The 2018 Workplace Outcome Suite (WOS) Annual Report finds that EAPs improve employee well-being

More than 24,000 cases analyzed in study conducted by Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) and other stakeholders

CHICAGO, May 13, 2019 – The Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) in partnership with Morneau Shepell, today announced the publication of the 2018 Workplace Outcome Suite (WOS) Report.

Analyzing the outcomes of 24,363 completed employee cases compiled from more than 30 different employee assistance programs (EAPs) across 28 countries, the 2018 study introduced a new combined SuperScore measure that demonstrated a 16 percent level of improvement across the five outcomes measured.

Results comparing metrics at start of an EAP case and at longitudinal follow-up about three months after counseling document positive and statistically significant results. Key findings for change over time include:

- Work absenteeism decreased by 27 percent
- Work presenteeism was reduced by 26 percent
- Life satisfaction was increased by 23 percent
- Workplace distress was decreased by 14 percent
- Work engagement was increased by 8 percent

Perhaps the most important discovery was that the degree of improvement for WOS outcomes was found consistently across various contexts of how the EAP was used. In general, there were little or no differences in outcomes based on the age and sex of employee, the different paths of referral into the EAP, different clinical issues, the type of business model for providing EAP (external vendor, internal staff program or hybrid of both), the industry of the employer, country where the employee lived and year. Thus, EAP counseling was effective across multiple contexts of use.

For a business perspective, the amount of lost productive time over the three-month episode of distress was reduced by about five work days (39 hours) in total as a result of EAP use. Most of this improvement was from the reduction in unproductive time while on the job (79 percent of the total), with only 21 percent from reducing time away from work. The estimated cost burden to the employer was reduced by almost US$1,731 per employee user of EAP counseling. Using industry averages for annual program utilization for counseling cases and annual program total cost, the return on investment for EAP counseling was $3.37 for every $1 invested.

“The results of the research demonstrated that there is a good reason for employers to use an EAP to support distressed employees and enhance overall employee well-being,” said Barb Veder, vice president and chief clinician, Morneau Shepell. “After use of EAP-provided counseling, problem rates were reduced for every aspect measured in the study where employees need support. Thus, EAPs help to reduce the risks associated with workplace problems.”
“The WOS Report provides compelling evidence supporting the important role that EAPs play in reducing absenteeism, improving the productivity and healthy functioning of employees in the workplace,” said Greg DeLapp, CEO, EAPA. “When considering whether to provide employees with EAP access, employers should also take into account the impact of counseling on health care costs, accidents and employee turnover.”


Editor’s notes

The Workplace Outcome Suite (WOS), developed through Chestnut Global Partners (a Morneau Shepell company) and endorsed by EAPA, is a well-established outcomes measurement tool that continues to grow in EA service provider use, popularity, and available data for reporting.

All WOS-generated data is stored independently from Morneau Shepell and is not used by the company for market intelligence on competitors. WOS users who signed license agreements have written assurances of confidentiality. Data submitted to WOS never identifies individual employees, specific EAP providers or client information and will never be shared externally; only aggregated data from across all providers is shared in the WOS report.

About Morneau Shepell

Morneau Shepell is the leading provider of technology-enabled HR services that deliver an integrated approach to well-being through our cloud-based platform. Our focus is providing everything our clients need to support the mental, physical, social and financial well-being of their people. By improving lives, we improve business. Our approach spans services in employee and family assistance, health and wellness, recognition, pension and benefits administration, retirement and benefits consulting, actuarial and investment services. Morneau Shepell employs almost 5,000 employees who work with some 24,000 client organizations that use our services in 162 countries. Morneau Shepell is a publicly traded company on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: MSI). For more information, visit morneaushepell.com.

About EAPA

The Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) is the world’s largest, oldest, and most respected membership organization for employee assistance professionals. With members in over 40 countries around the globe, EAPA is the world’s most relied upon source of information and support for and about the employee assistance profession. EAPA publishes the Journal of Employee Assistance, hosts the annual EAP Conference and EXPO, and offers training and other resources to fulfill its mission. EAPA’s mission is to promote the highest standards of EA practice and the continuing development of employee assistance professionals, programs and services. For more information, visit www.eapassn.org.

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