EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to define the services offered by The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center's (MD Anderson's) Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of MD Anderson to have an EAP that provides workplace assistance with personal difficulties that may affect work performance. EAP services are available to employees, their supervisors, and the organization. (See target audience, below).

- Employees are offered individual consultation as well as referral and follow-up services for personal, family, emotional, health, and legal issues.
- Supervisors are provided guidance when dealing with troubled employees who may have personal issues that affect work performance. The EAP supports MD Anderson’s risk management initiatives by providing procedural help when impaired employees may pose a risk to themselves or others, or when traumatic events disrupt workgroups.
- MD Anderson recognizes that mental illness, including substance use disorders, can be successfully treated. Employees who seek assistance from the EAP will not have their employment status threatened as a result of asking for help. However, seeking help will not prevent disciplinary action for coexisting work performance problems.

SCOPE

Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of all faculty, trainees/students, and other members of MD Anderson’s workforce.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for this policy includes, but is not limited to, full or part-time benefits-eligible employees and their immediate family members, retirees, active educational appointees, and students in the School of Health Professions and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

DEFINITIONS

None.
PROCEDURE

1.0 Employee Referrals

1.1 Employees:

Employees may self-refer by contacting the EAP when they experience personal, family, health, work, legal, or other stressful concerns. Supervisors may also informally suggest accessing EAP services.

1.2 Supervisors:

Supervisors are encouraged to consult with the EAP when their employees experience personal problems that may be affecting their work. A formal management referral may follow if the employee is experiencing persistent difficulties that interfere with work performance, attendance, or interactions with others.

A. Supervisors and managers seeking guidance may call the EAP to request a consultation, arrange training, or to refer an employee to the EAP.

B. Case management is available to assist employees with serious mental health problems that may affect work. Employees or their supervisors may call the EAP for information regarding this service.

2.0 Organizational Services

The EAP provides:

2.1 Services to support departments and work groups that are facing sudden stresses such as the death of a coworker or rapid reorganizational change.

2.2 Direction and follow-up when an employee demonstrates unsafe behavior while at work. Refer to the Fitness for Duty Policy (UTMDACC Institutional Policy # ADM0274) for procedures to follow when an employee is suspected of being impaired.

2.3 Employee training to enhance personal resilience and prevent or mitigate workplace stress.

2.4 Periodic announcements in employee publications and the EAP website about trainings, support groups, and EAP presentations.

3.0 Confidentiality / Release of Information

3.1 MD Anderson recognizes that strict adherence to confidentiality requirements is essential for program success. The EAP adheres to professional guidelines and standards for employee assistance programs, certification requirements for employee assistance professionals, and Texas State requirements pertaining to licensed mental health professionals. Employees whose problem(s) may involve complaints such as sexual harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and/or disability accommodation are referred to those policies for direct handling. Use of EAP services does not serve to put the institution on notice of any complaint(s).

3.2 In the case of a self-referral or supervisor suggested referral, information will not be released to anyone without the authorized consent of the client-user of services. Information about complaints that are addressed by other policies will not be released except as required by law and will not be processed as complaints.
3.3 In the case of a formal supervisor referral, the EAP will notify the supervisor if the employee:

A. Contacts the EAP and follows through with appointments; and

B. Whether EAP recommendations have been followed. The information shared will not disclose personal or medical information.

3.4 In the circumstance of a direct threat of violence, the EAP may disclose information on a need to know basis to the University of Texas Police Department at Houston (UTP-H) or other law enforcement entities.
ATTACHMENTS/LINKS

None.

RELATED POLICIES

Fitness for Duty Policy (UTMDACC Institutional Policy # ADM0274).

JOINT COMMISSION STANDARDS / NATIONAL PATIENT SAFETY GOALS

None.

OTHER RELATED ACCREDITATION / REGULATORY STANDARDS

None.

REFERENCES

Employee Assistance Certification Commission Standards of Practice, Certified Employee Assistance Professional (CEAP) Code of Conduct, and Client Bill of Rights (Revised and Adopted on 4.15.10).

The Employee Assistance Professional Association (EAPA) Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programs (last published in 2008).

State of Texas Licensing Boards for various Mental Health Professionals.
POLICY APPROVAL

Approved With Revisions Date: 03/18/2016
Approved Without Revisions Date:
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Version: 19.0

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT(S)

Employee Health & Well-being