Contemporary EAP Research: Demonstrating the Impact of EAP Services on Workplace Outcomes

PRESENTERS:
Melissa Richmond, PhD
OMNI Institute
Principal Investigator

Bernie McCann, PhD, CEAP
Employee Assistance Research Foundation
What is the EARF...?

Created as a non-profit foundation, the Employee Assistance Research Foundation was formed to stimulate innovative, rigorous and evidence-based research activities which demonstrate the ability of EAPs and related workplace efforts to maximize employee contributions to organizational success.

The Employee Assistance Research Foundation is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit EIN #26-2443117.
Our Mission

To promote excellence in the design and delivery of Employee Assistance services throughout the world.

To promote and support effective measurement practices, performance tools, and outcome criteria.

To bridge the gaps between knowledge and policy by translating valid research findings into practice.
EARF Priorities for Action

- Fund relevant & scientifically rigorous research
- Investigate new trends in EA practice
- Communicate findings to stakeholders
EARF-Funded Research to Date

**Round 1:** In 2011, two grants of $44,800 were awarded to ISW Limits & the National Behavioral Consortium to study *The Current State of EAPs.*

**Round 2:** In 2013, a grant of $112,000 was awarded to the OMNI Institute to study the *Workplace-Related Outcomes of EAPs.*

**Round 3:** EARF is currently soliciting those interested in producing a global history of EA practice from the 1970s to the present.
Dissemination of EARF Research

- EARF has supported numerous free webinars and conference sessions for researchers to present their findings from EARF-funded studies.

- To date, researchers have published three scholarly articles with results of EARF-funded studies. Additional mentions of findings have appeared in various trade publications and cited on various websites.
Round 2: Currently-Funded Study

The Impact of Employee Assistance Services on Workplace Outcomes - PI: Melissa Richmond, PhD, OMNI Institute with the Colorado Employee Assistance Program

- Gathers data on multiple workplace outcomes
- Strong study design including carefully-selected comparison control group
- Study site includes many different worksites and occupational classes
- Study will shed new light on EAP workplace results
Colorado State EAP (C-SEAP)

- Internal EAP for Colorado State Government: Housed in the Department of Personnel & Administration

- 6 Session Model: Counseling provided in 9 regional offices across Colorado (rural & urban) by licensed professionals. Capacity for additional service when assessed as essential to employee well-being

- Comprehensive Service menu: Consultation, mediation, education, crisis response, coaching, facilitated groups, organizational development & emergency financial assistance

- Additional Offerings: Psychological Fitness for Duty, Worksite Mediation & Managerial Emotional Intelligence Coaching

- Diverse Employee Population: Executive, Legislative, Judicial & Higher Education branches; Educationally, professionally, and socio-economically diverse - 80,000+ eligible employees
Study Goals

1. Quantify EAP impact on 3 workplace outcomes
   – Absenteeism
   – Presenteeism
   – Workplace Distress

2. Identify conditions where EAP is most effective
   – Hazardous Substance Use
   – Depression

3. Estimate cost-savings from reducing absenteeism
Study Strengths

- Large demographically & geographically diverse employee base
  - Provides strong external validity
- Rigorous study design
  - Selection of matched employees to compare to EAP clients
- Validated and objective measures
  - 3 scales from Workplace Outcomes Suite
  - State-generated timekeeping data
Study Design

EAP

Baseline ➔ Services ➔ Follow-up

Control

Baseline ➔ No Services ➔ Follow-up

Employee Assistance Research Foundation

OMNI

Colorado State Employee Assistance Program
Data Domains

**EAP Group**
- Demographics
- Depression, Anxiety, Substance Use
- Absenteeism, Presenteeism, Workplace distress
- Help-seeking

**Control Group**
- Demographics
- Depression, Anxiety, Substance Use
- Absenteeism, Presenteeism, Workplace distress
- Help-seeking

---

Employee Assistance Research Foundation

Colorado State Employee Assistance Program
Outcome Measures

Workplace Outcomes Suite*

– **Absenteeism:** Number of hours taken away from work due personal/work problems.

– **Presenteeism:** Extent to which personal/work problems adversely affects work performance.

– **Workplace distress:** Degree of discomfort associated with the work environment.

Timecard Data - tracked daily

*Open Source; © Chestnut Global Partners, Inc.
EAP Group Enrollment by Month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of EAP Group Enrollees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Control Group Enrollment by Month

- October: 1319
- November: 697
- December: 60
- January: 30
- February: 35
- March: 898
- April: 77
- May: 3
- June: 423
- July: 523
# Matching & Follow-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EAP Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>256 enrolled</td>
<td>2,957 enrolled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239 matched</td>
<td>340 matched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156 follow-up</td>
<td>188 follow-up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Time Between Intake & Follow-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number (N)</th>
<th>Average Time in Months</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>7.90</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>12.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>12.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Study Balance
Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EAP (n=156)</th>
<th>Matched Control (n=188)</th>
<th>Full Control (n=2903)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Female</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Caucasian</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participant Demographics

**Mean Age:**
- **EAP** - 44.1 years
- **Matched Control** - 45.1 years
- **Full Control** - 46.3 years

**Mean Length of Employment:**
- **EAP** - 8.0 years
- **Matched Control** - 8.5 years
- **Full Control** - 10.0 years
Baseline Anxiety

Severity of Symptoms

EAP (n=156): 2.46
Matched Control (n=188): 2.29
Full Control (n=2903): 1.03
Baseline Alcohol Use

Degree of Hazardous Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Count (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAP (n=156)</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched Control (n=188)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Control (n=2903)</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Baseline Seeking Social Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EAP (n=156)</th>
<th>Matched Control (n=188)</th>
<th>Full Control (n=2903)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree of Seeking Support</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>7.54</td>
<td>6.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Baseline Absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Missed</th>
<th>EAP (n=156)</th>
<th>Matched Control (n=188)</th>
<th>Full Control (n=2903)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>15.15</td>
<td>13.02</td>
<td>9.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Baseline Presenteeism

Impact on Productivity

- EAP (n=156): 2.88
- Matched Control (n=188): 2.81
- Full Control (n=2903): 1.89
Baseline Workplace Distress

Level of Distress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Level of Distress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAP (n=156)</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched Control (n=188)</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Control (n=2903)</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EAP Group vs. All Controls

Compared to All Controls, EAP study participants:

- Were slightly younger in age
- Were slightly more likely to be Hispanic/Latino
- Had shorter length of employment
- Had higher levels of hazardous drinking
- Had higher levels of depression & anxiety
- Had higher rate of help-seeking behaviors
- Had higher rates of absenteeism, presenteeism, and workplace distress
EAP Group vs. Matched Controls

Compared to Matched Controls, EAP study participants:

- Had no significant differences in demographics; help-seeking tendencies; pre-intervention psychological distress; pre-intervention hazardous alcohol use; pre-intervention absenteeism, presenteeism and workplace distress

- Achieved balance between groups to allow for a rigorous test of program impact
EAP Group Characteristics

Most Common Presenting Issue

- Personal relationships difficulties (34.6%)
- Psychological distress (19.2%)
- Work relationships in conflict (12.8%)
- Sub abuse concerns (self & other) (7.6%)

Number of Sessions

- Average # of sessions = 2.79 (range 0-11)
- 10.3% no-show/cancellations
Findings: Absenteeism

Hours Missed

Pre   Post
Control: 15.2   16.9
EAP: 13.0    10.7
Findings: Presenteeism

Impact on Productivity

Pre  Post

Control

2.9  2.5

2.8  2.3

EAP

Employee Assistance Research Foundation

Colorado State Employee Assistance Program
Findings: Workplace Distress

Level of Distress

Pre | Post
--- | ---
2.7 | 2.5
2.7 | 2.4

Control
EAP
Findings – Main Effects

- **Sensitivity Tests**
  - Multiple models of change
  - Control for baseline depression, anxiety, productivity, and alcohol use
  - Control for length of time between assessment

- **Confirm EAP impact on Absenteeism & Presenteeism**
Results - Main Effects

- EAP associated with reduced absenteeism and reduced presenteeism
- EAP not associated with reductions in workplace distress
  - Global assessment irrespective of cause
  - Other factors may be outside EAP control (negative work culture, poor leadership, lack of career opportunity, etc.)
Subgroup Comparisons

- Analyzed EAP impact on workplace outcomes as a function of baseline levels of:
  - Absenteeism, Presenteeism, and Workplace distress
  - Depression symptoms
  - Anxiety symptoms
  - Hazardous alcohol use
Subgroup Results

- **EAP was equally effective for:**
  - Employees with varying levels of baseline productivity
  - Employees with varying levels of baseline alcohol use

- **EAP was more effective at reducing absenteeism for those:**
  - Employees lower on baseline depression
  - Employees lower on baseline anxiety
Subgroup Conclusions

✓ Most EAP cases are typically resolved through short-term counseling
  – Consistent with the literature, 18-20% require referral (Attridge et al., 2013; Selvik et al., 2004)

✓ More severe cases typically
  – Necessitate additional treatment, and require more time and time off to resolve
Study Considerations

- Participants were governmental employees
  - May limit generalizability to for-profit and/or other industry types, although study population has a wide diversity of occupational categories & worksite environments.

- EA Program Type
  - C-SEAP is a long-established, internal EA program
Study Limitations

- Unmeasured differences between groups
  - Inability to randomize to study group (EAP client vs control)

- Some EAP clients in significant distress may not have enrolled into the study

- Differences in length of time between baseline and follow-up for two groups
  - However, may have favored comparison participants
Next Steps

1. Additional Analyses
   • Clinical outcomes
   • Timecard data (objective absenteeism measure)

2. Dissemination Plan
   • Peer-reviewed publications
   • Conference presentations
Acknowledgements

- **Employee Assistance Research Foundation**
  - Ron Manderscheid PhD, Paul Roman PhD

- **Colorado State Employee Assistance Program**
  - Randi Wood LCSW, CEAP, Madalena Garcia, Joey Gomez

- **Statistical and Design Consultant**
  - Fred Pampel PhD

- **OMNI Institute Study Team**
  - Melissa Richmond PhD, Ana P. Nunes PhD, Anthony Molieri MSW & Alexis Zimmerman
Implementation Lessons Learned

- Acknowledge & address potential staff resistance
- Designate one person to oversee the process
- Create a workflow that builds in extra time
- Give EAP clients options (phone, online, or in person)
- Stay in close communication with research team
- Be flexible & willing to adjust strategy (ex: incentives)
- Keep your eye on the prize: Creating a business case for C-SEAP & a significant contribution to EAP research!
Value Proposition for EARF Support

✓ Tangible business benefits of better data on EAP contributions to workplace productivity.

✓ Visibility for your organization as a advocate for EAP efficacy, viability, and sustainability.

✓ Demonstrate leadership and commitment to advancing the EAP field.
EARF Contributions to Date

- Donations: $165,400
- Matched Funding: $200,000
- Still Available Matching Funds: $800,000

Tisone Foundation Matching Pledge

$1,000,000
The Bottom Line...

- EARF contributions + matching funds received to date have totaled approximately $365,000.

- Funding of previous research and commitment to current study proposal = over $300,000.

- EARF’s future capacity for funding EAP research studies are simply unsustainable without additional financial support.
How You Can Help

1. Facilitate a contribution from your organization to fund future research efforts.

2. Make a personal tax-deductible contribution to fund future research efforts.

3. Make an in-kind contribution to assist EARF with dissemination of research findings or fundraising efforts.
Organizational Donors to EARF

Alliance Work Partners
ACI/Ann Clark Associates
CG Hylton, Inc.
Chestnut Global Partners
Claremont Behavioral Services
Colorado Chapter of EAPA
EASNA
First Sun EAP
Health Mgmt Systems of America
Houston Chapter of EAPA
HRI/Humana
KGA/Kathy Greer Associates

New Directions Behavioral Health
North Carolina Chapter of EAPA
Northern Illinois Chapter of EAPA
Optum Behavioral Health
ORCAS
Perspectives, Ltd.
Philadelphia Chapter of EAPA
Psychcare
San Francisco Bay Chapter of EAPA
United Behavioral Health
Upper Midwest Chapter of EAPA
ValueOptions
Individual Donors to EARF

Scott Cullen-Benson
Kenneth Burgess
Carol Duncan Clayton
Greg DeLapp
Julius “Chip” Drotos
Charles Durban
Eric Goplerud
Stanford Granberry
Michele Grow
Steven Haught
Lucy Henry

Pat Herlihy
Brian Hutchinson
Kaoru Ichikawa
Donald Jorgensen
Michael Klaybor
Andrea Landsman
David Levine
Maria Lund
Paul Maiden
Dale Masi
Bernie McCann

Vaughn Moser
Cynthia Persico
James Printup
Thomas Reynolds
Pamela Ruster
Sandra Turner
Marci Stafford
Mike Webb
Patrick Williams
Randi Wood
Beverly Younger
In-Kind Support for EARF

Chestnut Global Partners
Corporate Counseling Services
Employee Assistance Professionals Association
Employee Assistance Society of North America
Employee Assistance European Forum
National Assoc. of County Behavioral Health Directors
National Behavioral Consortium
Massachusetts/Rhode Island Chapter of EAPA
Northern Illinois Chapter of EAPA
Contact information

Melissa Richmond, OMNI Institute  mrichmond@omni.org

Randi Wood, Colorado State EAP  randi.wood@state.co.us

Bernie McCann, EARF  mccannbag@gmail.com

EARF website:  www.eapfoundation.org