

HR60 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP – Staff & Volunteers)

Policy Statement

This Policy establishes a clear framework under which staff & volunteer members and Volunteers, who may at some stage in their engagement with BHS encounter personal difficulties that affect their work performance, can access a comprehensive program of support to work towards the resolution of difficulties.

Staff & volunteer members have significant relationships and responsibilities to themselves, families, friends and community. Beechworth Health Service (BHS) recognises that problems or issues arising in any of these relationships, and or responsibilities, whether at home or at work may affect the person and their ability to function optimally in the workplace.

In order to minimise the adverse impact on staff & volunteers of personal issues and concerns an on-going commitment by management to staff & volunteers will be through the provision of access to a support service. Staff & volunteers can access these services in a fully confidential manner.

BHS recognises benefits to staff, their families, volunteers and work colleagues through the provision of the opportunity to attend this type of confidential support service.

Applicable to: This counselling may be accessed by all paid staff, approved contractors, approved volunteers and board members who are experiencing work and/or personal problems which affect the workplace.

BHS will conduct worker welfare checks, that are reasonable given all the circumstances and including any concerns for worker safety and welfare.

Process

Staff & volunteers determine their own need for counselling - there is no need to seek permission or inform the manager. Staff & volunteers self-refer to the service.

All actions to provide assistance to employees remain confidential; where at no time does any member of staff & volunteers at the Beechworth Health Service have any knowledge of who attends this confidential and external service. Beechworth Health Service will receive feedback by a report highlighting areas of concern.

1. Accessing Employee Assistance Program .
 - i. Access to Employee Assistance Program is voluntary and confidential.
 - ii. Access to Employee Assistance Program is initiated by the individual.
 - iii. Line managers are enabled to approve in principle, access to Employee Assistance Program for an individual staff & volunteers' member. Final approval is issued by the Human Resources Manager. In issuing approval, it is not necessary that the Human Resources Manager understands the nature of support required.
 - iv. The Employee Assistance Program assistance is available to staff & volunteers. This service maybe available to immediate family by approval from the Human Resources Manager.
 - v. In accessing Employee Assistance Program, it is not necessary for the individual to cite the nature of the difficulty, only the need to access a service provider.
 - vi. Staff & volunteers members seeking the Employee Assistance Program will not jeopardise their employment in any way.
 - vii. Should access to the Employee Assistance Program result in time away from work, the staff members sick leave will be used for this purpose. Where a staff member

does not have any sick leave entitlements, other leave as appropriate will be accessed. Where sick leave entitlements are fully used as a result of Staff Support, BHS will negotiate the reimbursement of sick leave entitlements with the staff member.

2. Participation within the Employee Assistance Program
 - i. Individuals accessing Employee Assistance Program are encouraged to commit fully to the support identified to resolve presenting difficulties / issues.
 - ii. Individuals can access service providers of their choice provided the service provider is:
 - a) Registered with an industry / peak body and maintains appropriate insurances
 - b) Delivers services aligned with the nature of the presenting difficulty / issue
 - c) Geographically reasonable.
 - iii. Ongoing participation within Employee Assistance Program is based on the likelihood of a successful resolution or successful maintenance of the presenting problem / issue. In this context agreement between the individual accessing Employee Assistance Program and the Human Resources Manager will determine the initial number of episodes of care / support appropriate to the presenting issue.
 - iv. BHS will initiate review periods to determine progress against the problem / issue experienced by the individual. Review periods will be negotiated between individuals and the appropriate line / senior manager.
 - v. BHS reserves the right to terminate a Staff & volunteer Support arrangement under circumstances including, though not limited to:
 - a) Independent advice that suggests the difficulty experienced by the individual no longer presents an issue
 - b) An individual's demonstrated lack of engagement and commitment to appropriate engagement with the support recommendations
3. Administering Employee Assistance Program BHS will maintain data that demonstrates:
 - i.
 - a) The category of service provider accessed (i.e. GP, physiotherapy, counselling, etc.)
 - b) Total cost, site-based cost, and team-based cost accrued on an annual basis
 - c) Episodes of care (total of all Employee Assistance Program participants)
 - ii. Line Managers in discussion with their respective Executive Line Manager maintain responsibility for the administrative functions related to an individual staff & volunteers member's access to Employee Assistance Program including advising accounts of expenditure, Employee Assistance Program agreements, and appropriate correspondence with service providers.
 - iii. If not using our preferred Employee Assistance Programs contractor, approval must be issued by the Human Resources Manager.

The providers of these confidential services are:

acaciaEAP

Online 24 hour counselling service via Phone booking on 1300 364 273 or the self-service booking portal called - Appointment Hub

[link](#) or visit www.acaciaconnection.com and select 'Request an Appointment', employees will need to enter beechworthhealth.org.au

Step Psychology

**490 David Street, Albury NSW, or 5 Stanley Street, Wodonga- Phone 02 6021 7410
Counselling can provide face to face, video call or telephone.**

Hume Psychology

56 Gilchrist Avenue, Beechworth, Phone 03 5728 2446
Hours – 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday

To access Employee Assistance Program the staff & volunteer member requiring the service must contact the reception of their preferred provider and make an appointment. The account invoice for payment for the service must be presented to BHS as soon as practicable for payment by BHS. Upon arrival all staff & volunteers are required to present their BHS Staff & volunteers ID swipe card for identification, without the ID card you will not be able to access the appointment.

BHS will pay for the first ~~two~~ three visits. Invoices for the **first three visits** will be made out to BHS but not to include the name or gender of the staff & volunteers' member.

If additional visits are sought, each staff & volunteers' member's individual case will be assessed and directed to the Human Resources Manager for consideration of the request, if approved, the provider will be informed of the number of additional visits prior to the additional visits being accessed. If approval has not been provided by the Human Resources Manager staff & volunteers members will be required to pay for the additional visits.

Outcome

All staff, approved contractors and board members have the opportunity to access appropriate and confidential support/counselling away from the workplace.

Definitions

Nil

Appendix

Appendix 1 [HR60 Employee Assistance Program - Appendix 1 Employee Assistance Program \(Information for Staff and Volunteers\) Brochure](#)

Quality & Risk Management

Goal	Risk	Rating (with controls as per this policy)	Required actions
All staff and volunteers will have access to a confidential counselling service.	If the service is not available, staff, and volunteers, may be affected and their ability to function within the workplace may place them at risk.	Freq= Unlikely Conseq = Minor Rating = Low (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage with routine procedures Monitor Trends

Policy Quality Improvement Action Plan

Specify accountability and responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Governance and responsibility of this policy has been assigned to the Finance Resources & IT Service Committee (FRITS).
Monitor Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Policy to be reviewed regularly Areas of concern to be reported by Hume Psychology
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff & volunteers to be made aware of policy at orientation as well as staff intranet. The FRITS Committee will monitor the use of this policy
Quality Improvement	Quality Improvement to this policy will be informed at review by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback (if any)

Document Control

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSQHS Standard 1 – Clinical Governance • ACQSC Standard 8.7 Human Resources • NDIS Standard – 2 Provider Governance and Operational Management 		
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHS Brochure – 2023_StaffSupportServicesBrochure 		
Approving Committees	Finance Resources & IT Service Committee (FRITS)	Approval Date: 27/07/2023	
Contact Point	Chief Executive Officer		
Review Dates	Issue Date: 01/05/2002	Last Review: 27/07/2023	Next Review: 27/07/2026