

EAPrefer PRESS

SPRING 2012

Your EAPrefer® Connection

Welcome to the first edition of *EAPrefer Press*, the EAPrefer® quarterly newsletter.

Issues of *EAPrefer Press* are available for download at www.eaprefer.org.

This inaugural edition was provided in print; however, all future issues will be emailed and uploaded to our website.



EAPrefer® is a program of NASW Assurance Services Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

A Message From Your NASW Executive Director



Dear EAPrefer Members,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the inaugural issue of *EAPrefer Press*, our EAPrefer quarterly newsletter. In the year since this program launched, EAPrefer has grown tremendously. We are continually expanding and learning from our EAP network provider partners, social workers and industry experts.

Progress in 2011 has opened doors to exciting opportunities in 2012. The recent launch of EAPrefer in nearly all 50 states is a major cause for celebration. National and grassroots efforts to promote our services have resulted in the addition of 15 EAP network provider partners, who now have access to our comprehensive database of more than 4,600 qualified social workers.

We have already heard from members who have been contacted by provider partners for case referrals. For those still waiting for a referral, please know that we are working hard to enlist more EAP network provider partners in need of your services. As our program expands, so will your opportunities.

We have many new and exciting initiatives in mind for 2012: a creative marketing campaign will attract and build relationships with EAP network providers and social media outreach will provide an environment where members, EAP network providers, NASW leadership, and NASW chapter directors can communicate and share experiences. Representatives from EAPrefer will also be attending NASW chapter conferences and national professional meetings to create and sustain relationships with leaders in the EAP and human resources fields.

Most importantly, we continue to be motivated by the work that you, our EAPrefer members, do. We look forward to the year ahead and the future opportunities to connect with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth J. Clark".

Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH
Executive Director, National Association of Social Workers

Welcome to the World of EAP

By Lynne Penn Pick, MSW, LCSW-C, EACS, EMI, PC

Have you ever been frustrated, tired, or at your wits end with the insurance world? Sitting hour after hour, seeing client after client, trying to add in actual non-billable hours only to receive a denial for all of the services that you have rendered? If this sounds familiar, you might consider growing your work through an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) network provider. EAP work is stable, payment is not a battle, and your clinical experiences are easily transferrable.

EAPs are pre-paid benefit programs provided to employees and their families through an employer. The services provided are intended to help individuals deal with personal problems or issues that may be affecting their work, health and/or wellbeing.

As a qualified social worker, you will work through an EAP provider company to help counsel individuals in need. More than 80 percent of EAP clients are self-referred, all are voluntary, and none of them have any co-pay. Most EAP contracts have at least three sessions built in for the clinical social worker to complete an assessment and an additional three sessions for brief short-term counseling. Several EAP companies allow clients to self-refer for additional therapy if deemed appropriate by your evaluation.

There is simple paperwork that most EAPs ask you to obtain for the client to fill out. Since the individual you counsel is the EAP provider's client, all documentation must be sent to that EAP. Remember to make copies of everything for your personal records.

After you submit all necessary forms and billing, you should receive payment within 30 days. The national average for EAP payments is around \$65.00/per session, and if on average you provide six sessions, you secure \$390.00 for your services rendered.

Interested in learning more about the EAP industry? Visit www.EAPrefer.org for more information.



www.EAPrefer.org
for more information

Proudly Supporting Our Partners

EAPrefer has already partnered with some of the nation's leading and most well respected EAP network providers. With 15 partners to-date, EAPrefer is helping providers across the country meet their client needs. If you would like to learn more about our EAP network provider partners, email us at eap@naswasi.org.

To all of our partners,

thank you for your continued support and commitment.

Interview with H&H Health Associates, Inc.

Vicki Saali, MSW, LCSW, is an EAP counselor at H&H Health Associates, Inc. in St. Louis, MO.



How did you become an EAP counselor?

Before I made the transition to an EAP counselor, I worked for 12 years in a psychiatric emergency room. For eight of those years, I was on the floor and saw very little fruits of my labor. Although I was getting hospital experience, I wasn't providing the continuum of care that had first interested me in the health care profession.

When I began working with H&H Health Associates, I noticed an immediate difference. As an EAP counselor, I am able to work with individuals and teach them preventive and proactive ways to deal with an issue. EAPs are in a great strategic position because the workplace is often where the first signs of a personal problem appear.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your EAP work?

My most rewarding experience came from working with our client Nurses for Newborns. We provide support to help nurses achieve work-life balance and deal with caregiver fatigue. I can tell that it's a relief for nurses to know that we exist and that there is help out there.

What is unique about EAPrefer and how have you benefitted from access to the EAPrefer database?

EAPrefer is far more wide-reaching in their ability to connect providers with professionals; more so than any other program I have used in the past. The database has drastically decreased my stress on the job, especially because of the quick matches I can make for clients. Prior to EAPrefer, I used to search for people online and then I would have to call them to double check their credentials and background — the whole process was extremely time-consuming.

What advice would you give our members that may help them receive more referrals?

It is really important for people in the database to provide a telephone number. If I find a match on the database, I prefer to call candidates so that I can ask questions and get a sense of their personality.

When I've emailed members in the past, the response rate has been too slow.

How do you select professionals for referrals?

Overall, there are two things that I look for when choosing professionals. First, does he/she know how to do crisis intervention? Second, does he/she have any experience with chemical dependency? If you have these qualifications, I suggest making them visible on your member profile.



Interview with Health Management Systems of America

Gary Lalicki, LMSW, ACSW, MBA, is Vice President of Clinical Operations at Health Management Systems of America, Inc. (HMSA) in Detroit, MI.

How did you first become involved with EAPs?

At the beginning of my career, I worked as a mental health treatment provider for inpatient and outpatient services. The company I worked for had a branch of EAP services and I was able to learn a lot from those experts. I discovered that EAPs provide an essential, comprehensive assessment that can connect clients to valuable resources, support groups and insurance referrals.

How long have you been in the EAP field?

I've been in the EAP field in one capacity or another for about 30 years, and with HMSA for a little over five years. HMSA is unique because we are primarily an EAP company, whereas a majority of companies offer EAP as one portion of their services. We provide all aspects of EAP — from assessments, trainings, wellness, worklife resources, management consultations and crisis intervention.

Why do you think EAPs are so important for employers and employees?

Sometimes life can interfere with someone's ability to perform at work. When a dedicated, productive worker is experiencing personal issues (like moving a parent into a nursing home, an adolescent acting out at home or school, or feelings of depression or anxiety), employees can utilize the EAP to be assessed and to determine if these issues can be resolved within the EAP benefit or if a referral is needed.



How has HMSA used the EAPrefer database?

EAPrefer has been a huge help. When HMSA started in 1980, we were a regional provider but we now have affiliate providers working with us in nearly all 50 states. Our partnership with EAPrefer has allowed us to expand our network and connect with professionals in remote locations. We've been working with the EAPrefer database for about eight months now and we've been able to refer more than 40 cases.

Is there any advice you can offer to EAPrefer members that might help them to receive more cases?

When we first started looking through the database, a lot of members left out important information from their profile. I would just reiterate that members should provide all necessary forms and information in their application, including both an email address and a phone number.

Where do you see HMSA and EAPrefer in the future?

We would love to continue working with EAPrefer and I think HMSA could be a great resource for EAPrefer members. We have a lot of experience with consultations and trainings which could be helpful for members just transitioning into EAP work. Most of our clinicians have an average of 15 years experience so we have a wealth of knowledge about EAP.

“I would just reiterate that members should provide all necessary forms and information in their application, including both an email address and a phone number.”



Update
your profile
information.



Your Best Member Profile

EAP network provider partners turn to the EAPrefer database to find social workers best situated to help clients in need. When searching the database, they look for profiles that are current, complete and informative. What your profile says or does not say about you could be the deciding factor for a referral.

This profile quick guide provides expert advice to ensure your best member profile.

- 1. Update your profile information.** To help our network provider partners choose their ideal candidate(s), the EAPrefer database is easily searchable by licensure, expertise and/or location. Make sure your profile information is accurate and up-to-date so that no opportunities are lost. Send us a copy of your current credentials (license, professional liability insurance) and make sure to remind yourself of an upcoming expiration.
- 2. Provide a working telephone number.** Several providers have told us that they prefer connecting with social workers over the phone. Check your contact information for a phone number and consider adding both a mobile or home/office number. Omission of a phone number could be a deal breaker for many EAP network providers.
- 3. Check your messages frequently.** If an EAP provider is unable to reach you, or, if you don't return a call in a timely manner, you may lose the chance for a referral. If your phone isn't always on hand, be sure to setup a voice message system so that EAP network providers can leave you with follow-up information.
- 4. Collect and copy all documents.** Once you have received a referral, ask the EAP provider for back up documentation. EAPrefer is not responsible for coordinating invoices and this information is essential for your records and payment.

EAPrefer is currently working to make profiles more accessible to participating members. At this present time, all profile changes must be submitted to **eap@naswasi.org** with "profile change" in the subject line.

“I received a referral from EAPrefer recently.

It was handled professionally and EAPrefer made setting up the appointment and getting in contact with the client truly uncomplicated.

The amount of paperwork was minimal, which was a blessing. I completely recommend using this EAP referral service.”

—Sandra Russalesi, LCSW, CAC III

EAPrefer: Now You Know

Although you’ve grown to know EAPrefer pretty well over the last year, there are still a few things you might not know about the program.

1. Do social workers need to be credentialed to participate in EAPrefer?

No. The mandatory requirements to enroll in EAPrefer are:

- hold a state license that allows you to provide counseling without supervision
- have professional liability insurance policy

We do not require social workers to be credentialed. NASW believes that master’s-prepared and licensed clinical social workers already have the qualifications and experience necessary to provide services to employees in need of counseling.

If you do possess a certification related to the EAP industry, you can include that information in your database profile.

2. I’m an EAPrefer member who owns my own EAP. Can I access the database?

Yes — and at no cost! If you own an EAP business or work for an EAP in private practice, you can access our database for free.

3. How involved are EAPrefer members in the program’s strategic direction?

As experts in your communities, EAPrefer relies on your help for new business opportunities. If you know of an emerging EAP, or think an existing EAP network provider could benefit from EAPrefer services, we want to hear from you!



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Member's Corner

Member's Corner is a place for EAPrefer members to share their thoughts and experiences. Each issue of EAPrefer Press will spotlight a member who exhibits the passion and dedication that inspires us to achieve more.



Margit Bane, LCSW, Support for Serious Health Conditions

At the end of 2011, NASW-ASI had the privilege to sit down with Margit Bane, LCSW, to discuss palliative care social work and her new practice,

Support for Serious Health Conditions (SSHC). Bane poignantly described her field and the advantages that palliative care social workers can offer to EAP network providers.

Situation: Iris is a committed employee at a large corporation in Southern California. Her mother, who lives on the East Coast, was recently admitted to a hospital. Iris' days have become plagued with calls from the hospital with questions about her mother's medical treatment preferences — issues that Iris and her mother never discussed. The calls come during the day and often interrupt her work. Iris spends her days concerned about her mother as well as her own inability to focus at work.

Solution: Connect Iris with a palliative care social worker. Palliative care social work aims to comfort patients and their loved ones during complex health situations. It is appropriate for people of all ages, at any stage of serious health issues, and is not synonymous with hospice or end of life. Palliative care social work focuses on important relationships, quality of life, and helping patients make well-informed health decisions.

In her experience as a palliative care social worker, Bane has found that employees who are also caregivers for an ill loved one exhibit high levels of stress. With professional and personal demands, employee caregivers have strained family relationships, increased anxiety and depression, and frequent employee absenteeism. They often find themselves struggling, with little or no preparation, to understand medical and hospital processes, to communicate with numerous health care providers, and to help to make sometimes profound medical decisions on behalf of a loved one too ill to make them for him/herself.

Palliative care social work can help these individuals deal with their situations — from education about hospital process and community services opportunities, to family interventions and supportive counseling for medical decision making. Employees have told Bane that these interventions clarify complex issues and dramatically decrease the amount of time required to understand medical systems. This leaves time for greatly needed self-care and preserves emotional and physical energies for other family responsibilities as well as for the work setting.





EAPrefer®

Connecting Qualified Social Workers
with Employees Who Need Them®

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