



## Frequently Asked Question

### Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

#### General Questions

#### **What is the Purpose of the Employee and Family Assistance Program?**

The EFAP provides services so you can take practical and proactive steps to improve your well-being and be the best you can through free, flexible, and confidential support services.

These include supports for topics such as:

- family and relationship
- anxiety and stress
- work related issues
- alcoholism and drug dependency
- personal and emotional difficulties
- childcare and eldercare issues
- legal and financial concerns
- traumatic events in the workplace
- grief and loss support services
- nutrition support services and health coaching
- health coaching
- smoking cessation
- stress management
- career support
- work life balance

It is important to remember that no problem is too small or too large.

#### **How will the will you ensure that EFAP services are meeting the needs of our people?**

The organization will be given regular statistical information to help evaluate the uptake and effectiveness of services. These reports do not include any information about the specific identity of employees who have used the program and are meant for trending purposes only.

#### **Is the EFAP Confidential?**

Yes. The EFAP has strict confidentiality guidelines in place to protect your privacy. Homewood Health professionals work within a strict code of professional ethics as the law requires and will only share personal information with certain authorities under very specific conditions including threat of violence to oneself or others, reports of child/elder abuse, or a subpoena.



To preserve confidentiality:

- Two people from the same organization will not have back-to-back appointments with the same counsellor to avoid accidentally meeting each other.
- Homewood Health will not leave any identifying telephone messages at home or at work unless given permission to do so by employee/client.
- Counselling services can be provided away from the work site and can be offered before and after work hours if necessary.

## **Will my organization know if I personally use the program?**

No. Your employer receives only anonymous statistical reports to help evaluate how the program is being used and how effective it is. These reports do not include any information that could identify individual employees.

## **Why does Homewood Collect Personal Information?**

Homewood Health collects personal information for the purpose of providing appropriate services. Your personal information is kept as a secure record. Homewood Health will not disclose or release information without your knowledge and permission. At any time, you may withdraw your consent to the collection of your information.

Please visit <https://homewoodhealth.com/privacy/> to learn more about Homewood Health's commitment to protecting your personal information.

## **What is short-term counselling?**

Homewood Health's short-term counselling program is a solution-focused, goal setting approach that enables individuals to develop and practice the skills necessary to improve their well-being, coping strategies and resiliency to solve their life challenges.

We offer a range of counselling modalities giving you the ability to choose how you receive counselling, based on your unique needs.

## **Who is eligible for EFAP services?**

- All employees;
- their spouse/partner;
- and eligible dependents up to the age of 21 living at home, or up to the age of 25 if enrolled in post secondary education full-time.
- retirees are eligible to receive services for up to one year post retirement.

## **Who pays for EFAP services?**

The cost of EFAP services is paid by the organization as an employee health benefit. If you need specialized or longer-term support, the EFAP will help you find an appropriate specialist or service. While fees for these additional services are your responsibility, some may be covered by your provincial or organizational health plan.



## How do I access the EFAP?

**Phone:** To get started by phone call **1-800-663-1142** – toll-free available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

If you prefer services in another language, let the Client Services Centre Intake Counsellor know at the time of your call so that the language matching service can ensure you receive help in the language you prefer.

**Online:** You can also access the EFAP through [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca). Create your own private account using **Access Code:**

- Online access provides a secure way to book most EFAP services.
- e-Counselling provides written exchanges, or real time chat with a counsellor via secure online portal.
- Video counselling
- Mobile App

## What languages are available?

Homewood Health is fully bilingual, and more than 200 languages are always available at intake, via an immediate, over-the-phone interpreter service. Our national network of counsellors is diverse with more than 60 languages spoken fluently at any given time. As such, we are very likely able to provide, at minimum, telephonic services directly with a clinician who speaks your preferred language. We are continuously working to ensure our network meets the diverse language and cultural needs of Canadians across the country.

## How do individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or who have speech difficulties access the program?

Individuals can utilize the 7-1-1 relay service to connect in with our Client Service Centre. Additionally, they can go online to [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca) and use our chat feature for instant support, communicate via email with our Client Service Centre, utilize the online [e-Counselling form](#) or [video counselling form](#) or do the self-led intake through Pathfinder.

## What can I expect when I call the toll-free number?

The EFAP toll-free number **1-800-663-1142** is available 24/hours a day, seven days a week and is one of the options to access EFAP Services should you require support. When you are connected to an Intake Counsellor they will speak with you to understand your needs and connect you to the support you need. This representative can also answer your questions about the EFAP and the available programs and services.

## What kinds of questions will I be asked?

The Client Service Centre Intake Counsellor will ask you some eligibility questions as well as a set of risk questions.

### *Eligibility questions:*

- Name and Date of Birth
- Are you an employee or family member
- Name of Organization

### *Risk Questions:*

In the past week have you...

- Had thoughts of hurting yourself or ending your life?
- Had thoughts of harming or hurting others?
- Had concerns about your safety at home or in your relationship(s)?

In the past month have you had trouble with your relationship and responsibilities (home, work, school, social) because of your drinking or drug use?

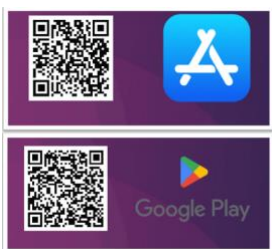
These questions help to determine eligibility as well as to assess any imminent risk that you may be in.

The Intake Counsellor will proceed with setting up your personal confidential file and collect only the necessary information to understand the reason for calling to identify and offer appropriate services to you.

## What is the Homewood Health App?

The Homewood Health App is a mobile application for iOS and Android devices provided by Homewood Health. It provides users access to tools, resources and support so that you can get the help and support you are looking for, when you need it. The Homewood Health App includes access to a wealth of tools and resources on Homeweb, one-touch access to Homewood's Client Services Centre, and Chat.

Download and install the Homewood Health App using your smartphone through the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store.



Simply use the email address and password you chose when you registered on [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca) to login to the App. If you have not created your account yet choose the Register option on the app, search your organizations name and use **Access Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ to create your own private account.



## **Can my employer make me use EFAP services?**

No. Your participation is always voluntary. Employers can remind you that EFAP services are available if you are experiencing difficulties or if your work performance has been negatively impacted by a specific issue or event. However, the decision to access services is entirely yours to make.

## **Should I use the EFAP instead of services covered under the medical benefit plan?**

The EFAP is not offered as a replacement for the services covered under the medical benefit plan. Instead, it is a compliment to these services. The EFAP can be used as a preventative measure and can help you with short-term challenges. Counsellors can also provide referrals for specialized or longer-term services.

## **What is Homewood's approach to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?**

Respect for diversity is a core value to Homewood Health. Our Intake Counsellors are trained to respond to requests that reflect the diverse needs of employees—such as preferences related to gender, cultural background, language, or other identity factors—when matching individuals with a counsellor. This is often presented as requests for a provider from a particular cultural background, language requests, or queries around the physical accessibility of an office space or alternative counselling modalities. Our Intake Team regularly works with our clinical network to meet such requests.

## **Counselling Services**

### **What modalities of counselling are available?**

We offer a wide range of counselling modalities catering to diverse needs, presenting issues, geographies and expectations. Counselling services are offered face-to-face, through video, over the phone or online. Appointments are made quickly, with your convenience in mind.

#### **Video Counselling**

You can access video sessions with a counsellor, no matter where you live. Licensed Counsellors will deliver virtual care to through private, scheduled video visits. The service is accessible via desktop, iOS, and Android devices.

#### **In-person Counselling**

Homewood Health's counselling may be delivered in-person at offices in multiple geographical areas. To support in-person counselling, we draw on our network of professionals across Canada.

#### **Telephonic Counselling**

This delivery method is especially valuable to those who prefer the added anonymity of a telephone appointment, are time- challenged, or for whom in-person is not convenient or possible.



## **e-Counseling**

e-Counseling allows individuals to use written communication to access counseling with a counsellor who is in a different location than they are using a secure system for confidential communication. E-Counseling correspondence allows you send asynchronous messages back and forth with your counsellor. Chat counselling allows for real-time interaction in a private chat environment.

## **How many counselling sessions am I entitled to with short-term counselling?**

Because the complexity and type of issue varies from person to person, the number of sessions required to address a specific concern will vary. Homewood Health is committed to offering the most appropriate level of support to help you get back on track. Your counsellor will work with you to determine what is best for your situation.

## **How soon can I be scheduled with an EFAP counsellor?**

For non-critical counselling requests, depending on location, first appointment can be offered as soon 24 hours from the time of the intake call, although employee preference/convenience are determining factors. The average is within 3-5 business days. For Urgent or Crisis Counselling, same day and immediate appointments can be offered through our First Call Care/Meet Now support which connects individuals telephonically to a counsellor for immediate support.

## **What if I'm in crisis?**

If you are experiencing a crisis, you can call the toll-free number 1-800-663-1142 24 hours a day, 7 days of the week to connect in with a Counsellor for immediate support and crisis counselling.

If you are working and need assistance, ask a supervisor or colleague to assist you with calling the EFAP and indicate that the situation is a crisis or emergency.

## **Who are the counsellors for Counselling Services?**

Homewood Health has a network of counsellors who are professionally trained clinicians, such as social workers, psychologists and clinical counsellors, with a Master's level degree and minimum of 5 years experience in clinical counselling. To offer access to services to clients across a broad geographical area, some rare exceptions to the above criteria have been made. In these cases, the counsellors have been internally vetted to ensure they meet Homewood Health's professional and clinical standards

## **How do I give feedback about counselling?**

You will receive an electronic survey that you have the option to complete once you have finished counselling. This survey is sent to an email address that you provide to us and provides an option to share anonymous feedback on your experience. You can also provide immediate feedback by contacting our client service center at **1-800-663-1142**. Our Intake Counsellors are always available to listen to your feedback as well as to help resolve any concerns you may have.



## **What if I don't like my counsellor?**

If you would prefer to see a different counsellor, contact our customer service for assistance and we will do our best to accommodate your preferences. It is important for you to find a counsellor that is the right fit for you. If you are not satisfied and would like to file a complaint, you can contact our Client Service Centre and our Intake Counsellors can assist. All complaints relating to counselling are investigated.

## **Services for Family Members**

### **Can I make the initial contact for a family member?**

No. In fact, adult family members must access the services independently because appointments cannot be initiated by a third party. However, a parent, or legal guardian can initiate services for young children and must attend the first appointment with children under the age of 15.

### **Will the EFAP provide service to a family member who is a minor without my consent?**

Children under the age of 15 require parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to attend the first counselling session with the child. Laws vary from province to province. Unless the law requires otherwise, EFAP services provided to children between the age of 15 and the provincial age of majority remain confidential. Because the successful resolution of a minor's problem often depends on parental support, EFAP counsellors usually encourage the minor to involve the parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

### **Do I need to refer a family member to the program or link them to my account?**

No. Eligible family members can call the toll-free number 1-800-663-1142 or register for their own private account on [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca) or through the Homewood Health App in the same way that you as an employee would. Their access to the program and their account is private and confidential to themselves.