a comprehensive substance abuse policy and employee assistance program requires a change in the organizational culture of a business. If such a change is imposed without involvement of employees, labor relations problems may arise. Employees are frequently concerned with issues of fairness and due process. Addressing these concerns at the developmental phase in a context where the employer couples concerns for productivity with those of health and safety will often facilitate a successful partnership in the development of an effective policy.

Universal application of policies is also very important to employees. If a separate set of standards is applied to management, the policy efforts may be sabotaged or legally contested.

Drug testing efforts may become issues of collective bargaining and labor relations. Development of a clear set of standards for implementation of tests as well as assurance of verifiability and secure chains of custody are important to good labor relations. Additionally, implementation of an employee assistance effort must be developed in a context where employees feel that they have choices and that their confidentiality is being protected.

Finally, the issue of supervisory training is critical to successful implementation of a substance abuse policy. Supervisors must be trained to confront substance abuse constructively by focusing on performance problems and making appropriate referrals. Developing clear expectations regarding performance improvements is also very important. The supervisor must not be placed in the role of diagnostician, counselor, or investigator.

"Management concerns appear to be related to the efficiency and productivity of the organization, while union concerns are related more to employee rights and humanitarian issues.

"A major motivating factor for unions seems to be that of providing a viable alternative to dismissal for employees with problems affecting their employment.

"With the EAP in operation, it appears that the union feels morale will improve and the number of disciplinary problems and grievances will be reduced. The union also avoids confrontation with management where it is unlikely to win." ("Management and Union Perspectives on EAP Policy Development," Scott Macdonald, M.A., and Werner Albert, Ph.D., EAP Digest, May/June 1985)

Employee Assistance Programs

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) are useful referral resources for employers and supervisors who are struggling with employee performance problems due to substance abuse or other personal problems. James Wrich in a 1988 article in the Harvard Business Review points out that:

"(EAPs are used) with great effectiveness to reduce absenteeism, promote

24

recovery, minimize relapse, cut treatment costs, and improve productivity

among drug abusers as well as alcoholics."

He also states that:

"EAPs...reduced the stigma (of drug problems) but also encouraged

supervisors to refer a troubled employee without first trying to figure

out the nature of the problem."

In this way EAPs provide a useful buffer to mitigate the labor relations

problems involved in confronting a substance abusing employee. Mr. Wrich also

points out that there is a significant cost benefit to investment in EAPs. He

cites:

"An AT&T study in 1982 showed declines of 78% in overall absenteeism, 87%

in absence due to disability, 82% in on-the-job accidents, and 58% in

off-the-job accidents." ("Beyond Testing: Coping With Drugs at Work",

James T. Wrich, Harvard Business Review, Jan.-Feb. 1988 #1 pgs. 120-130)

Three models of EAPs are generally used in the private sector. In-house EAPs

are operated by businesses which have a large enough workforce and the

resources to provide services through staff employed by the organization.

Often these in-house programs act as referral sources to external providers of

services. At other times they provide counseling services and other programs

themselves. Although this model can be useful, concerns regarding

confidentiality must be addressed to assure that employees referred to the ASP

feel that they can receive services without stigma.

Many businesses are finding external contracts with EAPs to be a more

effective use of resources. These out-of-house programs provide services away

from the work site and are used to broker services or provide direct services. The development of such contracts should be carefully undertaken. It is important for employers to have a clear sense of their needs and expectations before entering into agreements. Reporting and evaluation criteria also should be clearly established. Reports by contracted EAP providers should focus on utilization and success indicators while protecting the individual confidentiality of employees referred.

Consortium EAP efforts are being explored more frequently by small businesses which do not have the resources to develop a program. Many of these consortia are developed to serve a particular industry. Additionally, labor organizations may also have EAP programs which employers can use under labor contracts.

Traditionally there are four components to an EAP:

1. Needs assessments are conducted for each individual referred.

2. Information and referral resources are often provided by EAP's to referred individuals. The EAP may be involved in providing prevention related education materials to the entire work force of an organization as well.

3. Treatment is often provided by EAP staff on an out-patient basis. EAPs may link clients with self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, or broker services with in-patient or other out-patient providers.

4. Family assistance is provided by many EAP programs in an effort to

26

mitigate stress related to a substance abusing family member and to increase the supportive alliances needed to assist in maintaining recovery.

5. Follow-up/Aftercare is frequently provided by EAPs. EAP providers can play a critical role in the development of return to work conferences with supervisors or employers. In addition they can provide ongoing out-patient or support services to reduce the possibility of relapse.

"...the return-to-work conference can meet a number of objectives. The conferences's purposes are:

o Encourage the employee to identify concerns about returning to work, as well as pinpointing support systems for dealing with these concerns.

o Update the employee on events which have occurred at work during his or her absence.

o Identify job-related issues that emerged during treatment and develop a plan for addressing each issue.

o Review work performance problems that existed prior to treatment and develop a plan for addressing each issue.

o Identify any special needs that the employee anticipates upon returning to work -- such as modified job responsibilities or release time for follow-up activities -- and develop a plan to meet these

needs." ("Return-To-Work Conference Eases The Way," Gloria Singer, MSW, _EAP Digest_ March/April 1986)

In determining the EAP structure for a business, a planning team made up of managers, labor representatives, personnel, and health staff should be convened to assess needs to be met by the EAP and to determine the appropriate EAP model to be used. This planning team also should discuss confidentiality concerns, costs, and potential impacts on benefits packages.

Once an EAP has been established, efforts should be made to educate the entire work force of the available services and to train supervisors to make appropriate referrals. These referrals should be based on performance problems and indicators rather than specific efforts by supervisors to diagnose substance abuse problems.

E'aluation of the EAP should be conducted by the employer in cooperation with appropriate employee representatives on a regular basis. Evaluation should review the level of utilization of the EAP, information regarding success in recovery, and improvements in work productivity indicators such as quality of products and services, level of accidents, and absenteeism.

Conclusions

Employers can make significant improvements in the productivity of their businesses by developing clear substance abuse policies. Such policies should be developed in an atmosphere of partnership with employees as a strategy to increase safety and productivity and to provide for the health and well being

of the workforce. Policy components should include pre-employment
orientation, performance standards, supervisory training to implement
performance evaluations and make referrals to employee assistance programs,
and aftercare/follow-up support for employees returning in recovery. The
costs of such policies are mitigated by the increased productivity, reduced
turnover, and lower accident rates of employees.

An employer must recognize that establishing a substance abuse policy requires
a change in organizational culture. By seeking to create a substance abuse
free workplace, the employer is engaging in creating social change which
requires a change in organizational culture. By seeking to create a substance
abuse free workplace, the employer is engaging in creating social change which
requires addressing the mores established by the counter culture represented
by Abbie Hoffman in his book, Steal this Urine Test, and the over the counter
culture which emphasizes the use of pills to solve problems of diet, day to
day pains, stress, and a number of minor ailments.

There is no easy solution to the problem of substance abuse. However, the
employer can play a pivotal role in reducing the demand for drugs in our
society by creating a work environment free of substance abuse.

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