

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR EMPLOYEE AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EFAP)

## WHAT IS AN EFAP?

An EFAP is a professional and confidential service offered by organizations to promote and support the well-being of their employees and eligible family members.

Everyone faces difficult or stressful events in their lives. Most of the time, we handle these personal issues fairly well. Other times, life events can become challenging enough to interfere with our effectiveness and happiness both at home and at work.

Your EFAP provides you with **confidential**, professional counselling and wellness services that are there to provide support for those times when a little extra help is needed. The program provides access to masters' level counsellors, plus a full suite of lifestyle, specialty, and online services.

## WHO PROVIDES YOUR EFAP?

Homewood Health™ provides your EFAP to all eligible employees and their immediate family members. Homewood Health is a private Canadian company specializing in employee and family assistance programs for over 35 years. They offer a one-of-a-kind approach to EFAP—the highest quality of clinical support and intervention available—and an unmatched continuum of services that spans health promotion, mental health and addictions treatment, and prevention-focused work-life counselling services.

Your EFAP through Homewood Health provides completely confidential, professional counselling for a broad range of personal and family issues. While the program can be used for crisis intervention, the ideal time to use the program is before concerns get out of hand. The EFAP is a pro-active option for helping you manage your personal health and well-being.

## WHAT SERVICES DOES THE EFAP OFFER?

The EFAP offers counselling, coaching, information, and support for all types of issues relating to mental health, health management, and achieving greater personal and workplace well-being.

You and your dependents can receive short-term counselling from a professional counsellor either in person, over the phone or online at [www.homewoodhealth.com](http://www.homewoodhealth.com). You are also able to access a full suite of Homewood Health Plan Smart – Lifestyle and Specialty Counselling Services as well as several online services.

All of the EFAP services are outlined in more detail immediately below:

## WHAT KINDS OF COUNSELLING SERVICES ARE OFFERED?

Counselling services are confidential and professional. Assessments, guidance (and referrals when required) are offered that may help with many personal challenges including, but not limited to:

- Relationship concerns in areas such as communication, separation, divorce
- Family issues such as parenting difficulties, family conflict or aging parents
- Workplace concerns linked to conflict, stress, change, balance or career
- Financial and legal difficulties
- Alcohol and drug misuse or dependency
- Gambling and other addictions
- Depression and anxiety
- Bereavement and grief
- Anger management
- Sexual harassment and abuse
- Life transitions such as retirement, menopause or divorce

## HOW DOES THE COUNSELLING PROGRAM WORK?

When you need to speak with someone, simply call the Homewood Health toll-free number listed below. Homewood Health staff will ask you for some basic information (to establish your eligibility for this benefit) and will help set up an initial face-to-face counselling appointment at a time and office location that is convenient for you. Or, if preferred, telephonic or e-counselling can also be arranged. In all cases, an experienced counsellor will help assess your concerns and aid you in developing practical solutions. All Homewood Health counsellors have a minimum of a master's level degree, and extensive experience in helping individuals with their personal challenges. If longer term counselling, hospital treatment or specialized services (such as medical, legal or financial help) are required, your counsellor will discuss referral options with you to get you connected with the most appropriate support.

## WHAT ARE PLAN SMART—LIFESTYLE AND SPECIALTY COUNSELLING SERVICES?

Whether one needs to find a nursing home for an aging parent on the other side of the country, obtain help getting finances under control, receive advice on how to nurture a child with special needs or gifts, plan for the transition back to work following parental leave, or receive legal advice on custody or visitation questions, Homewood Health can help.

Clients utilizing Plan Smart are provided with an overview of the service at time of first call by the intake counsellor initiating support with the specialist. Clients have access to the specialist within 24-48 hours and specialists can often provide an assessment of the client's needs upon first contact. Assessment outcomes, including additional support and resources, are customized for each client.

Plan Smart services are delivered over the telephone and often include a personalized package of information and useful tools, such as tips sheets, articles and software programs that have been selected with the client's specific interests in mind.

Plan Smart—Lifestyle and Specialty Counselling Services include:

#### **Life Balance Solutions**

- New Parent Support
- Childcare and Parenting
- Elder and Family Care
- Relationship Solutions
- Legal Advisory
- Financial Consultation

#### **Health Smart Coaching Services**

- Nutritional Counselling
- Smoking Cessation Program
- 12 Weeks to Wellness—a healthy lifestyle program

#### **Career Smart Counselling Services**

- Career Counselling
- Pre-Retirement Planning
- Shift Worker Support

## **WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE?**

In addition to core EFAP services, you have access to a variety of online resources that provide self-help information, references, articles, and guidelines.

- **Online Health Library**— an extensive collection of educational resources organized into a Health Library with rich content, relevant topics, and easy navigation.
- **The Health and Wellness Companion**— a comprehensive self-guided, self-development program that is designed to provide a personal plan of action. This also includes a Health Risk Assessment.
- **E-Learning Courses**— instant access to online learning developed by psychologists specialized in e-learning and health promotion. These self-paced, interactive, confidential learning courses target personal and workplace issues.
- **BusyFamily Child and Eldercare Resource Locators**— conduct your own customized searches by keying in specific requirements. You can search for daycares, homecare, respite care, schools, camps, long-term facilities, assistive care facilities, and facilities geared towards the elderly with health needs or cultural preferences. Responses are instantaneous and can be easily sorted for comparison purposes.

## WHAT DOES THE EFAP COST?

All EFAP services are offered at no cost to you or your family members. Occasionally a counsellor will refer to resources in the community. Any costs incurred through community resources are considered outside of the EFAP program and are therefore not covered by the program; however, they may be covered through your other health benefits.

## IS THE EFAP CONFIDENTIAL?

Confidentiality is the cornerstone of the EFAP. The program allows all EFAP clients to discuss any life-issue in complete confidence, whether speaking with a masters' level counsellor or another professional for one of the Plan Smart specialty services (e.g. Lawyer or Registered Dietician).

Homewood Health standards of confidentiality are the same as those used by medical doctors in Canada. You and your family may rest assured that all conversations and dealings with the EFAP will remain strictly confidential within the limits of the law\*.

Homewood Health is fully accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA), an objective and recognized body for EFAP provider accreditation, which also ensures organizations meet the standards of confidentiality.

*\*Homewood Health is required by law to disclose what would otherwise be confidential information when there is a risk of serious injury to oneself or others, there is suspicion of child abuse as defined by provincial legislation, or when served with a properly executed court order (i.e. subpoena).*

## WHAT IF I'M SEEING A COUNSELLOR WITH OUR PREVIOUS PROVIDER?

If you are currently meeting with a counsellor through our previous EFAP provider, you may continue with your counsellor through to case closure. Any future needs would be met by contacting Homewood Health.

## HOW DO I CONTACT THE EFAP?

Whether a concern is just beginning or at a time of crisis, you and your family members are encouraged to take the first step, and access support through your Employee and Family Assistance Program.

To speak to someone in confidence, for immediate support or to book an appointment , you may call one of the Homewood Health numbers below 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Help is always available.

**1.800.663.1142 (English) • 1.866.398.9505 (Numéro sans frais - en français)**

**1.888.384.1152 (TTY) • 604.689.1717 International (Call Collect) • [www.homewoodhealth.com](http://www.homewoodhealth.com)**