

Employee Perceived Barriers Influencing the Utility of Employee Assistance Programs in Western Australia's Fly-in/Fly-out Community: A Qualitative Study

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The benefits of psychological support in the workplace (also known as Employee Assistance Programs) are well documented. With over 50,000 employees working in Western Australia's mining industries alone, most Australian mining organisations now have these types of services to assist their workers mental and physical health. This study investigated participant's current pressures, perceived barriers to accessing Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), and their perceptions of ways to reduce the barriers that may exist. The current pressures noted by participants included; job demands, balancing the FIFO lifestyle with family, as well as pressures of redundancy. Perceived barriers to accessing EAPs revolved around individual barriers (confidentiality, perceiving accessing help as a weakness), organisational barriers (accessibility, education, awareness) as well as external barriers (Australian culture, FIFO culture). Common themes of strategies to decrease these barriers included; increased facilities of EAP services on site, as well as additional education from a FIFO and broader Australian perspective.