



YOUR BENEFITS, DISCOVERED

April 2018

WHAT AN EAP IS...AND WHAT IT'S NOT

We all know it can be difficult to ask for assistance. Many of us also know that we've been in positions where we wanted a little help facing life's challenges.

An EAP is an Employee Assistance Program, which is a benefit made available to you (**Abraham Kapua from Clatsop County**) by CIS and your employer. People use EAPs for a variety of services. But the reason people use an EAP is the same — to get help solving a problem, relieve a bit of stress, or take care of an issue before it becomes unmanageable, so the focus can be on a balanced, happy life.

As of Jan. 1, CIS partnered with Deer Oaks to bring you these services and more. CIS wants to offer you and your family a wide range of resources to assist you in everyday life.

We've had questions and feedback that we thought would be helpful to share so that you'll know what to expect when using these services. First and foremost, we want to emphasize that all interactions with the EAP are 100 percent confidential. This feedback was shared only with the express written permission of the employee.

How EAP Services Interact with your Medical Plan

The EAP is a short-term solution focused service — basically a presenting issue that can be "resolved or managed" within an allotted time frame of sessions. Any time a participant's needs indicate long term care is needed, Deer Oaks will refer the participant to someone else. And, they'll match the referral to

CIS

Benefit Connections

Are you one of our secret winners?

We've randomly selected four winners and buried their names and employer in the text. If you find your name, email **EmployeeBenefits@cisoregon.org** by May 25, 2018.

We'll confirm who you are and then mail you your gift card.

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someone participating in the participant's medical plan, so it's covered by medical insurance. If someone is already seeing a counselor and/or taking medications to manage their condition, starting new services with an EAP provider could do more harm than good. It's inappropriate for the EAP to start such services, so they'll be denied.

The Deer Oaks Network

While the Deer Oaks network is extensive, there are a few areas of the state with limited or no providers. CIS was aware of these limits when choosing Deer Oaks, but Deer Oaks was, and remains, committed to expanding their network. We will also continue to work with them on this issue. Please know that you're **(Cheryl Goodhue from Douglas County)** welcome to identify the type of provider you would like to see, based on any criteria you choose. But be aware that the more specific you are, the more time it may take to get an appointment or the further you may have to drive. Deer Oaks' commitment is that responses will be made within two days, and they have met the 95 percent performance standard guarantee 96.6 percent of the time for the first quarter of 2018. The following are some reasons for delays: the participant asks for a specific provider, the location or time of day requested, utilization for the day, staffing for the day, etc. In addition, if you call back multiple times with more information, the two-day response time starts over, delaying access to care even more.

Deer Oaks' Customer Service Centers

Lastly, we've received feedback about Deer Oaks' worldwide customer service centers and thought we'd share more information. Deer Oaks directs all of its U.S. customers to U.S. service centers first. However, when confronted with multiple and simultaneous catastrophic events (e.g., flooding, fires in California, storms on the East Coast, etc.), the U.S. service centers can become overwhelmed. During these times, some calls may be redirected to other service centers. For the first quarter of 2018, 95 percent of all U.S. calls were answered by U.S. service centers.

Deer Oaks' global staff must be proficient in English (both understanding and speaking) to be cleared to answer U.S. calls. The company strives to be as diverse as possible within its service centers, hiring all races and backgrounds.

Overall, our transition to Deer Oaks has been met with exceptionally good feedback, but all changes come with challenges. We're committed to working with Deer Oaks to work through any issues that come up. If you **(Tyler Crook from Elgin)** have concerns or other feedback, please contact us at healthybenefits@cisoregon.org. If you contact us, we'll keep everything confidential. However, we will need your name if you want us to follow up with them. Deer Oaks is a great EAP partner and we hope everyone will be patient as issues are resolved.

Important!

All employees and their dependents/household members are eligible to access services 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling the EAP toll-free helpline. Call 888-993-7650 or visit www.deeroakseap.com. Under the Member Login tab, enter Oregon as your username and password.

Deer Oaks EAP services are free. In some cases, the help of community resources may be needed. If so, the counselor will provide a referral to the most appropriate resource.

When a referral is made **(Jonathan Shinpaugh from Forest Grove)**, those expenses become the employee's responsibility. When employees use the services of Deer Oaks, they're assured of confidentiality. If an appointment is set up with a Deer Oaks EAP counselor, no one will know. All sessions are confidential, a critical element in Deer Oaks EAP's success. Information is not released without the employee's written permission.

