

Making Use of the Employee Assistance Program

Did you know that your mental health is as important as your physical health? In many cases, your mental health directly affects your physical health. Medical research estimates as much as 90 percent of illness and disease is stress-related.

- 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year
- 1 in 20 U.S. adults experience serious mental illness each year
- 1 in 6 U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year
- 50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-34

The OPTUM Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help with stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, childcare and eldercare services, workplace concerns, financial and legal advice, and more. All employees at parishes and schools that participate in the St. Raphael Health Plan receive this benefit, even if they do not participate in the health insurance. Employees receive three EAP sessions per plan year (July 1- June 30) at no cost.

Access to the OPTUM EAP Program is easy, confidential, and available 24 hours a day. Call 866-248-4094 or log on to liveandworkwell.com. The access code is straphael. If you are using the EAP for behavioral health counseling, after the 3 EAP visits, you can most often continue to work with the same counselor and benefits will be paid through your medical insurance plan.

I get a number of questions from individuals who are trying to locate a Catholic therapist/counselor. In addition to the resources for locating a counselor through myuhc.com and liveandworkwell.com these are some other therapist locator sites:

- <https://www.catholictherapists.com/find-a-therapist>
- <https://www.catholicpsychotherapy.org/directory>
- <https://catholiccounselors.com/>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists>
- <https://www.mhawisconsin.org/>

To find a therapist, look through the above website, read the bios of a number of therapists, choose a handful that look like a good fit for you, and then give them a call. Most therapists offer prospective clients a free 15-minute consultation for you to ask questions, hear about the therapist and their approach and see if it feels like a good fit. Research continues to find that it is the match between therapist and client that is the biggest predictor to a successful treatment outcome—over any other variable such as training, treatment approach, etc.

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