

Depression In The Workplace



SHARP

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

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Learning Objectives

- Understand the impact of depression and identify associated work performance problems.
- Be able to define the role and responsibilities of the manager/supervisor in helping employees who exhibit symptoms of depression.
- Be able to refer employees to the EAP.

Scope of the Problem



The impact of depression on day
to day functioning is
“comparable to that of a chronic
heart condition”

-Rand Corporation Study



- At any given time one in ten employees experiences depression.
- Costing companies annually \$52 billion in absenteeism and reduced productivity.
 - University of Michigan Depression Center (UMDC) 2004

Depression is costly and disabling.



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Reported by employees:



- Lack of motivation (73%)
- Difficulty concentrating (82%)
- Missing one to three days of work per month due to depression (50%)

-UMDC 2004

- Two out of three people with depression do not get appropriate professional care.
- In a Rand study primary care physicians detected only 51% of patients with a current depressive disorder.

Depression is often unrecognized and inappropriately treated.

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- In a Roper poll 78% of respondents said that they would live with depression until it passed.
- Only 12% were willing to take medication.
- Many people do not understand that depression is a medical illness and not a “weakness of character” or “a psychological problem”.

Lack of knowledge prevents people from getting help.



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Other Barriers to Getting Help



- Only 41% of the employees surveyed felt that they could acknowledge their illness and still get ahead in their careers.
- 85% of managers surveyed believed that assisting employees with depression was part of their job, yet only 18% had received training to do so.
- 89% of employees reported having mental health coverage, yet three out of four delayed getting help.

– UMDC 2004

You Can Lift the Barrier

“The workplace serves as an important point of intervention. In fact, many people who have been diagnosed and treated for depression say they were driven to seek treatment by a co-worker or boss”

–Lea Ann Browning-McNee,
National mental Health Association

What is “depression”?
How would you describe it?



Depression

“Whole body illness involving body, mood, thoughts, and behavior.”



It is not a temporary feeling or
a case of the “blues”

Depression is a serious medical illness,
which may become chronic
if left untreated.

Symptoms of Depression

- Persistent sad mood
- Loss of interest in pleasurable activities
- Decreased energy
- Sleep disturbances
- Eating disturbances
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling hopeless
- Feelings of guilt or unworthiness
- Thoughts of suicide
- Excessive crying
- Chronic aches and pain that do not respond to treatment

Treatment

- 80% of depressed individuals can be treated effectively with medication, counseling, or both.
- Most people are treated on an outpatient basis and can be helped in a matter of weeks.

Supervisor/Manager Role



1. Understand depressive illness.
2. Identify signs of work performance problems.
3. Confront, refer, supervise, reintegrate

1. Understand Depressive Illness

- Symptoms
- Types of depression
- Duration of the illness
- Treatment
- Duration of treatment

2. Identify Signs of Work Performance Problems

- Absenteeism and tardiness
- Decreased productivity
- Increased accidents/mistakes
- Poor concentration
- Negative attitude and mood swings
- Increased illness
- Change in appearance, grooming

Focus on work performance problems .



Focus on work performance
problems .



Don't diagnose!

3. Confront Refer Supervise



- Confront to motivate
- Refer to the EAP
- Provide supervision, support, expectations. Hold the employee accountable.
- Help the employee reintegrate into the work place if they go out on MLOA.

How Skillfully To Refer To The EAP



- Pick the right time and make the meeting private.
- Focus on changes in work performance or behavior.
- Explain expectations for performance.
- “Suggest” the EAP and explain how the program works.

SHARP EAP

- 8 sessions per year for the employee.
- For any personal or work related concern.
- Confidential
- Cost free
- EAP counselors are licensed mental health professionals

SHARP EAP

(619) 681-0022

Depression: Raising Awareness

■ Depression Awareness Recognition, and Treatment Program (DART) 1998

NIMH and Washington Business Group on Health

- ◆ Employee education
- ◆ Management training
- ◆ Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services
- ◆ Benefit plan design
- ◆ Data collection and management

Ways to Raise Awareness

- Organization or department memos
- “Housekeeping” announcements
- Remind employees of their benefits
 - ◆ Insurance providers
 - ◆ Educational websites
 - ◆ Employee Assistance Program
 - ◆ Company Wellness Programs

Depression Resources

- Depression is real
 - depressionisreal.org
- Healthfinder
 - healthfinder.gov
- Mental Health America
 - nmha.org
- National Institute of Mental Health
 - nimh.nih.gov

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