



## GRIEF AND ADDICTION

**My employee's father died of COVID-19 last fall, and there was no real funeral. Now it's 7 months later and she appears depressed, and some days not very functional. Friends have approached me and shared that they are worried. She was previously treated for drug addiction and is now drinking. How should I approach EAP referral?**

You are commended for being sensitive to this person's pain and unhappiness. This is a situation where you may want to start by making a call to the EAP to discuss the best way to approach this employee. This situation is compounded by multiple issues. If your employee is drinking now, but had previously been treated for drug addiction, that sounds like a relapse,

a serious clinical concern. Addictive disease patients in recovery, typically must abstain from alcohol and psychoactive drugs as part of their recovery program. Discuss with the EAP and/or your HR department the possibility of starting with a self-referral. Cite to the employee specific behaviors you see at work leading you to believe she is depressed. If you are afraid she will become defensive if you use the word "depression," "sadness" may be a less threatening descriptor. If possible, give her feedback about any occasions you have observed that her demeanor or words slowed productivity or had a negative impact on positive team spirit. If her ability to function at work diminishes, you must consider arranging a formal referral using

EAP consultation for the best results. Two additional things to keep in mind:

- The rumors of her chemical abuse are an important piece of information. This case is urgent, stay with it, don't back away! This is essential information to verbally share with the EAP. However, your influence is founded on behaviors seen at work, that is the legitimate supervisory concern giving you the most leverage.
- Many people do experience a phenomenon known as prolonged grief disorder (PGD). This is a recognized condition that can result from the inability to participate in a normal bereavement and grief process.

### Leadership Orientation Session B

Watch for Up Coming Classes

#### CONTACT US TODAY:

Please contact our office by calling 800-779-6125 or e-mailing (info@connectionseap.com) for more information or register online:  
[www.connectionseap.com](http://www.connectionseap.com)

#### ATTENTION: SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS, ADMINISTRATORS:

Session A: "Leadership Orientation to the EAP", is always available on the website. Please check your wallet cards or contact your HR department for your username and password.

Website Information – Webinars are available in the Work/Life Services site. Log in on Connections website go to Employee or Leadership Resources tab to access webinars, continue to scroll down on the Work/Life Services opening page. (All webinars are archived for later viewing.)

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