

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 focused mainly on the goal and objective of this study, which was “a needs assessment for an Employee Assistance Programme at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital”. The goal and objectives of the study were compared with empirical findings and conclusions drawn from that. Attention was paid to the extent to which the research question for the study, namely “Is there a need for an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital?” was confirmed and how the results from empirical findings could be generalised to the entire employee population of Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital.

A thorough investigation about the EAP as a concept, the rationale for EAP programmes, goals and objectives of EAP, the concept of a troubled employee and why problems develop was done through a literature study.

The psychiatric hospital as a workplace was also investigated. The employee’s need for an EAP was explored through an empirical study. A questionnaire was randomly distributed to the employees in order to explore this need. The empirical study was completed successfully because all 53 questionnaires were completed and returned to the researcher by the respondents.

On the basis of the above mentioned, conclusions and recommendations will be made.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions drawn were based on the goal and objectives of the study, the research question for the study and the extent to which the results of the study

University of Pretoria etd – Lentsoe, M M (2003)

could be generalised to the entire employee population of Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital.

The results of this study revealed that 62,26% of the respondents indicated that they had a good working relationship with their subordinates or supervisors, thus implying a positive response from the employees of Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital towards the application of a constructive confrontational approach by the supervisor.

Sterkfontein employees experience both personal and work-related problems. This was evident from the results of this study, which showed that 83,02% of the respondents indicated that they went to their supervisor with work-related problems and that 39,62% went to a family member when they had personal problems.

Problems at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital are left unattended until it is too late. This was revealed by the results of this study which showed that 51,92% of the respondents indicated that their supervisor could only sometimes see when they had problems.

Information is not accessible to all the employees of Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital. This problem was exposed by the results of this study, which indicated that 43,14% of the respondents did not know how their job performance was measured, whereas 35,29% knew how their job performance was measured.

The following information confirmed further that Sterkfontein employees experience personal and work-related problems. This was revealed by the study results, which showed that 92,68% of the respondents indicated that they and their colleagues had experienced financial problems, and 85% were respondents who experienced alcohol abuse and marital or family conflict.

University of Pretoria etd – Lentsoe, M M (2003)

The fact that Sterkfontein employees experience stress and high absenteeism indicates the need for an EAP. Thus, the results (86,79%) of the respondents indicated that the effect that personal problems have on the staff is stress, followed by 75,47% who indicated high absenteeism, which confirms this need.

Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital, like many workplaces, experiences productivity problems. This was evident in the result of this study in which 94,34% of the respondents indicated that personal problems had a negative effect on the productivity of the employees.

Since Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital has a problem of high absenteeism on pay-days and the day thereafter as was indicated by 77,36% of the respondents, in this study, followed by 71,7% of the respondents who indicated that high absenteeism occurs on Fridays and Mondays, then by deducting money as a treatment for an absent worker aggravates the situation.

The results of the study – 100% (53) of the respondents thought that confidentiality was important in handling clinical information in a hospital EAP.

The fact that there is a high rate of employee turnover at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital, as was indicated by 100% (53) of the respondents, on its own shows that Sterkfontein employees experience personal and/or work-related problems.

The results of this study indicated that 54,72% of the respondents indicated that when a troubled employee was identified the hospital (supervisor) normally listened to his/her problems and gave advise. This shows that the hospital (supervisors) follow an incorrect procedure when dealing with troubled employees as their role is only to identify work deficiencies and not to act as counsellors for their subordinates.

University of Pretoria etd – Lentsoe, M M (2003)

The results of this study revealed that 61,54% of the respondents indicated that if help is provided to troubled employees, the union representatives are used in this regard.

Sterkfontein employees need a structured support system to help them with problems. Hence, the results of this study indicated that 40% of the respondents indicated that they would like to have an EAP/Counselling service. This was followed by 21,88% of the respondents who indicated that they wanted their problems to be addressed.

Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital does not cater for the emotional needs of its employees. Thus, the results of this study revealed that 40% of the respondents indicated that the hospital provides them with no assistance when they experience problems.

The following results of the study findings confirmed furthermore the need for an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital, namely 83,02% of the respondents indicated that if the hospital were to introduce an EAP, they would use this service to solve their own problems; 67,92% indicated that they would be more comfortable to discuss their problems with the hospital's full-time EAP, 39,06% indicated that they would like the hospital to help them when they had problems and 40% indicated that the hospital did not provide assistance to employees who experienced problems.

The results of this study revealed that 95,34% of the respondents indicated that Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital should pay for EAP services.

As a further confirmation of the need for an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital, 47 respondents ranked personal counselling as their number one priority.

University of Pretoria etd – Lentsoe, M M (2003)

The results of this study indicated that 83,02% of the respondents thought that Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital had a responsibility towards troubled employees.

As a further confirmation of the need for an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital, 33,96% indicated that EAP staff should be located in a neutral place.

Union involvement/support is crucial for the survival of an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital. Thus, the results of this study indicated that 86,79% of the respondents thought that the unions should be consulted when designing/introducing a hospital EAP.

EAP practitioners should not be members of the Disciplinary Committee. This was revealed by the results of this study, which showed that 54,72% of the respondents thought that EAP practitioners should not be members of the Disciplinary Committee.

The goal of the study was to determine the need for an Employee Assistance Programme at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital. The empirical results indicated that there is a need for an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital, by producing an overwhelming positive response of 98,11% (51) from the respondents who indicated that the hospital should design/introduce an Employee Assistance Programme. On the basis of these results, it can be stated clearly that the goal of this study was achieved.

The results of this study confirmed the need for an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital by producing a positive response of 98,11% from the respondents who thought that it was necessary for Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital to have an EAP.

4.3 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations based on the investigation can be made.

The researcher recommends that Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital should consider designing/introducing an Employee Assistance Programme to help minimise the problems indicated in the study.

The researcher will provide the necessary information on EAP and its service to the Management of the hospital for the design and introduction of an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital.

Should Sterkfontein Management accept the recommendation for the design of an EAP, the researcher will then have to discuss the location of the EAP office because it has to be located conveniently and centrally so as to be accessible for use by all the employees.

The issue of confidentiality should also be given a high priority in Sterkfontein's EAP. This should be written down in the EAP Policy Document, which has to be communicated clearly and made available to all the employees in the form of pamphlets, newsletters, in-service training and staff induction.

In order to reduce any stigma, both the unions and management must be jointly involved in non-counselling EAP issues such as communicating and educating employees about the importance of EAP.

Payment for EAP services has to be considered carefully so that a troubled employee should not have to worry about paying for services as this might reduce the motivation to seek help.

If an EAP is designed at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital, the supervisors will receive training on acceptable procedures, such as early identification of troubled

University of Pretoria etd – Lentsoe, M M (2003)

employees, constructive confrontation and referral to relevant resources, from EAP practitioners.

The hospital's EAP should also address and emphasise the importance of communication between supervisors and subordinates with regard to information giving to subordinates regarding performance standards, which will help address the problem of poor productivity.

The researcher recommends that a thorough needs assessment based on the problems (personal and work-related) experienced by the employees be conducted. The information gathered will form the content of an EAP for Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital.

It is recommended that the hospital may utilise the existing resources such as social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists, nurses, psychiatrists and unions. These people can mobilise employees for the use of an EAP by providing training sessions and workshops on EAP.

Should the recommendation for the design of an EAP at Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital be accepted, perhaps the hospital could start with at least one EAP practitioner, who is qualified with management skills and training in EAP.

On-going evaluative research must be implemented as a monitoring device to assess whether the hospital's EAP meets its objectives.

Future research should be undertaken to help Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital in focusing on profiles of different client groups in order to tailor make the EAP services to the specific and particular needs of the different groups of employees in the hospital.

University of Pretoria etd – Lentsoe, M M (2003)

Future research should also be undertaken to determine the type of EAP model of service delivery that would be suitable for Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital.

4.4 **SUMMARY**

It is the researcher's opinion that the findings of this study indicate clearly that Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital should design/introduce an Employee Assistance Programme. Furthermore, the study findings could be generalised to all the employees (population) of Sterkfontein Psychiatric Hospital as the sample for the study was chosen/selected indiscriminately.