

**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE NEED FOR AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP):  
THE CASE OF CAPE WINELANDS DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

By

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## DECLARATION

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## ABSTRACT

Employees, whether in the public or private sector, are the most valuable asset of an organisation. The human resource component of the organisation contributes toward the creation of a positive advantage for that organisation. Any organisation with high performance goals will treat people as their most valuable asset and the top priority within the organisation. Too many organisations still do not invest in the human side of the equation, but emphasise the technical efficiency which reaps financial investment. Organisations that want to remain competitive and at the leading edge must invest more in the human side of the equation. Today more and more organisations are aware of their social responsibility towards their employees.

Employees experience a multitude of personal and work-related problems such as marital, family and financial difficulties, substance abuse, the impact of HIV/AIDS, job stress, job burnout and other. These problems influence work performance detrimentally, which in turn causes financial losses to the organisation. Further pressure is placed on the work community with government legislation on employment equity and affirmative action, which also leads to diversity problems within the workplace. In this milieu, work organisations are challenged to take up their social responsibility towards their employees and take better care of them.

One way in which organisations can take care of their employees is through an **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**. An EAP is a service provided by organisations to their employees to deal with health, personal, marital and substance abuse problems and other. It is a short-term, confidential counselling service for employees who are experiencing personal problems that affect their work performance and which can therefore improve the employees' general wellness.

Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM) does not have a formal structure such as an EAP to render support to a troubled employee. This research focused on the question: "Is there a need for an EAP at CWDM?" The data gathered in this study reveal that there is a great need for an EAP. On the basis of the outcome of the study, ten practical guidelines for implementation of an EAP are provided to the organisation.

## OPSOMMING

Werknemers, hetsy in die privaat of publieke sektor, is die waardevolste bate van die organisasie. Die menslike hulpbron komponent dra by tot die skepping van 'n positiewe voorsprong vir daardie organisasie. Enige organisasie met hoë prestasiedoelwitte sal hul werknemers as hul waardevolste bate en die hoogste prioriteit behandel. Te veel organisasies belê steeds nie in die menslike sy van die organisasie nie, maar eerder in die tegniese sy wat meer finansiële beleggings oplewer. 'n Organisasie wat kompetend en toonaangewend wil bly, moet meer belê in die menslike sy. Deesdae besef al hoe meer organisasies dat hulle 'n sosiale verantwoordelikheid teenoor hul werknemers het.

Werknemers ervaar 'n magdom persoonlike en werkverwante probleme soos byvoorbeeld huweliks-, gesins- en finansiële probleme, middelmisbruik sowel as die impak van HIV/VIGS, werkstres, uitbranding en ander. Hierdie probleme beïnvloed werksproduktiwiteit aansienlik, wat direk lei tot finansiële verliese vir die organisasie. Voorts word verdere druk op die werksgemeenskap geplaas deur regeringsbeleid te wete werksgeelykheid en regstellende aksie wat ook aanleiding gee tot diversiteitsprobleme binne die werksplek. Teen hierdie agtergrond word werksorganisasies uitgedaag om sosiale verantwoordelikheid vir sy werknemers te aanvaar en om beter sorg te dra vir sy werknemers.

Een manier waarop organisasies na hul werknemers kan omsien, is deur 'n **werknemerhulpprogram**. 'n Werknemerhulpprogram is 'n diens wat verskaf word deur werkgewers aan werknemers wat probleme ondervind met byvoorbeeld gesondheid, huwelik, gesin, middelmisbruik en ander.. Dit is 'n korttermyn, konfidensiële beradingsdiens vir werknemers wie se werkvermoë negatief beïnvloed word. 'n Werknemerhulpprogram het ten doel om 'n werknemer se totale welstand te verbeter.

Kaapse Wynland Distriksmunisipaliteit (KWDM) het tans, nie 'n formele struktuur soos 'n werknemerhulpprogram wat bystand aan die geaffekteerde werker kan bied nie. Hierdie navorsingstudie fokus op die vraag: "Is daar 'n behoefte aan 'n werknemerhulpprogram by KWDM"? Die data wat tydens die studie ingesamel is, toon dat daar wel 'n behoefte aan 'n Werknemerhulpprogram is. Gegrand op die uitkoms van die studie, word tien praktiese riglyne vir die implementering van 'n Werknemerhulpprogram aan die organisasie voorgestel.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
DECLARATION .....	i
ABSTRACT .....	ii
OPSOMMING .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
Chapter One .....	6
Introduction: Research methodology and outline of chapters .....	6
1.1. Orientation.....	6
1.2. Motivation for the study .....	7
1.3. Aim of the study .....	8
1.4. Objectives of the study.....	8
1.5. Research design .....	9
1.6. Research methodology .....	10
1.7. Data analysis .....	12
1.8. Core concepts .....	13
1.8.1. Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).....	13
1.8.2. Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM).....	13
1.8.3. Troubled employee .....	13
1.8.4. Absenteeism .....	14
1.8.5. Personal problems .....	14
1.9. Outline of chapters .....	14
1.10. Conclusion .....	15
Chapter Two .....	16
Literature Review .....	16
2.1. Introduction .....	16
2.1.1. Employee Assistance Programme: A Historical Overview.....	17
2.1.2. Development of EAPs in South Africa.....	17
2.2. Defining and describing an Employee Assistance Programme.....	18

2.3.	Rationale for an EAP.....	19
2.4.	The Nature of an EAP .....	20
2.5.	Different EAP Models.....	22
2.5.1.	Internal Programme Model .....	22
2.5.2.	External Programme Model .....	22
2.5.3.	Union-Based EAP/ Member Assistance Programme .....	23
2.5.4.	EAP Affiliates.....	23
2.6.	Essential components for an effective EAP .....	24
2.7.	Benefits of an EAP .....	25
2.8.	Wellness Programme.....	25
2.9.	Legislation linked to EAP in the Workplace .....	27
2.9.1.	The SA Constitution (RSA, Act 108 of 1996).....	27
2.9.2.	The Employment Equity Act (RSA, Act 55 of 1998).....	27
2.9.3.	Labour Relations Act (RSA, Act 66 of 1995) .....	28
2.9.4.	Skills Development Act (RSA, Act 97 of 1998).....	29
2.9.5.	Occupational Health and Safety (RSA, Act 85 of 1993).....	29
2.9.6.	Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Amendment Act (RSA, Act 14 of 1999) .....	29
2.10.	Employee Assistance Programmes and the Troubled Employee.....	29
2.10.1.	Troubled Employee .....	30
2.11.	Employee Assistance Programmes and Problems Experienced by the Employee .....	30
2.11.1.	Job stress and Job burnout .....	30
2.11.2.	Substance Abuse .....	32
2.11.3.	HIV/AIDS.....	33
2.11.4.	Sexual Harassment .....	34
2.11.5.	Domestic Violence .....	34
2.12.	Conclusion .....	34
Chapter Three.....		36
Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM).....		36
3.1.	Introduction .....	36
3.2.	Local authority in relations to the three spheres of government .....	36

3.3.	Background of the organisation .....	38
3.4.	Vision and Mission, and Objectives .....	39
3.5.	Organisational structure .....	41
3.5.1.	Political support structure.....	41
3.5.2.	Administrative support structure.....	41
3.6.	Employee composition.....	42
3.7.	Budget.....	43
3.8.	Human resource policies .....	45
3.8.1.	Key legislation in human resource management .....	45
3.8.1.1.	<i>Basic condition of employment act (RSA, Act 75 of 1997)</i> .....	45
3.8.1.2.	<i>Labour relations act (RSA, Act 66 of 1995)</i> .....	46
3.8.1.3.	<i>Employment equity act (RSA, Act 55 of 1998)</i> .....	46
3.8.1.4.	<i>Occupational Health and Safety act (RSA, Act 85 of 1993)</i> .....	46
3.8.1.5.	<i>Skills Development act (RSA, Act 97 of 1999)</i> .....	46
3.7.1.6.	<i>Unemployment Insurance Act (RSA, Act 63 of 2001)</i> .....	46
3.7.1.7.	<i>Municipal Systems Act (RSA, Act 32 of 2000)</i> .....	47
3.8.2.	Existing Human Resource Policies/Strategies at CWDM.....	47
3.8.2.1	<i>Sexual Harassment Policy</i> .....	47
3.8.2.2.	<i>Substance Abuse Policy</i> .....	47
3.8.2.3.	<i>Chronic Illness strategy</i> .....	48
3.8.2.3.1.	<i>HIV/AIDS in the workplace</i> .....	49
3.8.2.3.2.	<i>Policy for occupational exposure to blood or human fluids</i> .....	50
3.8.2.3.3.	<i>High-risk service provides</i> .....	50
3.8.3.	CWDM draft policy on people living with disabilities.....	51
3.9.	Conclusion .....	52
Chapter Four .....		54
Data Collection and Analysis.....		54
4.1.	Introduction .....	54
4.2.	Background to the study.....	54
4.3.	Presentation of research results .....	57

4.3.1.	Outcomes of expert interviews .....	57
4.3.2.	Outcomes of workshops with interest groups .....	63
4.3.3.	Interpretation of organisational records .....	70
4.4.	Summary of findings .....	71
4.4.1.	Organisational perspective .....	72
4.4.2.	Employee perspective .....	72
4.4.3.	Support through an EAP .....	72
4.5.	Conclusion .....	73
Chapter Five .....		75
Conclusion and Recommendations .....		75
5.1.	Introduction .....	75
5.2.	Findings of Study.....	75
5.3.	Recommendations.....	75
5.3.1.	Develop an internal EAP.....	76
5.3.2.	Develop clear, written policy and procedures .....	76
5.3.3.	Specify the objectives of an EAP .....	77
5.3.4.	Confidentiality .....	77
5.3.5.	Establish an EAP Forum.....	78
5.3.6.	EAP Marketing Plan .....	78
5.3.7.	Ensure Top Management Support.....	79
5.3.8.	Union Support .....	79
5.3.9.	Accessibility .....	79
5.3.10.	Programme Monitoring, Review and Evaluation .....	79
5.4.	Overview of Study.....	80
5.5.	Limitation of the Study .....	82
5.6.	Recommendation for further Research.....	82
5.7.	Concluding Remarks .....	82
References.....		84

**Annexure. One.....89**  
**Annexure. Two.....94**  
**Annexure. Three.....97**

## Chapter One

### Introduction: Research methodology and outline of chapters

#### 1.1. Orientation

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is viewed as an integral and essential part of effective human resource management. The general philosophy of an EAP is the belief that employers have no right to interfere in the personal life of employees, but they have the right to set performance standards and establish sanctions when those standards are not met (Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx and Van Der Schyf, 1998:428). Employees today experience multiple personal problems such as marital and family problems, financial difficulties, substance abuse, elder care, childcare and parenting issues, issues with separation and loss, as well as balancing work and family life (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2002). The above issues as well as job stress and job burnout and the affects of HIV and Aids are influencing employees' work performance negatively.

An average employee spends more or less six to seven hours per day at their workplace (RSA, Act.75 of 1997). In addition to this, organisations experience great financial losses because of employees' poor work performance. This indicates that employees need greater assistance to deal effectively with their personal problems, if the organisation wants to stay at the leading edge.

Since the 1980s several South African companies have acknowledge the prospects of EAPs in enhancing employees performance by improving their physical health, mental health and life management knowledge and skills (Maiden, 1999:2). Harper emphasises that EAPs are the ideal vehicle for implementing an integrated approach in managing the impact of HIV/AIDS, violence, substance abuse, and other, in the pursuit of business objectives (Maiden, 1999:2).

Many companies appear to be unaware of the scope and role that EAPs and EA professionals can play in their organisations. Such an organisation is the Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM). This organisation does not have a formal structure to address personal problems experienced by employees. For effective implementation of a formal EAP structure at CWDM, a comprehensive needs assessment is required.

This chapter will give an orientation to the research study, providing the background to the problem, the motivation for the study as well as the goals and objectives of the study and a short description of the research methodology. Some core concept used in this study will be defined. This chapter will conclude with an outline of the study.

## **1.2. Motivation for the study**

Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM) does not have a formal structure by which support and assistance could be rendered to troubled employees. This is currently done on an ad hoc basis as the need arises by the Human Resource Department. The lack of a formal EAP structure restricts the scope whereby aspects such as enhancing employees' morale, and increasing job performance and productivity in the workplace can be addressed.

It is estimated that 10 percent of the total employee population in an average organisation are troubled at any given time (Grobler, Wörnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2006:398). This phenomenon is costing the organisation five percent of that employee's annual salary (Carrell *et al.*, 1998:428). With a working staff complement of about 561, it is estimated that a total of 56 employees at this municipality are troubled at any given time.

A troubled employee impacts negatively on the organisation because of excessive absenteeism rates, tardiness and early departures from work. Common problems found with a troubled employee in the workplace include regular altercations with co-workers, a tendency to cause more injuries as a result of negligence, bad decision-making abilities, and a tendency to spoil and break equipment through negligence (Grobler, Wörnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2006:398). A troubled employee's overall work performance is low, affecting the total expenditure of the organisation.

Employees are troubled because of the various personal problems they experience on a daily basis. These personal problems may stem from substance abuse, stress, burnout, marital and family problems, as well as the impact of HIV and AIDS.

The high levels of disciplinary hearings related to absenteeism from work at CWDM, increasing awareness of alcohol and drug abuse amongst employees and the lack of employee motivation have motivated the researcher to explore the need for greater assistance to employees who are experiencing personal problems. A Human Resource Official has identified the need for early intervention to reduce the number of disciplinary hearings related to poor work performance and misconduct. Union representatives, especially from the South African Municipalities Workers Union (SAMWU), have indicated their concern about the increasing cases where members receive warnings for poor work performance. In most of these instances the problem with poor work performance could be linked to one or other personal problem experienced by the employee but are unknown to the employer before the investigation.

Managers and supervisors within the organisation are not trained to identify the early warning signs of a troubled employee. They are also not competent to deal effectively with the troubled employee within the working environment. Some managers and supervisors have indicated that they are having problems with a high rate of absenteeism, which is becoming a matter of great concern. Ignoring the impact of employees' personal problems on his or her work performance can lead to workplace related problems such as absenteeism, unexcused absenteeism, poor judgement and bad decisions, low productivity and injury through negligence. Such behaviour generally retorts to the institution of disciplinary procedures. Poor work performance together with disciplinary procedures and the coupled investigations can lead to an additional cost to the organisation. The researcher is therefore of the opinion that an appropriate needs assessment is required to investigate the need for an EAP and to establish a formal EAP structure within CWDM, if necessary.

### **1.3. Aim of the study**

The aim of the study is to explore the need for an Employee Assistance Programme at CWDM to develop guidelines for future implementation.

### **1.4. Objectives of the study**

The study will focus on the following three objectives:

- To describe the nature and advantages of an Employee Assistance Programme;
- To explore the employees' need for an EAP by means of an empirical study;

- To give clear, practical recommendations/guidelines for the implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme at CWDM.

## 1.5 Research design

The research design concentrates on the end product of the study (Mouton, 2005:56). Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:63) emphasise that the research design is the planning of any scientific research from the first to the last step. Essentially the research design is the steps or strategy followed to accomplish the objectives of the research. This study will be empirical in nature, based on an exploratory research design type. According to Brynard and Hannekom, (1997:29) the qualitative approach produces descriptive data. Welman *et al.* (2005:188) add that this approach is essentially descriptive in nature and typically takes the form of study of texts, in-depth interviews, or group discussions (Welman *et al.*, 2005:188). Fundamentally the qualitative research approach is used to study formerly unexplored areas (Wikipedia Encyclopaedia, 2008). This design type will be combined with a case study to determine the need for implementing an EAP at CWDM. According to Mouton and Marais (1990:44), exploratory design investigates new issues. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:42) emphasise that the purpose of exploratory research is to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or person. The need for exploratory research normally surfaces from a lack of basic information on a new area of interest (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995:42). The concept EAP is relatively new for this municipality, therefore the choice of an exploratory research design. Through the study of this new concept, recommendations can be made to the organisation that may help them to deal effectively with a troubled employee through an assistance programme.

Case study research is aimed at understanding the uniqueness and idiosyncrasies of a particular case in all its complexity (Wellman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2005:193). According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:44), the case study is a method of organising social data and viewing the object to be studied as a whole. The case study attempts to observe the current situation within CWDM with regard to an EAP in general. Documentary sources of the organisation and other existing data such as the turn-over rate and the statistics on injury on duty will be studied to establish if there is an ongoing trend that can be linked to a need for greater assistance to employees. It needs to be stressed that there are other indicators such as the absenteeism rate; sick leave records and annual leave records that could be studied but for the purpose of this study the organisational records was narrowed down to the termination and injury on duty records.

Mouton (2005:150) stresses that the strengths of case study research are the high construct validity, in-depth insights and the opportunity to establish rapport with the research subject. Case study research permits the researcher to concentrate on a specific instance or situation in order to identify the various interactive processes at work (Bell, 1993:8). On the other hand; this author highlights the following limitations of case study research: a lack of generalisation of results, non-standardisation of measurements, the time-consuming nature of the data collection and analysis process. Mouton warns the researcher against the potential of being biased and rigidity in analysis (Mouton, 2005:150).

### **1.6. Research methodology**

The methodology of this research is qualitative in nature. The focus of this study is acquiring information from key role players. For the purpose of this research the key role players identified by the researcher included managers and trade union representatives. These people were identified because of their expert knowledge of the organisation (CWDM) and human resource issues at this organisation.

To gain primary data expert interviews and workshops with interest groups were conducted. An expert interview is a session where one or two people who are considered as experts in a specific subject, program, process or policy (Department of Civil Service, 2010). The format of such session can vary from one- on one interview to a large group session with a panel of expert. For the purpose of this study, the researcher decided on one-on one interviews with selected experts within the organisation which included the Director Human Resource Management, Director Roads, Head Labour Relations, Occupational Health and Safety Officer and Individual Performance Management Officer. This selection allowed for inputs from junior management to top management.

According to Bless and Higgson- Smith (1995:106), an interview involves direct personal contact with the participant. The aim of the interviews with these role players is to determine if an employee assistance programme can add value in their line of duty, but also to explore the basic difficulties of these managers in assisting employees. In addition, the current modus operandi will be explored to determine if there is an effective way of dealing with employee problems. All interviews will be confidential and no names will be used in the research.

To guide the researcher through the interviews, a questionnaire (see Annexure One) was developed which was used with all the role-players. Questions were divided into four sections which includes the demographics of the participant, awareness on the problems experienced by employees, view on CWDM as a supportive organisation and the need for support structure such as an EAP.

To ensure effective interviews it is suggested that the researcher must guarantee:

- A still location to create an informal, relaxed and peaceful atmosphere;
- The availability of necessary equipment such as a tape recorder, batteries, and other;
- Prearranged appointments in advance (De Vos *et al.*, 2004:306).

All interviews with role-players were arranged beforehand. Three of the interviews took place in the participants' own offices and two of the interviews in the researcher's office. There was no disturbance and there was always a quiet, relaxed and peaceful atmosphere.

The second data collection method used was workshops with interest groups. For the purpose of this research the researcher opted for two workshops which were in the form of an in depth-interview. The groups consisted of a smaller number of individuals or interviewees, drawn for the purpose of articulating their opinions on a specific set of open questions. For the first group the researcher selected line managers from each directorate at CWDM. The group session consisted of 6 line managers, although invitation was made to 13 line managers.

The second group comprised of Union Representatives of both the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) and Union Representatives of Independent Municipal an Allied Trade Union (IMATU).

The main aim of these workshops with interest groups was to determine these people's view on employee assistance in general, as well as the existing situation within the organisation with regards to rendering support and assistance to troubled employees. At these workshops the researcher gave a detailed overview on the topic employee assistance program. Based on this information given as well as these people's practical experience within the organisation, the researcher would like s to determine what these employees classify as essential for an employee assistance programme as well as their views on the need for such a programme within the organisation. Their opinions will also be tested on the range of personal problems

experienced by employees. These data gained in the workshops will be recorded and then documented by means of a report.

For both the expert interviews and the workshops with interest groups, purposive sampling was used to draw a sample. Authors such as Bless and Higgson-Smith (1995:95) and Welman *et al.* (2006:69) state that this sampling method is based on the judgement of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample.

The third manner in which data was attained was through the study of the organisational records of CWDM for instance the injury on duty and termination record. The injury on duty and the termination record is just two of many indicators that could be utilised to interpret and draw a link to the need of the establishment of an EAP. The researcher opted for the termination record because it was observed that during the 2007/2008 financial year almost one employer per month terminated their services at CWDM. The purpose of studying the turn over rate was to establish how often employees leave the organisation as well as what age group leave this organisation. Although there are many reasons why employees leave an organisation, a possible reason could be that the organisation does not value the employee as a valuable asset, which could be addressed through an EAP. Through the injury on duty records the researcher would like to establish how regular accidents occur, how do these accidents on duty affects the absenteeism record and if the injury on duty can be linked to personal related problems, experienced by the employee.

In addition to the above data collection techniques an extensive literature review was conducted. Documentation was gathered from the Internet and relevant literature regarding employee assistance programmes. The purpose of the literature review is to gain greater knowledge on the development and implementation of employee assistance programmes with specific emphasis on the benefits of such a program for both employer and employee. This comprehensive knowledge will be used to provide a broader theoretical dimension to the empirical information.

The following section will discuss how data gained will be analysed.

## **1.7. Data analysis**

The main aim of collecting the data is to determine whether role players and employees identify a need for the implementation for an EAP. Existing information within the organisation will be analysed, such as total turnover rate for and the number of accidents that occurred for the 2007/2008 financial year.

The field notes from the discussions in workshops will be analysed and interpreted. Finally employees' opinion on the implementation of an EAP will be indicated and role players' views on the implementation of an EAP will be explained. The expert interviews, workshops with interest groups, organisational records and other literature will be used to develop guidelines for the implementation of an employee assistance programme at CWDM. The computer program Microsoft Word will be used to document the coded data gathered during interviews and workshops.

## **1.8. Core concepts**

The following section will define some core concepts that are used in the research.

### **1.8.1. Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

An EAP is a short-term confidential counselling service for employees who are experiencing personal problems that affect their work performance and therefore can improve an employee's general wellness. It is in essence a service provided by organisations to their employees for health, personal, marital and/or substance abuse problems (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:527).

### **1.8.2. Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM)**

CWDM is a Category C local authority and deals with the Witzenberg, Drakenstein, Stellenbosch, Breede Valley and Breede River Winelands local municipalities. District municipalities oversee and make rules for a district, which comprises more than one local municipality. Together with the local municipalities, the district shares the responsibility for local government in their areas ensuring that all communities have the same access to resources and services. CWDM provides work for 561 employees.

### **1.8.3. Troubled employee**

A troubled employee is an employee who is suffering from any personal or work-related problem, ensuing in a lack of optimal economic and social functioning (Tereblance, 1999:6).

#### **1.8.4. Absenteeism**

Absenteeism is an employee's failure to report for work/duty irrespective of the reason (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:553)

#### **1.8.5. Personal problems**

Personal problems in this study will refer to problems that an employee faces that affects their social functioning and overall work performance. Specific focus will be given to Substance Abuse, HIV and AIDS, job stress and job burnout.

### **1.9. Outline of chapters**

This study contains five chapters. An overview of the five chapters is outlined below.

#### ***Chapter 1. Introduction***

This chapter focus on the introduction and a general orientation to the subject, the rationale and method of the research.

#### ***Chapter.2. Literature review***

This chapter consists of an extensive literature review. The following topics will be covered in the literature review: employee assistance programme, troubled employee, personal problems, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, job stress and job burnout. This chapter also discuss some legislation, related to EAP in the workplace.

#### ***Chapter. 3. Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM)***

This chapter concentrates on the Cape Winelands Municipality as a whole and give the reader a greater understanding of the roles and functions of this municipality in relation to the three spheres of government. The chapter further highlights the challenges that the organisation experiences as a consequence of the absence of an EAP.

#### ***Chapter.4. Data collection and analysis***

This chapter focus on an empirical study, which entails the expert interviews with role players as well as the workshops with interest groups. Empirical data and findings will be analysed and interpreted.

## **Chapter.5      *Conclusions and recommendations***

This chapter focus on the conclusion regarding the findings in the empirical study. It will provide an overview of the study and will describe guidelines and recommendations for the CWDM for the effective implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme if needed.

### **1.10. Conclusion**

This chapter orientated the reader regarding the research study. It sketched the research problem, research goals and motivation for the study. The methodological considerations and process were explained. Some of the common concepts used in the research were defined. In essence this chapter give an overview on how this study will unfold.

Chapter two concentrates on the theoretical framework of the study. The Employee Assistance Programme, with specific reference to the historical development of EAPs, development of EAPs in South Africa, and the nature of an EAP will be described. Different EAP models will be illustrated. The legislative framework related to EAPs in the South African workplace will be highlighted. The chapter will conclude with an indication to some personal problems experienced by employees.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The introductory chapter states that the human resources of any organisation, whether in the public or private sector, are among its most valuable assets. The human resource component of the organisation contributes toward the creation of a positive advantage for that organisation. Schermerhorn *et al.* (2005:295) emphasise that any organisation with high performance goals will treat people as their most valuable asset and the top priority within the organisation.

Employees are human and experience a variety of personal as well as work-related problems. They bring these problems and their needs to the workplace. Employees' needs could be partially material, economic, social or psychological (Drafke and Kossen, 2002:293). These needs and/ or problems can impact on the employee's job performance, leading to a decline which in turn causes a fall in overall productivity in the workplace. Too many organisations still do not invest in the people side of the organisation, but still emphasise the technical efficiency which reaps financial investment. Organisations that want to remain competitive and at the leading edge must invest more on the people side of the equation. It is true that people are the organisation and that people issues are integral to the organisation (Boninelli and Meyer, 2004:292). Management is responsible for employees' emotional and psychological health.

Through an Employee Assistance Programme organisations can assist employees to deal effectively with demanding work and the work environment as well as their personal problems. In essence EAP is a workplace-linked counselling system which can be beneficial to both the employee and the employer.

The purpose of this chapter is to give a comprehensive overview of Employee Assistance Programmes in organisations. This chapter will cover the historical development of EAPs, the development of EAPs in South Africa and the nature of an EAP. The rationale and objectives of an EAP as well as different EAP models will be discussed. Benefits of an EAP for organisations and employees will be highlighted. The Wellness Programme as part of an EAP will also be discussed. The chapter will also make reference to South African legislation that has implications for EAPs. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of

examples of some personal problems experienced by employees. In essence this chapter gives effect to the research objective: *“To describe the nature and advantages of an Employee Assistance Programme”*.

### **2.1.1. Employee Assistance Programme: A Historical Overview**

The history of Employee Assistance Programmes is intimately entwined with the establishment of Alcoholics Anonymous during the 1930s in the United States. During the 1940s EAPs evolved extensively with the involvement of non-professionals in alcoholism campaigns, also known as occupational alcoholism programmes (Berridge *et al.*, 1997:34).

From the 1960s these occupational alcoholism programmes gradually become more professionalised through the intervention of social work professionals. Around the 1970s these programmes were extended to include drug and substance abuse programmes. The adoption of the Heughes Act (Alcohol Abuse and Alcohol Treatment Act) in the USA and the establishment of the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholics (NIAAA) transformed EAPs from a limited scope activity to a broader social movement. Provision was made for a broader approach to include the exposure to more social issues.

A further significant development of EAP was the Hawthorne studies, from where a programme of employee advice and counselling grew (Berridge *et al.*, 1997:34). This programme had two main targets: firstly, to promote social and psychological modification of the employee at work; and secondly, to ensure conformity and productivity within corporate objectives. From there EAPs grew rapidly in the USA.

### **2.1.2. Development of EAPs in South Africa**

Employee Assistance Programmes are a relative new phenomenon in South Africa. They do not have the colourful history of occupational alcoholic programmes like their US counterparts. Some South African companies only started to recognise the potential of EAPs and the role they can play in improving employee performance during the 1980s. EAPs were designed according to US models and were introduced to South African organisations by social workers and psychologists (Maiden, 1992).

Since 1994 the South African workplace has gone through dramatic transformation. Political, economic and social changes were introduced decisively. The government mandated work organisations through

legislation to implement affirmative action programmes, putting more pressure on transformation management as well as cultural diversity training.

In 1992 the very first significant series of articles on the development of EAP in South Africa emerged. The first comprehensive study on EAP in South Africa revealed that economic, political, social, cultural and political norms and values will continue to influence further developments in EAP in South Africa but also internationally (Maiden, 1999:17).

In spite of the benefits of an EAP, the potential of these programmes and employee assistance practitioners is under-utilised by many organisations in South Africa compared to other organisations in the global market. EAPs in South Africa are still positioned on the periphery of the organisation, having little influence. It is rather instituted according to the specific needs and demands of a particular organisation.

There is no doubt that a country such as South Africa which is experiencing many stressors – for example, the impact of HIV and AIDS, diversity challenges, unemployment and poverty – will benefit a great deal from EAPs. EAPs could provide immense relief to management and staff in organisations (Yende, 2005:35).

## **2.2. Defining and describing an Employee Assistance Programme**

There are many definitions of Employee Assistance Programmes. Fundamentally, an Employee Assistance Programme is a “systematic, organised and continuing provision of counselling, advice and assistance, provided or funded by the employer, designed to help employees and (in most cases) their families with problems arising from work-related and external sources” (Berridge, Cooper and Highley-Marchington, 1997:13).

EAP is also identified as “a worksite-based programme designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns including, but not limited to: health, material, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance” (Oher, 1999:60).

The Employee Assistance Programme Association of South Africa (EAP-SA) defines Employee Assistance as: “the work organisation’s resource that utilises specific core technologies to enhance employee and

workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification, and resolution of personal and productivity issues” (EAP-SA, 1999). The BNET Business Dictionary, on the other hand, defines EAP as an organised, integrated support service that resolves the worries of employees that may influence performance (BNET Business Dictionary, 2008). This entails support to employees during stages of demanding change, counselling services to help overcome problems of stress, substance abuse as well as work-related problems such as harassment. EAP also provides for child- and elder-care initiatives (BNET Business Dictionary, 2008). In essence an EAP is instituted by employers to provide professional support to their employees with the aim of enhancing work performance. EAPs are aimed at both personal as well as work-related problems. It is viewed as a strategic business tool and is used for the development of employees, to reduce absenteeism. It is an effective tool to encourage productivity, improve morale, minimise medical expenses and enhance the health and wellbeing of the employee. The definition of EAPs today has extended considerably to include much more than substance abuse, but also to deal with all manner of mental health issues. EAP services today are very broad. It is in fact a method that organisations use as a broad-based approach to health issues (Mathis and Jackson, 2002:143).

### **2.3. Rationale for an EAP**

Research shows three primary rationales for the establishment of an EAP, namely humanitarian commitments, safety issues and economic concerns. A short description of these rationales will follow.

- ***Humanitarian Commitments***

People are still the most valuable asset of an organisation. They ensure the functioning of the organisations. Even with the arrival of computers and other technologies, no organisation can function without people. On the other hand, employees are human beings and deal with a multitude of human problems. Since we are living in stressful times, the occurrence and extent of these personal problems has increased drastically. Rendering support and assistance to employees during their difficult times is viewed as a humanitarian and moral act.

- ***Safety Issues***

Government legislation such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act (RSA, Act 85 of 1993) affirms that organisations must provide a safe working environment for their employees. Failure to address human problems might lead to the occurrence of accidents in the workplace. The wide variety of human problems

– for example, stresses, depression, anxiety and substance abuse – can possibly instigate or accelerate safety-related problems. Negligence caused in the event of these human problems can have cost implications for the organisation.

- **Economic Concerns**

The primary motivation for establishing an EAP is the financial benefits for the organisation. The estimated cost of an employee's personal problems can be substantial. This is to the result of factors such as absenteeism, low productivity, accidents in the workplace and legal costs. An EAP can ensure a return on investment for the organisation. EAP service delivery is required to be cost effective and beneficial for both employee and employer (Taute, 2004:15). For this reason, it is suggested that short-term counselling is applied in an EAP context (Taute, 2004:15). Short-term counselling in an EAP context is a therapeutic aid to a troubled employee within a specific time frame.

Challenger (1988:5), identified 6 grounds for the implementation of an EAP namely: reduced cost; increasing the rehabilitation rate; improving the labour/management relationship; creating a no-lose situation; benefit the employee and his/her family and consequently reducing the organisational cost; and finally, it adds a humanitarian aspect to the organisation.

#### **2.4. The Nature of an EAP**

Originally EAPs focused on problems that stemmed from alcohol abuse which affected employee's productivity. The span of EAPs today has changed to incorporate a wider spectrum of personal, health and work-related problems. Oher (1999:59) states that over the past two decades EAPs have progressed in such a way that they integrated a broad spectrum of clinical tools and organisational services equipped to encourage productivity. Grobler *et al.* (2006:400) states that any change in society will influence the workplace in due course. As members of society, employees also experienced problems such as chemical substance abuse, AIDS and escalating stresses on the individual (Nel *et al.*, 2001:318); hence EAPs today address psychological and physical problems that include job stress, chemical dependency, depression, marital and family problems as well as health problems, anxiety and job boredom (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:309). An EAP is directed firstly at employees whose work performance shows a pattern of decline that cannot be readily explained by supervisory observation. Secondly, it is directed at employees who are aware of personal difficulties that might influence their work performance. Authors such as Nel *et al.* (2001: 309) and

Gibson *et al.* (2006:217) state that EAPs tend to be based on the traditional approach of diagnosis, treatment, screening and prevention.

Services provided by the EAP are offered to the employee and in many cases their families, supervisors and managers as well as specific groups. These services include: assessment and referral of employees, short-term counselling/problem solving, follow-ups, and emergency information and referrals.

For the managers and supervisors services are aimed at supervisory referral assistance, training and education of supervisors or managers, and managers' consultation. Within groups, services offered by the EAP range from stress debriefing, group intervention, education programmes, outreaches and special services such as wellness programmes. In essence EAP offers assistance for personal struggles, crisis debriefing and counselling, interpersonal workplace conflicts, educational workshops and wellness promotions. In addition to the above EAPs can also be used in not-so-obvious instances such as management technology for understanding and managing the behaviour of people, mediating difficult situations between colleagues or management and staff, behaviour risk management, managing performance, managing crises, enhancing development, consultation regarding "fit", human relationships skills as well as addressing fraud and rebuilding trust relationships (Boninelli and Meyer, 2002:294).

EAPs have an educational component that helps with stress management, developing a resilient personality, intervening in a crisis on time and appropriately, training in trauma management, emotional intelligence as well as management and leadership development (Boninelli and Meyer, 2002:294). EAPs are preventive in nature. Programmes can be developed to ensure early intervention. These programmes include workshops and seminars regarding stress management, parenting, substance abuse, communication skills, marriage enrichment, financial management, and career and retirement planning (Lewis and Lewis, 1985:11). These prevention programmes can be offered through workshops, information sessions, the media, videos or promotional articles. The aim of these prevention programmes is to reduce the incidence of possible problems that might impact on work performance. These training programmes ensure that the employee learns new skills to effectively cope with personal problems that might arise. Prevention programmes are generally focused on the sharing of information that might be valuable and informative to the employee. They normally address problems that generally appear in the specific

workplace. A further prevention method is support groups in the workplace for people with the same characteristics or who experienced the same problems.

## **2.5. Different EAP Models**

A number of EAP delivery models have emerged over time. The diversity in EAP service delivery models was the result of the differences in the sizes of organisations, the accessibility of internal resources and the enthusiasm of organisations to expand resources in terms of money or in human capital (Dickman *et al.*, 1984:57). Choosing the right model for the organisation is dependent on the size of the organisation, the vision and mission regarding the establishment of an EAP as well as the organisation's demands concerning EAPs. As emphasised by Cagney (Oher, 1999:59): "The demands of an EAP respond to the market place",

Four EAP models are described, namely: 1) Internal Programme, 2) External Programme, 3) EAP Affiliates, and 4) Union-Based EAP/Member Assistance Programme (Oher, 1999:64-68) and (Dickman *et al.*, 1984:58-66). A short description of these models will follow.

### **2.5.1. Internal Programme Model**

The EAP is structured as an internal department within the organisation and managed by professional staff employed by the organisation. The qualification of the EAP professional varies according to the programme approach. The main activities of an EAP include coordination of client activity from within the work environment, problem assessment, providing counselling and referral. The main advantages of an internal programme are better knowledge of the organisation than an outside vendor. The internal programme is positioned to deliver high-quality services that are tailor-made for that organisation. Internal programmes are also more integrated with the employer organisation and hence communication within the organisation is much better. Supervisors/Managers find the internal programme more credible and the organisation takes more responsibility for the programme. The main concern for this service delivery model is confidentiality, because of the perception that the programme is too closely linked to a specific department, group or person in the organisation.

### **2.5.2. External Programme Model**

With this model, the organisation contracts an independent service provider or vendor to supply EAP functions to all employees. The vendor provides services in its own offices, away from the organisation or sometimes uses the organisation's offices, or both (Yende 2005:39). This model allows organisations to have access to consultation for organisational development as well as the clinical functions of assessment, referral, follow-up and feedback. The most common advantages of this model are that it is less pricey for small and medium-size employers. Confidentiality is easier to maintain because of off-site counselling. There is usually more diverse and professional staff. The disadvantages of this model are that there is mostly no on-site counselling available; the organisation and the employees do not actually take ownership of the programme; outside vendors lack knowledge about the organisation; and communication between the service provider and organisation is at times difficult.

### **2.5.3. Union-Based EAP/ Member Assistance Programme**

This is an internal corporate-based assistance programme for union members. EAP services within the programme structure are offered to union members. A union coordinator is responsible for treatment referrals. External treatment resources are used. Within this programme model the management is encouraged to make referrals of union members to the EAP. This model enhances credibility with union members. There is no cost to the organisation. On the other hand, this model excludes non-union members from services. The organisation usually views the EAP with suspicion. The skills and expertise of union coordinators may be limited.

### **2.5.4. EAP Affiliates**

With this model a vendor subcontracts with local professionals rather than utilising salaried staff. Normally the vendor reaches employees in a location within the organisation, because the vendor might not have an office. This model is used in combination with a model that involves paid staff. With this model the vendor normally has less control over a subcontracted professional, but this has become a medium whereby employees in various locations can be reached by one responsible vendor (Yende, 2005:39). Such programmes may offer less accountability and decreased responsiveness.

In choosing the best model, each organisation must determine how complex a programme should be to meet the organisation's needs and the fit levels of its commitment (Yende, 2005:38). The model must meet the needs of both the employee and employer (Lewis & Lewis, 1985:35).

## 2.6. Essential components for an effective EAP

Authors such as Gibson *et al.* (2001:220), Grobler (2006; 399) and Carrell *et al.* (1998:428) have identified the following as important components to ensure beneficial results of an EAP:

- **Top Management Support.** This includes philosophical support and support in terms of workforce, finance and facilities;
- **Union Support.** Unions must support and as far as possible participate in the programme;
- An EAP must not be a once-off activity but a **long-term commitment.** It is essential that this programme must be an on-going, sustained effort;
- There must be extensive and continuing **employee participation** from the initial planning to the implementation and maintenance phase. This is essential for ensuring ongoing representative employee participation;
- The programme must have **clearly stated objectives**;
- Employees must be able to **participate freely**, without any pressure or stigma;
- **Confidentiality** must be at the core of the programme. Employees must have the reassurance that their participation in the programme will not jeopardise their reputation within the organisation;
- **Normal disciplinary procedures.** Participation or lack of participation must not be a measurement for an employee to receive harsh or lenient treatment;
- There must be **voluntary participation.** Managers or supervisors may advise an employee to participate, but can under no circumstances force the employee. Voluntary participation increases the likelihood of success;
- **Job security** must be ensured. The participation in the EAP must not influence the employee in any way;
- **Accessibility.** Employees must know how, for what problems and where they can obtain assistance. The office must be accessible to people living with disabilities.
- **Follow-up** sessions;
- **Separate location.** The location must be situated in such a way that it ensures the privacy of the users;
- **A written policy statement** is essential, because it outline the purpose of the programme, the organisational and legal mandates, the employee's entitlement, procedures and the roles and responsibilities of personnel in the organisation.

## **2.7. Benefits of an EAP**

An EAP is a helping aid for employees, managers and organisations. According to the EAP innovations component of the University of Western Cape, EAPs have a number of benefits for the employee and the organisation as a whole (UWC ETDU, 2008). EAP indisputably provides a return on investment (MHN, 2007). It lessens the cost of stress for the organisation. Job stress has an impact on the workplace as it can lead to absenteeism, high employee turnover, reduced productivity and workplace violence. By helping employees with personal issues and supporting employees to cope with the personal problems affecting their work, EAPs contribute towards reduced turnover. If turnover is reduced, then the costs of recruitment, replacement and training will be less.

An EAP can furthermore assist employees and their families to lead healthier lives which enhance productivity as well as employee satisfaction. Through an EAP an employee can learn to balance work and family life. This can lead to a decline in the rate of absenteeism, sick leave and work compensations.

Managers and supervisors can be trained to identify the early warning signs of a troubled employee as well as the correct referral procedures. As a result an EAP can increase management effectiveness. An EAP furthermore reduces the risk of litigation by teaching employees to respond effectively to workplace harassment and discrimination. This will clearly lead to the decline in legal actions. EAPs play a vital role in decreasing the risks of workplace violence by providing education, prevention resources and consultation for stressed employees.

The fundamental nature of an EAP is to resolve productivity issues related to the behavioural, health and personal concerns of an employee to ensure a return on investment for employers. Grobler *et al.*, (2006:398) highlight that EAPs could improve a company's productivity by avoiding plummeting absenteeism, high turnover, tardiness, accidents and medical claims. An EAP increases the co-operation between employees by improving interpersonal relationships. The existence of an EAP in an organisation can change the negative view an employee has of that organisation. The employee feels that there is someone who cares and is interested, which increases work satisfaction and productivity.

## **2.8. Wellness Programme**

Wellness programmes concentrate on the employee's total physical and mental health (Nel *et al.*, 2001:308). The aim of the wellness programme is to maintain or improve an employee's health in advance, before problems arise (Mathis and Jackson, 2002:143). It is thus proactive in nature. A Wellness Programme therefore can form part of the EAP of an organisation. The authors emphasise that the objective of an wellness programme is not the elimination of symptoms of disease, but to help foster lifestyles that will enable employees to achieve their full physical and mental potential through health awareness (Nel 2001:308). The wellness programme promotes self-directed lifestyle changes (Mathis & Jackson, 2002:143). Carell *et al.* (2006:427) state that an employee is the organisation's most valuable asset. Their health condition therefore directly impacts on their work productivity.

Wellness Programmes focus on preventing or rectifying particular health problems, health dangers or negative health habits. Such programmes include identification and control of hypertension, smoking cessation, physical fitness and exercises, nutrition and diet control, and job and personal stress management.

Nel *et al.* (2001:309) and Gibson *et al.* (2006:223) state that organisations can promote wellness by:

- Integrating employee wellness or health promotion into the total strategy and mission of the organisation;
- Implementing employee wellness into the culture of organisation;
- Encouraging commitment and support from the different role-players, for instance labour representatives, management and others;
- Developing and implementing health promotion policies and the value of well-being such as a non-smoking policy, an HIV/AIDS policy and programme, and an EAP policy;
- Developing a wellness plan that has executive support, union commitment as well employee support. The ultimate goal should be improving the wellness of employees;
- Committing organisational resources such as space, funds and time to realise the wellness plan of the organisation;
- Encouraging and rewarding managers for involvement, success and effort that ensure a better work-life balance;
- Reporting success and celebrating it publicly.

The wellness programme is beneficial to both the employee and the employer.

## **2.9. Legislation linked to EAP in the Workplace**

There is not a specific EAP Act in South Africa. Several existing pieces of legislation have an influence on EAPs. The employment relationship is affected by various sources of law (Nel *et al.*, 2001:94). EAPs are a human resource function. Some legislation applicable to the employment relationship also impacts on the establishment of an EAP. Such legislation includes:

- The SA Constitution (RSA, Act 108 of 1996)
- Employment Equity Act (RSA, Act 55 of 1998)
- Labour Relations Act (RSA, Act. 66 of 1995)
- Skills Development Act (RSA, Act 1997 of 1998)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (RSA, Act 85 of 1993)
- Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Amendment Act (RSA, Act No. 14 of 1999).

A short description of the above Acts will follow below.

### **2.9.1. The SA Constitution (RSA, Act 108 of 1996)**

The Constitution is the supreme law of the country. All South African statutes are therefore compelled to conform to the key principles contained in the Constitution. Parliament and the public and private sectors are subordinate to the Constitution (Nel 2001:1995).

Chapter two of the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) contains the Bill of Rights, which influences the establishment of an EAP. A variety of important rights, for example, human dignity, equality and freedom, are underpinned in the Constitution. Section 23 of the Act gives clear guidance with regards to employment relations. According to this Act, all persons have the right to choose trades, occupations and professions. All persons have the right to work and have access to healthcare services and suitable social services.

Within the context of an EAP, employees must always be treated with dignity. They must have equal access to opportunities and must be given the freedom to choose whether or not they want to make use of services offered by the EAP. Confidentiality is therefore an essential principle in the practice of an EAP.

### **2.9.2. The Employment Equity Act (RSA, Act 55 of 1998)**

The purpose of this act is to achieve equity in the workplace. This will be achieved by promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination as well as the implementation of affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment by designated groups and ensure equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace.

This act addresses:

- The promotion of the employees' constitutional right of equality and democracy;
- The elimination of unfair discrimination in the workplace;
- The implementation of employment equity to rectify the effects of discrimination;
- Diversity in the workplace;
- The promotion of economic development and efficiency in the workforce;

This act highlights the prevention of unfair discrimination against an employee within in an employment setting on the grounds of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, HIV status, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language or birth. It also prohibits harassment of any kind against an employee. Sexual harassment is also highlighted. Testing employees for drugs is forbidden. Testing for medical conditions including HIV/AIDS is also forbidden. Measures to promote diversity within the workplace are emphasised in the Act. The issue of disclosure of information and the aspect of confidentiality is addressed. The Act underlines the significance of the principles of equal dignity and respect for all in ensuring diversity in the workplace. Retaining and developing people from designated groups are important aspects and for this reason implementation of training measures is proposed.

### **2.9.3. Labour Relations Act (RSA, Act 66 of 1995)**

The aim of this act is to enhance economic development, social justice, labour peace and democratisation in the workplace through achieving and regulating the essential rights of workers as well as employees. The Labour Relations Act focuses on the establishment of workplace forums, dispute resolutions and unfair dismissals. It is emphasised that an employee's personal problems should be taken into account when dismissals are considered.

One aspect essential for an EAP is disclosure of personal information. This Act affirms that private and personal information of an employee cannot be made public, except in the case where employees consent to the disclosure of information.

#### **2.9.4. Skills Development Act (RSA, Act 97 of 1998)**

The Skills Development Act aims to develop the skills of the South African workforce by means of increasing the quality of working life of employees, increasing the productivity of the workplace and promoting self-employment and the delivery of social services.

The Act encourages employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment to provide employees with the prospect of acquiring new skills. Additionally the Act encourages employees to participate in leadership programmes. The Act increases the level of investment in education and training in the labour market with the aim of improving the return on that investment.

#### **2.9.5. Occupational Health and Safety (RSA, Act 85 of 1993)**

The Occupational Health and Safety Act promote safety in the workplace. Employers must offer and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of the employee.

The Act stipulates that an employee has a duty to take care of his/her own health and safety. Fundamentally, a troubled employee is a safety risk and the employee is liable if insufficient action is taken to reduce this risk.

#### **2.9.6. Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Amendment Act (RSA, Act 14 of 1999)**

This Act outlines the services to be rendered to support persons who are dependent on or addicted to, drugs and alcohol. There is specific reference to the establishment of programmes for the prevention and treatment of drug dependency as well as guidelines for the establishment of treatment centres and hostels.

#### **2.10. Employee Assistance Programmes and the Troubled Employee**

The following section will give a description of the troubled employee and an overview of some problems experienced by the troubled employee.

### **2.10.1. Troubled Employee**

A troubled employee is described as a person who causes job-related problems as a result of alcoholism, drug dependency, mental or emotional disorders, financial difficulties, or marital or family problems. Tereblance, (1999:6) refers to a troubled employee as an employee who is suffering from any personal or work-related problem, ensuing in a lack of optimal economic and social functioning. Sonnenstuhl and Trice (1986:1), refer to troubled employees as the individuals who are preoccupied with their personal problems, for instance, alcohol abuse, drug addiction, marital problems and environmental stress, and are disrupting their work.

Grobler *et al.* (2006:398) is of the opinion that 10% of the total employee population is troubled at any given time. They therefore affirm that the estimated cost of a troubled employee is almost five percent of that employee's annual salary (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:398). Carell *et al.* (1998:428) and Grobler *et al.* (2006:398) have identified the following symptoms of a troubled employee: excessive absenteeism, unexcused absenteeism, frequent absences, tardiness and early departures, altercations with co-workers, causing other employees injuries through negligence, poor judgments and bad decisions, unusual on-the-job accidents, increased spoilage and breaking of equipment through negligence, involvement with the law and deteriorating personal appearance.

### **2.11. Employee Assistance Programmes and Problems Experienced by the Employee**

The EAP is concern with an employee's personal as well as work-related problems. The nature of these problems has a momentous effect on the employee's work performance and productivity. For the purpose of this study only a few of these problems will be highlighted, namely: job stress and burnout, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS and sexual harassment in the workplace, domestic violence and depression.

#### **2.11.1. Job stress and Job burnout**

Stress signifies different things to different people (Nel *et al.*, .2001:303). What disturbs one person does not automatically disturb another (Sue *et al.*, 1990:204). Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (2005:371) define stress as tension from extraordinary demands, constraints or opportunities suffered by individuals. Gibson *et al.* (2006:198) emphasise that all the definitions of stress relate to two categories, namely a stimulus or response. These authors identify stress as "an adaptive response, mediated by individual differences, that is a consequence of any action, situation or event that places special demands on a person". Stone

(2005:680) identified stress as a condition of strain that affects one's emotions, thought process and physical condition. Stress endured over short periods can be good, but can become harmful when the stress is acute, chronic and experienced over a long period of time. The result of acute stress may be psycho-physiological symptoms, apathy, anxiety, panic, stupor, depression, violence or even death (Sue *et al.*, 1990:204). These authors also claim that stress decreases the immune system's efficiency, which increases a person's susceptibility to disease. Individual (personal), group, organisational and environmental factors instigate sources of stress and frustration. Cherrington (1997:640) confirms that environmental and personal conditions are the two key sources of stress.

Being alive automatically exposes a person to stressors such as,, illness, marriage, divorce, the death of a loved one, looking for a job or trying to keep a job, ageing, retiring and even schoolwork (Sue *et al.*, 1990:204). Stress at work influences job satisfaction, work performance, productivity, absenteeism and turnover rate as well as other personal problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, hypertension and cardiovascular problems (Mullins, 1999:637; Grobler *et al.*, 2006:388). Work can affect an employee's health through the physical and psychological environment (Gilbreath and Bensen, 2004:256). Any situation perceived as burdensome, threatening, confusing and boring is expected to aggravate stress. Schultz and Schultz (1994:412) claim that both work overload and work under-load can activate stress. Stress brings about feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, hostility, inadequacy and low frustration tolerance (Mullins, 1999:637).

Some stress is viewed as positive and is even a good thing at times, because it leads to higher levels of performance. On the other hand, if stress is not managed effectively, it can become harmful. Role stress can lead to communication difficulties and interpersonal relationship problems, and affect an individual's morale, performance as well as work effectiveness and health. Individuals in organisations can develop a great deal of stress. This can be the result of extra responsibility for the work of others, performing innovative functions, performing integrative or boundary functions, having relationship problems and career uncertainty (Mullins, 1999:638). The results of high stress situations are normally high levels of absenteeism, turnover, grievances, accidents and chemical dependency (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:391).

Job burnout is an extension of job stress. It arises when a person believes that they cannot or will not continue to do the job (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:395). Burnout is defined as a state of mental, emotional and physical exhaustion and transpires at all organisational, pay and age group levels.

### **2.11.2. Substance Abuse**

Sue *et al.* (1990:260) define substance abuse as “a pathological pattern of excessive use in which a person can not cease or reduce his or her intake of a substance, even though it may be causing physical damage, jeopardising safety or impairing social relationships and occupational functioning”.

Substance abuse refers to an addiction of drugs and/or alcohol. Carrell *et al.* (2006:430) stressed that drug and alcohol abuse in the work place is a leading contributor of societal problems, for instance, family break-up, crime, violence, dropping out from schools and universities.

Alcoholism is defined as a disease which involves the over-consumption of alcoholic beverages to such an extent that it interferes with that person’s health and overall job performance (Doogan and Means, 1990:27). It is also evident that alcohol abuse affects a person’s mental activity. According to studies, between 5 and 35 percent of the South African workforce are alcoholics (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:401). Alcoholic workers experience more work-related problems, for instance, absenteeism, injuries on duty, job accidents and low productivity than non-alcoholic workers do. Doogan and Means (1990:25) state that alcohol abuse is associated with social problems such as divorce, debt, child abuse, juvenile vandalism and work absenteeism. Alcohol abuse is therefore simply a symptom of a broader societal problem.

The most effective strategy to fight alcoholism in the workplace is by reducing stress and anxiety. For those employees who suffer from alcoholism, a rehabilitation programme can be implemented. Regular training and development programmes should be held to enhance employee’s knowledge on the negative effects of stress and anxiety. Training of supervisors/managers to identify the early warning signs of alcoholism among employees is also needed.

In South Africa drug dependency in general is increasing at an alarming rate. The South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (SANCA) maintains that drug abuse is usually instituted outside the workplace, but is enhanced when an employee is under a great deal of stress (Grobler *et al.*

2006:404). Studies done in the United States brought to the light that, a typical drug user's functionality is about 67 percent of his/her potential capacity. They are about 360 percent more likely to be involved in accidents and need three times more sick leave benefits; they are usually ten or more workdays absent in a year and are keener to file a grievance complaint (Grober *et al.*, 2006:404).

### **2.11.3. HIV/AIDS**

HIV/AIDS today has grown to be a critical health concern globally. 5% of South Africa's sexually active population is diagnosed with AIDS (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:405). The situation in Sub-Saharan countries is a matter of serious concern. Statistics indicate that 34 million people have been infected since the epidemic was made known. Since 1998 there have been four million new infections. There are 5,500 funerals of AIDS victims a day. Generally one in every seven infections on the continent is in South Africa (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:406). These statistics are a clear indication that every major organisation will have to deal with HIV/AIDS in one way or another (Stone, 2005:671).

The individual and the workplace are without any doubt affected by this pandemic. HIV/AIDS will influence the workplace in many ways, especially economically. In the first instance more people fall ill and take sick leave. Employees will require time off to care for sick family members and consequently employees take more compassionate leave. Employees will need more time off for funerals of family members and colleagues. As a result productivity will be influenced by time off and less healthy workers, which will impact on the medical scheme of an organisation; this will in turn lead to bigger financial contributions by organisations as well as the employees. The number of adult labourers between the age group of 20-59 will decline, which will directly influence the supply and cost of labour. Overall higher recruitment rates and training costs can be expected (Grobler *et al.*, 2006: 405-406).

Organisations can be actively involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS. This can be done through education and training of employees, encouraging HIV testing because this is a vital part of changing people's behaviour. Finally organisations can purchase insurance for their employees as a group. Education and training are critically important to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS (Saloner, 2002:157).

Working with people affected by, or infected with, HIV/AIDS requires moving past advocating for client groups to embracing a developmental function (Jackson in Saloner, 2002:156).

#### **2.11.4. Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment has become a complex, contentious and prevalent phenomenon in today's workplace. Stone (2005:673) defines sexual harassment as "the behaviour involving sexually suggestive remarks, unwanted touching and sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwanted and that adversely affects a person's employment and/or creates a hostile work environment". As stated in the Code of Good Practice (Section 203(1)), sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. Within the workplace sexual harassment can lead to a breach of trust and/or the abuse of power. Grobler *et al.* (2006:91) claim that sexual harassment can poison the workplace and affect the victim's physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing. This consequently leads to less favourable working conditions. It is therefore of great importance that the organisation identify or recognise employees with dangerous personality types in the organisation, and they have a good sexual harassment policy and provide constant training in this regard to employees (Grobler *et al.*, 2006: 92).

#### **2.11.5. Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence can no longer be seen as a private matter, because it is becoming a major health problem. The direct effects of domestic violence are major. It impacts on a person's psychological wellbeing, productivity, work attendance, physical safety, medical insurance costs, the organisation's turnover rate – all of which makes it a workplace issue today (Kinney in HR Magazine, 1995:74). Incidents of domestic violence lead to feelings of shame, fear and anxiety.

#### **2.12. Conclusion**

This chapter has described the value of an EAP to organisations. Firstly, the chapter provided a historical overview of the development of EAP abroad. Specific reference was then made to the development of EAPs within the South African context. The concept of EAPs was defined and broadly described to give a clear understanding of the rationale and nature of the programme in the context of the workplace. Different EAP models were highlighted. Furthermore, this chapter gave an overview on the essential components of an effective EAP and specific benefits derived from establishing such a programme in the workplace. South African legislation impacting on EAPs was also highlighted. In conclusion, the troubled employee was discussed with specific reference to some of the problems that employees encounter which impact on the workplace.

This comprehensive description of EAPs and the benefits they can have for the workplace has paved the way for the discussion in Chapter Three, which deals with the Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM), where the research is conducted. Specific reference will be made to the organisational structure, employee composition, human resource policies and/or strategies and some problems experienced within this organisation as a consequence of the absence of an EAP.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM)**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Chapter two gave a detailed literature review on EAPs, with specific reference to the historic development of EAPs abroad as well as in South Africa, and also addressed the rationale and benefits of such a programme for both the employees and employers. It dealt with the functioning of an EAP within an employment context.

Chapter three will focus more specifically on one organisation, the CWDM, where the exploratory research on an EAP has been conducted. According to Robbins and Barnwell (2002:65), an organisation is viewed as a collective of people. The aim of the chapter is to broaden the reader's understanding on the functioning and structure of the organisation, thus in essence its people.

To understand the total context of this organisation, this chapter firstly focuses on the local authority in relation to the three spheres of government. This is followed by an overview of the organisation, divided into four main categories namely: 1) The Vision, Mission and Objectives of the Organisation; 2) Organisational Structure and Employee Composition; 3) Budget Overview; and 4) Existing Human Resource Policies/Strategies at CWDM. A broad budget overview for the 2008/2009 financial year will be presented, with specific emphasis on the projects that reflect the council's social responsibility towards the community at large, but specifically towards the development of its personnel. In 2005 CWDM adopted several Human Resource strategies. This chapter highlights only four of these human resource strategies relevant to the purpose of the study, namely 1) Sexual Harassment; 2) Substance Abuse; 3) Chronic Illness; and 4) Draft Policy on people living with disabilities

At the end of this chapter the reader should have a holistic understanding of the CWDM as an organisation, and particularly the role of the organisation as a sphere of government, the main focus areas of service delivery, the driving forces behind realising the vision, mission and objectives, and how the employee corps is distributed to achieve these objectives.

#### **3.2. Local authority in relations to the three spheres of government**

Government is divided into three spheres, namely national, provincial and local. The CWDM is a local authority. This is the sphere of government closest to the people. All spheres of government must work together to consolidate government resources supply and render a variety of public goods and services to ensure effective service delivery to the citizens of South Africa. The ultimate goal of government is “*a better life for all*”, thus ensuring a high quality of life for each individual (Gildenhuys, 1993:22-23) and to satisfy the collective needs of the public. Government therefore strives towards the realisation of preset goals, which are embodied in specific objectives and targets (Gildenhuys, 2004:369). Government institutions, whether national, provincial or local follows predetermined goals, objectives and targets that are reflected in its annual operational and capital budgets. According to the South African Constitution (RSA, Act 108 of 1996), the three spheres of government are “distinctive, interdependent and inter-related”. These spheres of government are subject to the principle of co-operative governance and inter-governmental relations (RSA, Act 108 of 1996).

National government is responsible for policy making, regulation and oversight, and has the most significant fiscal revenue-raising powers. Provincial government’s main responsibility is the delivery of social services, for example, education, health and welfare. This sphere of government has the largest budgets, but has limited revenue-raising powers. Local government is responsible for the delivery of basic municipal services. It has its own revenue and fiscal transfers.

In 2006 National Government has embarked on the Local Government Strategic Agenda (LGSA). The LGSA is an extension of the Project Consolidate Programme, instituted in 2004. (SA Government information, 2006) The Agenda ensures that the three spheres of government focus on a systematic and co-coordinated local development programme that can be monitored (South African Government Information, 2006). The fundamental elements of the five-year strategic agenda is to mainstream practical support to local government in improving municipal governance performance and accountability; address and structure governance arrangement of state to strengthen, support and monitor local government, and to refine and strengthen the policy, regulatory and fiscal environment for local government to better focus on enforcement matters.

The Municipal Systems Act (RSA, Act 32 of 2000) requires all municipalities to prepare Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), which are five-year strategic plans that are reviewed annually in consultation

with communities and stakeholders. The IDP aims to achieve effective and sustainable service delivery and development goals in municipal areas.

The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act (RSA, Act 13 of 2005) required districts to establish their intergovernmental forums, which form a vital component of an institutionalised mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the five-year local government strategic agenda.

The following section will consider the local authority Cape Winelands District Municipalities (CWDM) as a sphere of government.

### **3.3. Background of the organisation**

CWDM, previously known as the Boland District Municipality, is situated in the Western Cape Province. The municipality's code is DC2. This is a Category C municipality. According to the Municipal Systems Act (RSA, Act 32 of 2000), a Category C municipality is a municipality that has municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality. The smaller municipalities resorting under the Category C municipality are called Category B municipalities. The five Category B municipalities that fall under CWDM are: Breede River Winelands, Breede Valley, Drakenstein, Stellenbosch and Witzenberg. A District Management Area (DMA), municipality code WCDA02, also falls under CWDM. A DMA is an area where municipal functions cannot be fulfilled by a Category B municipality and the District Municipality then fulfil these functions.

The Constitution (RSA, Act 108 of 1996), Municipal Structures and Systems Act (RSA, Act, 32 of 2000), IDP regulations and the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act (RSA, Act 13 of 2005) envisage the role of a district Municipality as a "*Development facilitator*". The key functional areas of the district municipality as a development facilitator include: Planning, Coordination, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Support and Capacity Building, Regional Economic Development, Municipal Health, Fire and Disaster Management, Public Transport Regulation, and Vulnerable Groups, specifically strategic support for social development and Infrastructure. The District municipality is one sphere of government. In his 2006 State of the Nation Address, former President Thabo Mbeki stressed that all spheres of government (national, provincial and local government) must work together to ensure integration of planning and implementation. He further emphasised that district and metro municipalities must be properly positioned to carry out their

responsibilities to the people. In essence this means that the district municipality must have a realistic IDP, a plausible LED Plan as well as the materials, human resources and operational systems for effective implementation.

The total CWDM district area is about 22 289 km<sup>2</sup> and, according to the 2001 census, it has a total population of 629 494 (Statistics South Africa Census, 2001). The density in the district is 28.24 people per km<sup>2</sup> and there are an estimated 159 820 households in the district. As a result of the wide service delivery area this organisation covers, CWDM has administrative officers in Stellenbosch, Paarl, Ceres, Worcester and Robertson.

### **3.4. Vision and Mission, and Objectives**

The vision of CWDM is “Growing, Sharing and Innovating Together” The mission is “The CWDM, in partnership with its citizens and stakeholders, commit themselves to inclusive, informed and responsible governance where sustainable service delivery and development create opportunities for all”.

The mission statement of the organisation is inspired by various key principles and the values of inclusivity, integration, sustainability, benefits for all, participation, education, accessibility and responsible governance.

The main objectives of CWDM include:

- **Local Economic/Social Development and Tourism:** To support the development of a diversified, resilient and sustainable district economy and tourism product in order to promote economic growth and eradicate poverty
- **Land Housing and Infrastructure:** To ensure that all the people of the CWDM have access to adequate housing and infrastructure
- **Community Development Services:** To improve and expand the provision of services (PPHC, MHS, Rural Development) to all the people of the CWDM
- **Promote public safety and protection**
- **Sustainable and sufficient use and planning frameworks**
- **Institutional Transformation and Financial Sustainability.**

The mission, vision and objectives of CWDM are strategically aligned with a number of the government's national and provincial policies, strategies and perspectives. These include The National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP), Accelerated Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) and the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS). These objectives are all in line with the government's intervention strategy to intervene in the second economy. Targeted programmes to ensure that these objectives are reached include:

- Development of small and micro enterprises
- Job creation and skills development
- Land reform and agricultural assistance
- Upgrade of extended public works programme
- Social services and welfare support through implementing a housing strategy, expanded primary health care, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programmes and primary school nutrition programmes.
- Improving the capacity of state in all areas to promote growth and inclusion
- Improving the capacity of local government
- Improving partnerships
- Combating crime to facilitate economic growth
- Expand international relations for growth and development.

To ensure continuous, effective services delivery and to meet the needs of the community, the CWDM must still focus on the following five areas:

- Develop a shared paradigm for sustainable development
- Improve government's connectivity with the community
- Maximise the impact of intergovernmental investment in localities
- Improve provincial strategic role in development
- Improve the credibility of Integrated Development Plans.

CWDM does indeed have a wide focus area for service delivery. The following sections will introduce the organisational structure and employee composition to indicate how the goals and objectives of the organisation are realised through the different departments/directorates and personnel.

### **3.5. Organisational structure**

The organisational structure of CWDM clearly distinguishes between administrative support and political support structures.

#### **3.5.1. Political support structure**

The current Council was elected during the March 2006 local government elections. The political structure is headed by the Executive Mayor. The Executive Mayor is supported by the Executive Mayoral Committee. The Portfolio Committee derives from the Mayoral Committee, consisting of portfolio councillors based on the six departments and key performance areas of the organisation. The Executive Mayoral Committee is responsible for the political vision, values and co-ordination, policy and programme oversight, functional compliance and intergovernmental relations. The Speaker is responsible for legal oversight, policy reviews and statutory committees.

Within this political structure four officials are employed, including an office manager, secretary for the office manager and councillor support staff. Although working in the political support structure, they are taken up into the administrative support structure of the organisation. The effectiveness and efficiency of the political structure influences the administrative structure.

#### **3.5.2. Administrative support structure**

The administrative support structure is headed by the District Municipal Manager and his executive management team. Eleven employees are employed in the Office of The Municipal Manager. This office is responsible for:

- Strategic planning, support and co-ordination
- Political and administrative co-ordination
- Internal audit and risk management
- Corporate governance and legal systems
- Integrated Development Plan.

The executive management team consists of the municipal manager and the executive directors from the six different departments. These six departments include: Corporate and Strategic Services, Financial

Management Services, Engineering and Infrastructure Development Services, Community Development Services, Regional Development and Planning Services, and Rural and Social Development Services.

The various departments consist of directorates and/ or sub-directorates and in some sub-directorates there are divisions. The department **Corporate Services** contains five directorates: 1) Human Resource Management; 2) Information Technology; 3) Strategic Services; 4) Administrative Support Services; and 5) Communication Services. The department **Financial Management Services** consists of two sub-directorates: 1) Expenditure, Procurement and Budgeting Control; and 2) Management Accounting, Asset Management and Systems Administration. The department **Engineering and Infrastructure Development** has three directorates: 1) Public Transport Planning and Regulation; 2) Project and Technical Services and Regulation; and 3) Roads. The sub-directorate housing resorts under the directorate Projects and Technical Services. The directorate Roads has two sub-directorates: Roads West and Roads East. The directorates 1) Emergency Services; and 2) Municipal Health Services are part of the department **Community Development Services**. The following two directorates resort under the department **Regional Development and Planning**: 1) Local Economic Development; and 2) Planning. The department Rural Development and Special Programmes consists of two divisions: Rural Development and Social Development.

The administration structure indicates dual matrix accountability in several functions. This is to ensure leading and co-ordination of development in the district. According to Gildenhuis (2004:198), the organisational structure should create circumstances for effective and efficient management. The current organisational structure of CWDM reflects:

- Joint management by management teams;
- An optimum span of control;
- Formal and informal horizontal as well as vertical communication lines;
- A comprehensible definition of goals, objectives, targets, functions and service activities.

The functions and roles of the various directorates and sub-directorates are clearly defined.

The following section will give an overview of the employee composition.

### **3.6. Employee composition**

The organisation's employs 561 people. Not all post on the organogram is filled. Of this 561, 390 of the working employees are men, and 171 are female. Employees are distributed over the whole area. The organisation has five administrative offices in the following towns: Stellenbosch, Paarl, Worcester, Ceres and Robertson. The Stellenbosch Office has 208 employees, which makes it the biggest work station. There are 135 employees at the Worcester office, 101 at the Paarl Office, 69 at Ceres and 48 at Robertson.

The Directorate Engineering and Infrastructure have the most employees namely 274. 143 Employees are employed in the Directorate Community Development Services, 63 in the Directorate Corporate Services, 37 in the Directorate Financial Management Services and 18 in the Directorate Regional Planning and Development and 10 Employees in the Directorate Rural and Social Development.

The organisational structure is strategically positioned to ensure the realisation of the goals, mission and vision of the organisation. The following section will highlight the budget of the organisation.

### **3.7. Budget**

The expenditure plans of the municipality are directly linked with the strategic objectives of the municipality. The main priorities therefore include: Basic Service Delivery, Municipal Transformation and Organisational Development, Local Economic Development, Good Governance and Public Participation, and Municipal Financial Viability and Management. For the purpose of this study the budget of the 2007/2008 financial years will be highlighted. The expenditure plans of the municipality are directly linked with the strategic objectives of the municipality. The main priorities therefore includes: Basic Service Delivery, Municipal Transformation and Organisational Development, Local Economic Development, Good Governance and Public Participation and Municipal Financial Viability and Management.

The total income for the 2008/2009 financial year amounts to R 294 257 183, which make up a Capital budget of R13.8 million, an Operating budget of R 199.7 million and a Project Budget of R 80.7 million. The sundry tariffs have increased by 5% to keep up with the Consumer Price Index. The main income sources for the 2007/2008 financial year comprises of:

General Income	-	R 6,801,973
Property Rates	-	R 874,200
Interest	-	R 24,542,700

Transfer Payments	-	R 143,203,000
Allocations and Subsidies	-	R 117,635,310
RCS Levies	-	R 1,200,000
Total Income	-	R 294, 257,183

The total expenditure for the 2007/2008 medium term is R 919 million and comprises of:

Operations and Maintenance	-	R 199,892,432
Projects	-	R 80,558,751
Capital Budget	-	R 13, 806,000

CWDM is in a sound financial position. Council maintains a positive current ratio whereby the current assets are greater than the current liabilities. All provisions and reserves are cash backed and there are no external loans. Council also received an award for 100% expenditure on Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG). Council also managed to have an unqualified audit report.

CWDM also envisaged spending an amount of **R 80,558,751** on projects in the B-municipalities for 2007/2008 financial year. For the 2008/2009 financial year, CWDM has aligned the budget to the strategic objectives of this municipality; monies have been allocated for the following projects:

- R13.5 million for local economic development and tourism;
- R128 million for housing, land and infrastructure;
- R 25 million for community development services
- R 46 million for Public Safety and Protection;
- R 3.5 Million for sustainable land- use and planning;
- R 78 million for governance and, institutional development and financial sustainability.

The budget reflects Council's keenness to social development. An amount of R 250 000.00 is budgeted for HIV/AIDS Programmes in the district. These programmes aim to develop a multi-stakeholder response to the HIV/AIDS Pandemic through awareness campaigns and district wide events. A further R 2.2 million has been budgeted for small farmer support and R1.1 million for community support programmes.

CWDM condemn the habits of alcohol and substance abuse, crime, gambling and the high incidents of youth pregnancies and street kids. Hence CWDM willingly supports NGO's in the fight against these social issues and render assistance for alcohol related programmes and support to these organisations

The following section will emphasise the relevant current functional Human Resource Policy at the organisation. A Proposed EAP Policy will typically be classified as a Human Resource Policy; therefore a brief description of the different policies will be provided. This section will start with a short description of key legislation impacting on human resource management in an organisation.

### **3.8. Human resource policies**

Macro legislation does impact on local government to implement policies to effectively regulate the workplace. Such legislation includes: the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (RSA, Act 75 of 1997), the Labour Relations Act (RSA, Act 66 of 1995), the Unemployment Insurance Act (RSA, Act 63 of 2001), the Employment Equity Act (RSA, Act 55 of 1998), the Occupational Health and Safety Act (RSA, Act 85 of 1993), Unemployment Insurance Act (RSA, Act 63 of 2001), the Skills Development Act (RSA, Act 97 of 1999) and the Municipal Systems Act (RSA, Act 32 of 2000). This legislation will be discussed below:

#### **3.8.1. Key legislation in human resource management**

Chapter two highlighted some of the legislation that implicates EAP. This chapter will highlight that legislation applicable to work environment within local government. Some of the acts discussed in chapter two will again be highlighted. This section will commence with the legislation impacting the human resource environment within local government and will conclude with some of the HR policies/strategies at CWDM.

##### **3.8.1.1. Basic condition of employment act (RSA, Act 75 of 1997)**

This act is aimed at enhancing economic development and social justice in the workplace. It gives effect to, but also regulates, the right to fair labour practices as set out in the Constitution. It further establishes and enforces basic conditions of employment and regulates the variation of basic conditions of employment. This act deals with issues such as regulation of working time, minimum leave regulation, factors that needs to be included in letters of appointment, conditions that apply to termination of employment and various other issues applicable to the employment of staff. The Basic Conditions of Employment Act sets minimum

standards for conditions of employment. Employers can provide better conditions than those provided for in the Act, but cannot permit inferior conditions to those implied in the act.

#### **3.8.1.2. Labour relations act (RSA, Act 66 of 1995)**

The prime focus of Labour Relations Act is to regulate the Rights of Trade Unions to promote and facilitate collective bargaining. The act highlights the right to strike and to allow lock-outs, encourages employee participation in decision making and provides procedures for labour disputes.

#### **3.8.1.3. Employment equity act (RSA, Act 55 of 1998)**

This act strongly focuses on the elimination of unfair discrimination in employment practices. The implementation of affirmative action to redress the effects of discrimination and to achieve a diverse workforce that is broadly representative of the various racial groups is emphasised in this act. This act also requires an Employment Equity Plan from employees with a working corps larger than 50.

#### **3.8.1.4. Occupational Health and Safety act (RSA, Act 85 of 1993)**

This act regulates the health and safety of persons at work and those employed in connection with the use of plant and machinery. This act furthermore aims to protect employees against health and safety hazards that arise from work activities. This act also provides for the establishment of an Advisory Council for Occupational Health and Safety.

#### **3.8.1.5. Skills Development act (RSA, Act 97 of 1999)**

The Skills Development Act is aimed at developing the skills of the South African workforce. The main focus of this Act is on increasing the quality of working life of employees, increasing the productivity of the workplace and promoting self-employment and the delivery of social services. This act requires employers to draft a Workplace Skills Plan with the intention of determining the training priorities of their employees and to pay levies to the applicable SETA passing through the Receiver of Revenue.

#### **3.7.1.6. Unemployment Insurance Act (RSA, Act 63 of 2001)**

This act aims to establish an Unemployment Insurance Fund to which employees and employers contribute 1% of the employee's salary. The act provides for the payment of unemployment benefits to unemployed contributors to the fund. It further provides for maternity benefits from the Unemployment Insurance Fund.

### **3.7.1.7. *Municipal Systems Act (RSA, Act 32 of 2000)***

Chapter Seven of this act deals with human resource issues in local government. This chapter deals with the appointment of Municipal Managers and managers directly accountable to the Municipal Manager. It further deals with the employment contract and other matters concerning the employment of municipal staff.

## **3.8.2. Existing Human Resource Policies/Strategies at CWDM**

In 2005 CWDM introduced a wide range of Human Resource policies and/or strategies in the workplace. The existing strategy/policies that imply an EAP include the Sexual Harassment Policy, Substance Abuse Policy, Chronic Illness Policy and the Smoking Policy. The following section will shortly describe these policies/strategies.

### **3.8.2.1 *Sexual Harassment Policy***

CWDM's sexual harassment policy is underpinned by the Code of Good Practice in the Labour Relations Act. The purpose of this policy is to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. The policy provides appropriate procedures to deal with and prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. A definition and description of sexual harassment is provided. The policy furthermore describes the four forms of sexual harassment, namely physical conduct, verbal forms of harassment, reverse harassment and sexual favouritism.

According to this policy, the employer has the responsibility to create and maintain a working environment where the dignity of employees is respected. Guidelines and advice for employees that experience problems with sexual harassment is highlighted. The formal and informal procedures for dealing with sexual harassment are explained in detail.

### **3.8.2.2. *Substance Abuse Policy***

CWDM acknowledges dependency on alcohol and drugs as an illness that requires special treatment. This viewpoint forms the building block for the organisation's substance abuse policy. The organisation makes a special effort to prevent abuse of any habit-forming substance amongst its employees. CWDM assists its employees in rehabilitation if they experience a dependency problem. For this reason this policy prevents substance abuse from becoming a management problem.

The substance abuse policy clearly states that CWDM will not interfere with an employee's private drinking or drug use on two conditions. Firstly, those employees' job performance, attendance or interpersonal relations at work are not affected. Secondly, employees must not be a safety risk to themselves, fellow workers and the property of the municipality.

The policy allows for both voluntary and mandatory referral for rehabilitation. It clearly indicates that an offer of assistance does not exclude an employee from standard disciplinary measures. An employee must support, co-operate in, and take responsibility for assistance offered. In the case of referral for rehabilitation of alcohol abuse, the organisation undertakes to fund the first period of the rehabilitation. The costs for the second period of rehabilitation are shared by the employee and employee. Subsequent rehabilitation costs will be the sole responsibility of the employee. The organisation preserves the right to monitor the employee for an agreed period after rehabilitation.

The substance abuse policy is based on the following treatment principles:

- Referral (whether voluntary or mandatory);
- Assessment on the premises of the organisation or by an outside body of the municipality's choice;
- Counselling, education and rehabilitation back into normal duties.

### **3.8.2.3. Chronic Illness strategy**

The chronic illness strategy is directed at employees living with a chronic illness. A chronic illness is a health condition that is long-lasting (more than 4-6 weeks and in most instances life-long) and needs to be managed on a long-term basis.

The aim of the strategy is to:

- Set guidelines for both employee and employer to prevent discrimination against employees living with a chronic illness;
- Enable the employee to create a supportive environment to enable chronically ill employees to continue to work under normal conditions in their current employment as long as they are medically fit to do so;
- Ensure reasonable accommodation matters to maximise performance of all employees;

- Enable the organisation to take reasonable steps to provide and/or refer employees to appropriate health, welfare and psychosocial services.

The policy is underpinned by confidentiality. An employee is not legally required to disclose his/her illness to the employer or other employees. Disclosure of an illness is voluntary and should be treated as highly confidential. In cases where an illness is disclosed, the policy provides for mechanisms to create an environment of acceptance and support. The onus is placed on the employer to provide and maintain a safe working environment that is free of any health risks, especially for the ill employee but also for other employees. Compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act is therefore of fundamental importance.

The strategy makes special reference to Tuberculosis (TB) infections in the workplace. In instances where an employee was infected with TB in the workplace, compensation can be claimed by the employee. The employer will support and encourage the employee to take daily medication and complete the full treatment regime.

The chronic illness strategy is based on the principles of:

- Equality and non-discrimination;
- Protection of human rights and human dignity;
- Inclusivity;
- Consultation;
- Participation of all stakeholders.

The chronic illness policy has three subsections: 1) HIV/AIDS in the workplace; 2) Occupational Exposure to Blood or Human Body Fluids; and 3) High-Risk Service Providers.

#### **3.8.2.3.1. *HIV/AIDS in the workplace***

The aim of this subsection is to set out guidelines for the employer and employee ensuring that individuals with the HIV/AIDS infections are not discriminated against and to provide mechanisms to effectively manage HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

The HIV/AIDS strategy is based the same principles stated in the overall chronic illness strategy. Rules for HIV testing, disclosure of information and the right to confidentiality are highlighted. The onus is on the organisation to create mechanisms that will encourage support, openness and acceptance of those employees disclosing their status voluntarily. The strategy furthermore affords the organisation with the responsibility to provide and maintain a safe working environment, free from any health risks for its employees.

It is clearly stipulated that an employee can claim compensation for becoming HIV infected because of an occupational accident. This is in line with the provisions of the Compensations for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act.

In managing HIV-positive employees, the policy allows employees to work under normal conditions as long as they are medically fit to do so. It further allows the employer to reasonably accommodate the employee to enhance the performance of all employees. The employer will also take reasonable steps to refer employees to appropriate health, welfare and psychological services.

#### **3.8.2.3.2. *Policy for occupational exposure to blood or human fluids***

This subsection of the chronic illness strategy describes guidelines for the employer and employee who are exposed to blood or human fluids. These guidelines includes proper education when such things occur, immediate and correct management of the situation, and rendering support and assistance to reach medical care within the critical post-exposure time frame. This section highlights the creation and encouragement of openness, acceptance and support of those employees who voluntarily disclose their status within the workplace.

#### **3.8.2.3.3. *High-risk service provides***

This subsection considers taking universal precautions for high-risk service providers at all times. It sets guidelines for the employer and employees who are at high risk of being exposed to blood or human body fluids. Training of high-risk employees is a priority. The subsection also describes guidelines for immediate and correct management after any exposure and describes the Council's duty to support and assist high-risk employees during the critical post-exposure time-frame. The organisation's responsibility in creating

and maintaining a safe environment is highlighted. The employee's rights to testing, confidentiality and disclosure are briefly stated.

### **3.8.3. CWDM draft policy on people living with disabilities**

The CWDM Draft Policy on people living with disabilities is largely based on the United Nation's Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for People with Disabilities. Supplementary to this, the policy draws on the experience of Swedish local authorities with regards to disability policy planning. The main purpose of the policy is to develop an integrated, holistic approach to deal effectively with issues influencing people with disabilities. It aims to support and encourage the growth and development of people with disabilities into active citizens, turning them into full contributing participants in the social, economic and political life of the District.

The policy focuses on exploring ways in which CWDM can play a significant role in dismantling barriers such as cultural, physical, social constraints that prevent people with disabilities from entering, utilising or benefiting from various systems of society that are available to other citizens. CWDM recognises disability as a human rights issue and acknowledges the institutional and attitude barriers that hamper effective service delivery to the disabled. The policy highlights poverty and disability as critical concerns and acknowledges the following as vulnerable groups that needs specific attention: women with disabilities, children with disabilities, youth with disabilities, elderly with disabilities, people with disabilities living in remote rural areas, people with severe intellectual and mental disabilities, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

The vision of the policy is "to work towards free access for people with disabilities". To ensure the realisation of this mission CWDM will focus on the following strategies:

- Take action to raise awareness in society about persons with disabilities, their rights and their needs, and potential to make a difference;
- Recognise the overall importance of accessibility in the process of equalisation of opportunities in all spheres of society;
- Take financial responsibility for programmes and measures to create equal opportunities for persons with disabilities;
- Consult with communities on disability issues;

- Recognise the right of the organisations of persons with disabilities to represent persons with disabilities at local level as well as the advisory role of organisations of persons with disabilities in the decision-making process on disability matters;
- Ensure the adequate training of personnel at all levels involved in the planning and provision of programmes and services concerning persons with disability.

In addition to the above policies and/or strategies, CWDM is also in the process of formalising the following strategic policies: Gender Strategy, Human Resource Strategy, Poverty Eradication Strategy, Youth Development Strategy, Local Economic Development Strategy and a Communication Strategy.

Through developing and adopting a number of policies and strategies, CWDM seeks to accomplish its vision, mission and organisational objectives. In essence, these policies seek to enhance the capacity of CWDM with the intention of rendering quality services to the staff and the community. These and other human resource policies are a clear indication of CWDM's progressive initiatives. The policies are aligned with organisational processes and have brought about uniformity in dealing with issues that affect the employees. These policies reflect the organisation's social responsibility towards its employees.

### **3.9. Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the organisation CWDM as a whole. Emphasis was placed on the role of CWDM as a local authority as stipulated in the Constitution, RDP and the White Paper, namely to deliver services and to perform a developmental role. According to Meiring (1988:7), the main purpose of any government, whether at national, regional or local level, is to guarantee that those residing in the jurisdiction uphold a high standard of living. The vision, mission and objectives of the organisation clearly indicate the Council's drive to deliver effective services and carry out their developmental role. According to Davids (1995:5), development has one common focal point, namely people. For this reason CWDM strives to improve the lives of people living in its jurisdiction, but also people employed by the organisation.

The organisation's striving for institutional transformation indicates that the developmental focus is also relevant to their employees. Rhoda (2001:47) states that the capacity of municipal officials should be increased to deliver services in a developmental manner. Council's responsibility in this regard was stressed in the overview of the organisation's budget. The administration of CWDM's budget reflects a

sound, effective organisation. From the budget overview, the Council's dedication to social responsibility programmes in the community and for their staff is also clear.

The organisational structure and employee composition gave a clear indication of the CWDM employee corps and how the different departments and/ or directorates are aligned to achieve the organisational goals. Robbins and Barnwell (2002:65) claim that a proper organisational structure improves organisational effectiveness.

CWDM has a wide range of human resource policies and strategies. For the purpose of this study this chapter only focused on four policies/strategies, namely: 1) Sexual Harassment Strategy, 2) Substance Abuse Policy, 3) Chronic Illness Strategy, and 4) Draft Policy on People living with disabilities. These formal policies/strategies illustrate the Council's developmental duty towards its employees and emphasise its fervent striving to create a non-discriminating environment.

With the current understanding of Employee Assistance Programmes (as described in Chapter two) and a holistic overview on the organisation, CWDM, there are indications that a functional EAP might extend the development focus of the organisation to its employees. This in turn will enable employees to deliver more effective services to the community at large.

Chapter four will describe the data collection and analysis. Data were obtained through expert interviews and workshops with relevant role players, line managers and union representatives. Some organisational records such as the turn-over rate and accidents in the workplace will be analysed and interpreted. The aim of the interviews, workshops with interested groups and interpretation of organisational records is to determine whether there is a need for an Employee Assistance Programme at CWDM.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

Chapter two gave a detailed literature review on Employee Assistance Programmes and how such a programme can benefit the employer as well as the employees of an organisation. Chapter three discussed the organisation, Cape Winelands District Municipality, where the empirical study was conducted. Chapter four forms the crux of this study, since it gives effect to the research objective namely: ***“To determine the employees’ need for an employee assistance programme by means of an empirical study”***.

This chapter (chapter four) aims to collect information related to employees’ need for an employee assistance programme at Cape Winelands District Municipality. Data obtained will be documented, analysed and interpreted. In fact, this chapter forms the foundation for Chapter five, where recommendations on an EAP will be made to the Cape Winelands District Municipality.

This chapter will commence with a short background to the study. The findings of the outcomes of the expert interviews, workshops with interest groups and the organisational records will then be presented. The chapter will conclude with a short summary of the overall findings of the study.

#### **4.2. Background to the study**

The researcher decided on CWDM as a case study to determine the need for an EAP by exploring the views of employees from both management and union perspective.

CWDM, previously known as the Boland District Municipality, is a category C municipality is situated in the Western Cape. This is a local government organisation. The municipality consist of 6 departments each with their own directorate and/or sub-directorates. CWDM provides work for 561 people and has administrative officers in Stellenbosch, Paarl, Ceres, Worcester and Robertson. More males (390) than females (171) are employed at CWDM.

To gain information for the study, 5 expert interviews and 2 workshops were conducted. For the expert interviews 5 employees from management (ranging from junior to top management) were selected to obtain

expert view on employee related matters as well as the need for an EAP. The interviews were guided by a questionnaire. Questions were designed to allow for open, closed and multiple choices. According to Van As and Van Schalkwyk (2001:95) an open-ended question encourages a respondent to comment freely on a topic. This method of questioning ensured a more extensive response from participants, but also helped with exploring different views on the topic at hand. The interview questions were divided into four categories. The first category gained information regarding the demographics of the participants. This includes information regarding gender, age group, religion, race, current position and rank of the respondent. It further emphasises the workstation of the respondent and number of years employed at CWDM, and elicits a short description of the respondent's job and whether the respondent previously held a management position in another organisation. All this information provides a basis from which correlations can be made.

The second part of the interview questions focused on problems experienced by employees of CWDM. This section is important and determines whether there is awareness on management side about the personal and work-related problems employees' experience. This section measured the participant's involvement in the personal and work-related problems experienced by employees, the impact that these problems have on the employee's productivity and morale in general. The problems experienced by an employee were drawn from the identified problems as discussed in chapters two. A correlation can be made between the high incidence of personal problems and the need for an EAP.

The third part of the interview questions explored views on how supportive CWDM is as an organisation. This section measured the capacity of CWDM as an organisation to deal effectively with a troubled employee. Aspects whether the organisation has a social responsibility towards its employees and whether employees of this organisation are viewed as its most valuable asset are determined. In essence this section measured the effectiveness of the organisation to deal effectively with a troubled employee.

The final section of the interview questionnaire focused on the need for a support structure through an EAP. It tested the participant's knowledge of an EAP. This section further focussed on the need for an EAP and whether such a programme would work at CWDM. A list of key focal points of an EAP was provided to the participants to allow them to choose what items would work for an EAP at CWDM. This section further

tested whether the participant's would support an EAP for CWDM and what strategy they would suggest to implement an EAP at CWDM.

In addition to the interviews, two workshops with interest groups were conducted. The one workshop comprised of line managers from the 6 directorates of the organisation. The second workshop comprised of trade union representatives from both SAMWU and IMATU. These workshops were aimed at testing the views of management and union on an array of issues which includes the following:

- The view on the organisation;
- The employee, specifically awareness of problem experienced by employees;
- Existing mechanisms in dealing with the employees' work-related and personal problems;
- Services that a possible EAP can provide for at CWDM;
- A Preferred EAP model for CWDM, based on information from the literature review in chapter two;
- Practical guidelines for developing a strategy for an EAP at CWDM.

For the purpose of this study the researcher decided on commencing the group discussion with an introduction on the topic EAP because of the group member's minimum knowledge on the topic EAP. This introduction was followed by in-depth group discussions, guided by a questionnaire (see Annexure two). To obtain specific information regarding the implementation of an EAP at CWDM, general questions as well as structured questions were asked to the participants. Ample time was allowed for discussions to gain as many views on the topic as possible.

Some of the organisational records such as the termination record and injury on duty record were also analysed. The purpose of studying the termination record was to establish how often employees leave the organisation as well as what age group leave this organisation. Although there are many reasons why employees leave an organisation, a possible reason could be that the organisation does not value the employee as a valuable asset, which could be addressed through an EAP.

With the injury on duty records the researcher would like to establish how regular accidents occur, how do these accidents on duty affects the absenteeism record and if the injury on duty can be linked to personal related problems, experienced by the employee.

The following section will present the outcomes of the expert interviews, workshops with expert groups and the organisational records.

### **4.3. Presentation of research results**

The research result will be presented by firstly giving an overview on the outcomes of the expert interviews, followed by the outcomes of the workshops with interested groups and thirdly the interpretation of organisational records.

#### **4.3.1. Outcomes of expert interviews**

The following section will give a broad description on the findings of the interviews and the interpretations of these findings. Findings will be presented according to the four sections of the questionnaire. The interviews gained a management perspective as interviews were conducted with employees from a junior management position to top management. Five people were interviewed.

#### **Section One: Demographics**

Most of the participant worked for this organisation for more than 5 years. These people are familiar with the organisational structure, policies, procedures and strategies. It is also evident that some are in management position after five years of working at CWDM. This is an indication that the organisation is keen on developing and promoting its employees to a better position in the organisation.

All participants' job demands required them to work from more than one workstation of CWDM which indicates that they interact with different employees in different areas, giving them a holistic view of employee-related problems.

All participants deal with human resource issues ranging from:

- Managing a department with a budget of more than R60 million;
- Recruitment, selection, labour disputes, performance management and administration;
- Individual performance management;
- Occupational health and safety issues;
- Labour relations.

The above details indicate that all participants have a great deal of experience in managing people. It is obvious that they will come across employees who experience work-related and personal problems. Their firsthand experience and expertise will lead to a great insight into the nature and extent of the problems of employees and how the absence of an EAP affects CWDM.

### **Section Two: Problems experienced by employees**

This part of the interview relates to the personal problems experienced by employees as discussed in Chapter two of the study. Participants were asked about their awareness of employees experiencing the following problems: marital problems, family problems, financial problems, alcohol related, drug related, domestic violence, sexual harassment, stress, HIV/AIDS and depression. Management's awareness of these problems was tested as well as the level of accessibility for employees to discuss their problems with different role-players.

Most of the participants are conscious of employees who experience financial and stress-related problems. Family problems, alcohol-related problems and depression are the second kind of problem they are most aware of. Only two participants are aware of employees that experience drug-related and HIV/AIDS-related problems. The problems that participants are the most uninformed about are marital problems, sexual harassment and domestic violence.

Besides the listed problems participants also mentioned the following problems that were not listed but are experienced by employees and which were discussed with them. These problems includes: bad living conditions; unsafe travel circumstances; diversity-related issues and racism.

### **Influence of problems on productivity**

Most of the participants with the exception of one are of the opinion that the problems experienced by employees do impact on the employees work productivity

### **Discussing personal problems**

All the participants indicated that employees discuss personal problems with them. Employees approach them either in their personal capacity or when they fulfil their duties. For two of the participants, dealing with

an employee's personal problems is not part off their job requirement, but employees still discuss these problems with them when they are available to listen. This shows that employees surely need a structure where they can express the issues that impact on their lives.

### **Problems employees talk about**

The problems employees mostly talk about with senior management are:

- Financial problems and advice to deal with the problem effectively;
- Retirement planning;
- Wills;
- Socio-economic problems related to alcohol and drug abuse;
- Perceptions of the requirement of their jobs;
- Relationship problems with immediate supervisor/manager and other employees;
- Social life skills;
- Work-related problems
- Cultural diversity and the management of associated problems.

The above indicates that employees struggle with multiple personal and work-related issues. The fact that they talk about these problems with managers is an indication that these problems impact on work performance and that employees need a channel to express their concerns.

### **Description of the morale of employees at CWDM**

None of the participants could describe the morale of the employees that they encounter as high. Two participants are unsure and three describe the employees' morale as low. The clarification given by this participant for their statement indicates that that the morale of the employee's varies from department to department. The other participant thinks that the morale of the employee depends on the employees themselves and how a particular employee chooses to deals with problems in the workplace. Therefore you will have persons whose morale is high and in the same department a person with extremely low morale.

### **Section Three: CWDM a supportive organisation?**

This section of the interview looked at CWDM's ability to deal with a troubled employee.

With regards to the view of on the organisation's awareness of their social responsibility task, all the participants are of the opinion that CWDM does have a social responsibility towards its employees. This statement was clarified with the following responses namely:

- Social issues affect an employee's work productivity which in return affects the organisation as a whole;
- The organisation's ability to take up their social responsibility brings it in line with the private sector;
- The social responsibility that the organisation has towards its employees is a given and can be viewed in CWDM's friendly policies and good conditions of services'
- Management does have a social responsibility towards its employees, as also highlighted by legislation, but the employee as an individual must also take responsibility for him/herself.

On the view of treating their employees as a valuable asset most of the participants are of the opinion that employees are not treated as the organisation's most valuable asset. Only one participant is of the opinion that employees are most certainly the organisation's most valuable asset. One participant could not answer yes or no to this question. According to this participant, the organisation through its policies and human resource strategies surely conveys the vision of employees first. But at implementation level those in lower-level management position do not carry out this message, because of a lack of understanding of organisation policies and low education level.

On the question of the organisation's existing method of dealing with employees who experience personal problems, the responses of participants can be summarised as follows:

- Dealing with employee's experiencing personal problems is currently a major challenge for the organisation;
- At present the organisation has no formal structure but deals with these problems on an ad hoc basis;
- The Human Resource Department of the organisation mostly deals with a troubled employee and mostly refers these cases to external organisations;
- The organisation does not have a formal structure to deal with a troubled employee, therefore the organisation follows a reactive approach;

Because there is no formal structure for assisting employees, the view is that the minimum is being done to support and help the troubled employee.

On the view of the organisation's current method for dealing with employees that experience work-related problems the participants responded by highlighting that the organisation currently do not have a formal structure for dealing with an employee who experience personal problems. The disciplinary hearings are one way in which the organisation attempts to deal effectively with the employees who experience work-related problems. Some departments have developed their own training manuals and training sessions to empower employees and develop their sense of worth in order to address work-related problems.

Participants were asked about the effectiveness of the current method dealing with an employee's work-related and personal problems. All participants agreed that the existing methods the organisation pursues in dealing with employee's work related and personal problems are not effective. It currently does not help employees to deal with these problems. The main reason for this is the lack of a formal support structure.

Participants offered the following suggestions to deal effectively with employees' work-related problems

- Appoint a designated person whose main responsibility is to deal with employee-related queries and problems;
- Establish a formal structure for the referral of employees for professional help and support;
- Develop a structure to give counselling to employees, especially those that are affected or infected by HIV/AIDS;
- Develop a department that can deal with employee-related issues, including employee wellness;
- Create a post for a Wellness Officer who can also attend to stress and trauma debriefing.

All suggestions by participants include the development of a formal structure to attend to employee-related issues as well as overall employee wellness. This surely indicates that there is a need for a support structure such as an EAP at CWDM.

#### **Section Four: Support Structure through an EAP**

The views of the participants were tested on the statement "***Management is responsible for an employee's physical and emotional health***". Responses from the participants indicate that most participants agreed with this statement. One participant is of the opinion that management is partially

responsible for an employee's physical and emotional health, but an employee must also take a great deal of responsibility for his or her own physical and emotional health.

All the participants are of the opinion that a support structure such as an EAP could work for CWDM. The following reasons for this were given:

- An EAP will surely benefit employees;
- There is a great need and a draft policy on an EAP is already in progress;
- An EAP will surely work if it is designated to a specific person or department which can take ownership of the implementation and execution of these functions;
- There is surely a great need for an EAP because employees are distributed throughout the organisation in terms of race, class and qualifications. These differences raise a number of issues that have an impact on employees' wellbeing in the workplace. An EAP would assist in dealing with these issues effectively.

Reflecting on specific services that a proposed EAP at CWDM can offer, the participants indicate that the following services should form part of an EAP for CWDM:

Counselling services, supervisor/management support, educational workshops, training of supervisors and managers to deal effectively with a troubled employee, stress/trauma debriefing, referrals to other professional services, wellness programme, career planning and retirement planning. In addition to the above financial management and planning, and HIV/AIDS management could also be added to the list of services offered by an EAP

The above indicates that there is a need for an EAP service that is all-embracing and would attend to employee problems in a holistic manner.

The views of participants were also tested on the preferred EAP Model for CWDM. One participant is of the opinion that a combination of all three approaches would be most effective for CWDM. One participant is of the opinion that the external EAP would be better for the sake of confidentiality and would therefore make employees more comfortable about utilising the service. Most of the respondents prefer an internal EAP for CWDM. Hence the following should be borne in mind when appointing a professional for managing an EAP:

- The person appointed for the job must be knowledgeable on EAP and social issues;
- Confidentiality should always be a high priority;
- EAP services should be accessible for all employees of CWDM;
- The language of the total population should be taken into account when appointing a professional.  
All employees should be capable to receive counselling services in their own mother tongue.

Participants were asked if they would refer employees to an EAP if there should be one at CWDM. All participants would surely support an EAP if there should be one at CWDM. The reasons for supporting an EAP are because there is a great need for such a service; an EAP will reduce the number of disciplinary hearings at CWDM and will surely save on costs for the organisation; an EAP will be a benefit for all employees and would help in developing employees morale. It is evident that an EAP would have a great deal of support on management level.

On the question of how CWDM must go about developing a strategy for the implementation of an EAP, the participants suggested the following strategies:

- Do research on how an EAP works, especially with regards to effective structuring of an EAP within the organisation;
- Carry out a survey among all employees do determine their specific needs that should be addressed by an EAP;
- Develop a policy on EAP for CWDM;
- Appoint an EAP professional as soon as possible that is funded by the Council;
- Involve skilful people in the organisation to assist with establishing an EAP.

#### **4.3.2. Outcomes of workshops with interest groups**

The following section will deal with the outcomes of the workshops with interest groups. The aim of the workshop discussions was to gain a management as well as a union perspective on the need for an EAP at CWDM. The first group consisted of six line managers, although 13 invitations were send to line managers across the organisation. This workshop was held on Friday 21 November 2008 in the Board Room of the Department Engineering and Infrastructure from 9:30 till 10:30.

The second workshop comprised of union representatives of SAMWU and IMATU. Only five union representatives participated in workshop. The workshop was held on Monday 24 November 2008 from 10:00 till 11:00 in the Board Room of the Department Engineering and Infrastructure.

The outcomes of the workshop with line managers will be presented at first. This will be followed with the presentation of the outcomes of the workshop with union representatives.

### Outcomes of workshops with line managers

Questions	Responses:
<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b><i>“The human resources of any organisation are the most valuable asset of any organisation”.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this statement true at CWDM?</li> </ul>	<p>The organisation, CWDM through its policies and strategies conveys the image of employees first. In the day-to-day activities of the organisation the practical implementation of this message is lost. This message is not communicated well through to all levels in the organisation.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Do you believe that any organisation, including CWDM, has a social responsibility towards its employees? Why?</b></p>	<p>Any organisation, including CWDM, has a social responsibility towards its employees. The challenge is to live out this responsibility and not only have a good social responsibility strategy on paper as it is the case with CWDM.</p> <p>The organisation’s social responsibility is a joint effort because employees must also take responsibility for themselves.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>CWDM currently does not have a formal structure that can render support to a troubled employee. Do you think there is a need for such a structure? Give reasons</b></p>	<p>There is surely a great need for an EAP at CWDM.</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers do not have the qualifications or skills to deal with a troubled employee.</li> <li>• Managers have other key functions to deal with and do not find sufficient time to assist a troubled employee.</li> <li>• Managers prefer not to be involved in an employee’s personal problems; they just want the guarantee that someone will take care of the employees’ problems so that the employees’ work performance is not negatively</li> </ul>

Questions	Responses:
	<p>influenced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending to an employee's problems sometimes place the manager in a position of performing conflicting roles, which affects the management of the employee within the work context.</li> <li>• There is surely a problem with absenteeism in certain departments. Absenteeism is mostly linked with an employee who is experiencing problems outside the workplace. An EAP will help to reduce absenteeism. One of the respondents mentioned a specific example of a company where the absenteeism rate was reduced drastically after the implementation of an EAP and highlighted that this would also be the case at CWDM.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b> <b>An employee's morale affects work productivity. How would you describe the moral of employees at CWDM and why?</b></p>	<p>The morale of employee's are viewed as low by all the respondents.</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b></p> <p>There is not consistency in labour practices.</p>
<p><b>5</b> <b>A troubled employee struggles with multiple personal and work-related problems which can range from:</b></p> <p>Marital Problems (relationship problems with spouse)</p> <p>Family Problems (relationships problems with children)</p> <p>Financial problems, alcohol-related problems, drug-related problems</p> <p>Domestic violence, sexual harassment, stress, HIV/AIDS (whether infected or affected)</p> <p>Depression</p> <p><b>a) As a line manager what are the problems that you are most aware of?</b></p>	

Questions		Responses:	
	<p>b) How do these problems affect an employee's productivity?</p>	<p>The problems employees mostly talk about are:</p> <p><b>Financial problems:</b> A lot of employees do not know how to work with their finances, especially those who were unemployed and started at the organisation for the first time.</p> <p><b>Family-related problems</b></p> <p><b>Substance-abuse problems</b></p> <p>b) Absenteeism is high. The motivation of the employer is also negatively influenced, which impacts on the productivity of an employee.</p>	
6	<p>How do you, as a line manager/supervisor currently deal with an employee who experiences work-related or personal problems?</p>	<p><b>Work-related</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through talks and warnings</li> <li>• Follow the described disciplinary procedure as prescribed by the organisation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal</b></p> <p>Mostly talks with the employee to give advice and guidance.</p> <p>Refer to HR Department when an employee needs specialised help, for example, rehabilitation services.</p>
7	<p>Do you think that a support structure such as an EAP would work for CWDM? Give Reasons</p>	<p>Definitely</p> <p>Without a question</p> <p>Fire Services needs this urgently</p> <p>Managers are not skilled to assist with employees personal problems. Managers feel that they do not want to get involved with an employee's personal problems but wants to be assured that the employee get the help they need.</p> <p>An EAP will surely reduce the absenteeism rate.</p>	
8	<p>An EAP is a <b>holistic service</b> to employees of the organisation. It can assist with the following: <b>Counselling Services Awareness, Programmes Supervisor/Manager Support (To identify early</b></p>	<p>A holistic approach would surely work for CWDM, which must include all the mentioned aspects.</p> <p>Emphasis is placed on the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Support and Training</li> </ul>	

Questions		Responses:
	<p><b>warning signs of an employee experiencing problems/ How to deal with the employee), and Training of Supervisors/Managers to deal effectively with the troubled employee, Referrals (other Professional services such as psychiatric, psychology etc), Stress Debriefing, Wellness Programme, Career Planning, Retirement Planning, Educational Workshop, HIV/AIDS Programme.</b> What is essential for an EAP at CWDM?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Management that must also form part of the Induction Programme of the organisation.</li> <li>• Retirement planning for those close to retirement to ensure a smooth transition to the following phase of an employee's life.</li> <li>• Proper preparation and support for those employees involved in disciplinary hearings.</li> </ul>
9	<p>There are different approaches to implement an EAP, namely:</p> <p><b>a) Internal:</b> An internal EAP Department within the organisation, managed by a professional employed by the organisation</p> <p><b>b) External:</b> The organisation contracts an independent service provider to supply EAP functions to employees (Refer employees to outside professionals)</p> <p><b>c) Union Based</b> The union is responsible for referrals of employees to professionals</p> <p><b>In your opinion, what approach would best work for CWDM if they implement an EAP?</b></p>	<p>A combined internal and external approach would work best for CWDM.</p> <p>There should be a person employed by the organisation that could serve as a contact person for further referrals.</p>
10	<p><b>How do you think CWDM must about developing a strategy for implementing an EAP?</b></p>	<p>Appoint a professional person internally who can coordinate EAP</p> <p>Develop a Draft EAP Policy and get buy-in from all relevant <b>role-players</b></p> <p><b>Ensure that the groundwork that has been done regarding the EAP are made available to all relevant role-players</b></p> <p><b>Ensure acceptance and buy-in for an EAP at all the relevant organisational structures.</b></p>

### Outcomes of workshop with union representatives

Questions		Responses
1	<b>"The human resources of any organisation</b>	This is true at CWDM. Policies reflect this.

Questions	Responses
<p><b>are the most valuable asset of any organisation”.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this statement true of CWDM?</li> <li>• What does this imply for the organisation?</li> </ul>	<p>Some managers do not treat employees as an important asset, which reflects a negative view on employees as an important asset of the organisation.</p> <p>The organisation must train supervisors/managers to reflect the policies and strategies in their day-to-day work to ensure that the message the organisation wants to portray comes across to all employees.</p> <p>On the other side, there are some representatives who feel that not all employees are treated in the same manner. To reflect this message, employees must be treated equally.</p>
<p><b>2 Do you believe that any organisation, including CWDM, should have a social responsibility towards its employees? Why?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p> <p>Employees are spending 60% of their time at work, placing a great responsibility on the employer.</p> <p>The organisation does have a social responsibility towards the employees, but employees must also take responsibility for their own development.</p>
<p><b>3 CWDM currently does not have a formal structure that can render support to a troubled employee. Do you think there is a need for such a structure? Give reasons</b></p>	<p>There is a need for a support structure for employees.</p> <p>There are talks about a support structure, but this is not known to all. Employees must know who to turn to if they are in need.</p> <p>A support structure will be beneficial to the organisation but cognisance must be taken of the fact that not all employees can talk openly about their problems.</p> <p>Some employees experience very difficult personal problems impacting on their work performances.</p>
<p><b>4 An employee’s morale affects work productivity. How would you describe the morale of employees at CWDM and why?</b></p>	<p>Some employees’ morale is very low due to social circumstances and work pressure.</p> <p>The morale of employees is dependent on how they are treated by their immediate supervisor/ circumstances within the department.</p> <p>There are employees with an extremely low morale.</p>
<p><b>5 A troubled employee struggles with multiple personal and work-related problems which can range from:</b></p> <p>Marital Problems (Relationship Problems with spouse)</p>	<p>One union is aware of all mentioned problems. These problems mostly affect the employee through high incidence of absences.</p> <p>One union is aware of alcohol abuse and drug abuse. Alcohol and drug abuse occur a lot and are mostly the reason for</p>

Questions	Responses
<p>Family Problems (Relationships problems with children)</p> <p>Financial Problems, Alcohol Related Problems, Drug Related Problems</p> <p>Domestic Violence, Sexual Harassment, Stress</p> <p>HIV/AIDS (whether infected or affected)</p> <p>Depression</p> <p><b>As a union representative what are the problems that you are most aware of?</b></p> <p><b>How do these problems do affect an employee's productivity?</b></p>	<p>absences of employees and eventually a reason for dismissals.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>How do you, as a union representative, currently deal with an employee who experiences work-related or personal problems?</b></p>	<p>Talks with employees. If the problem is big, help and support from knowledgeable people is requested.</p> <p>Also refer to HR Department. The union can identify success stories about people that were treated successfully after referral to HR and were then send for rehabilitation by HR. In most cases employees are being referred for rehabilitation. For work-related problems the route of grievances and dispute resolution is followed.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>Do you think that a support structure such as an EAP would work for CWDM? Give Reasons</b></p>	<p>Surely. Employees would know where to turn to for help. An EAP can be a great aid for employees but it is not compulsory for the organisation.</p> <p>Some people will never use the services of an EAP because they view their problems as private. An EAP would also be a mechanism to advice the organisation on unfair labour practices.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p>An EAP is a <b>holistic service</b> to employees of the organisation. It can assist with the following: <b>Counselling Services Awareness, Programmes Supervisor/Manager Support (To identify early warning signs of an employee experiencing problems/ How to deal with the employee), and Training of Supervisors/Managers to deal effectively with the troubled employee, Referrals (other Professional services such as psychiatric,</b></p>	<p>All of the mentioned programmes would be a benefit for CWDM.</p> <p>All-inclusive EAP would be beneficial to the organisation.</p> <p>There is already a HIV/AIDS Committee that is functioning effectively.</p> <p>HIV/AIDS awareness still needs a lot of attention, especially to ensure VCT.</p>

Questions		Responses
	<b>psychology etc), Stress Debriefing, Wellness Programme, Career Planning, Retirement Planning, Educational Workshop, HIV/AIDS Programme.</b> What is essential for an EAP at CWDM?	
9	<p>There are different approaches in implementing an EAP, namely:</p> <p><b>a) Internal:</b> An internal EAP Department within the organisation, managed by a professional employed by the organisation</p> <p><b>b) External:</b> The organisation contracts an independent service provider to supply EAP functions to employees (Refer employees to outside professionals)</p> <p><b>c) Union Based</b> The union is responsible for referrals of employees to professionals</p> <p><b>In your opinion, what approach would best work for CWDM if they implement an EAP?</b></p>	<p>Internal Programme is preferred because it would enhance record keeping and the involvement of the union.</p> <p>Confidentiality is an important aspect that must always have high priority in the internal programme</p> <p>Some representatives are of the opinion that the external programme would be best for the whole issue for confidentiality.</p>
10	<b>How do you think CWDM must go about developing a strategy for implementing an EAP?</b>	<p>Employees of CWDM must give their opinions in the establishment of an EAP. Unions and management must work together to realise the implementation of an EAP. An EAP service should be funded by the organisation.</p>

#### 4.3.3. Interpretation of organisational records

The results of the termination record and the injury on duty record will be discussed next.

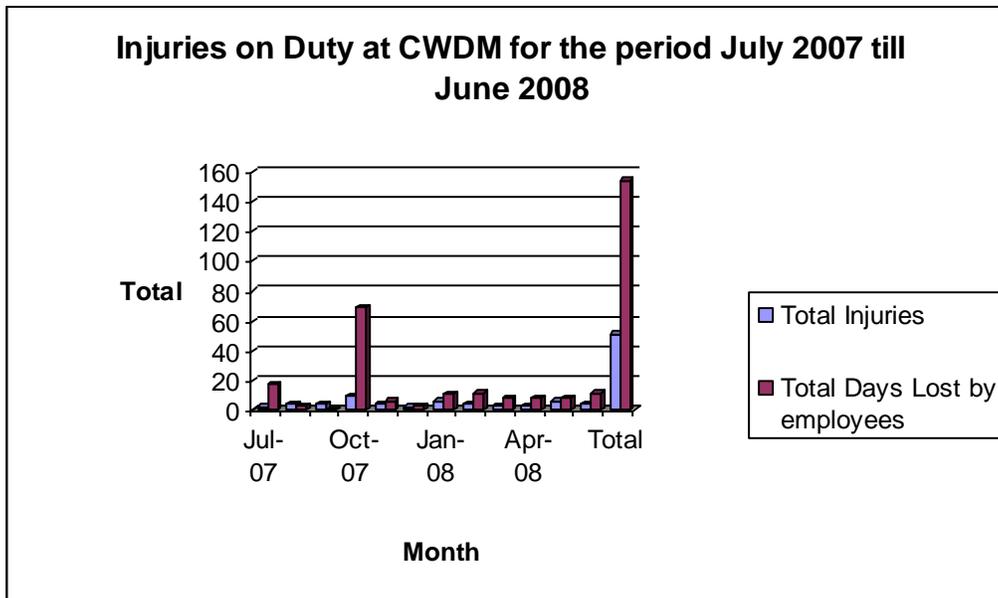
##### Termination record

The termination record for the period June 2007 till July 2008 was studied. The record revealed that for this period 61 employees left the organisation. The reality is that employees leave the organisation on a monthly basis. A firm amount of turnover is expected, unavoidable and viewed as beneficial for the organisation (Grobler *et.al.*,2006:125) but some turnover are viewed as dysfunctional when it becomes excessive, creates an unstable workforce and increases HR cost and organisational ineffectiveness.

This record also revealed that the age group between the ages 30-40 are more keen to leave the organisation. Grobler et.al (2006:125) affirms this trend by stressing that young employees with little seniority and are dissatisfied with their jobs are likely to leave the organisation. On the other hand, employees with large families and important family responsibilities are likely to remain in their jobs. No exit interviews are conducted to determine the real reasons why employees leave the organisation. An EAP can fulfil an important function to conduct exit interviews to determine why an employee is quitting. This information can help the organisation to design programmes that can enhance job satisfaction which might possibly reduce the turnover rate.

### Injury on duty record

The following graph will highlight the information regarding the injury on duty for the period July 2007 till June 2008.



Injuries on duty do not have a major impact on the organisation. Injuries could not be linked to employees that experience personal or work related problems. The days lost because of the injury on duty are also minimal.

#### 4.4. Summary of findings

The following section will give an overview of the findings. The overview of findings will be discussed under the following headings:

- The Organisational perspective

- Employee perspective
- Support through an EAP

#### **4.4.1. Organisational perspective**

CWDM has well-developed policies and strategies in place. The policies and strategies convey the message of employees first and that employees are the most valuable asset of the organisation. They also depict the organisation's social responsibility towards its employees, emphasising the developmental role the organisation fulfils. Overall strategies and policies are good, but are not effectively implemented at all levels in the organisation. This is a consequence of insufficient monitoring and control mechanisms.

The organisation's ability to keep the younger population is low and therefore loses young, vibrant and skilled staff on a regular basis. An EAP could assist with conducting exit interviews with employees who quit their job. These interviews can provide valuable information about the work environment; identify areas of discontent and how the organisation can design programmes to enhance job satisfaction. This might possibly help to retain more workers that would otherwise resign.

#### **4.4.2. Employee perspective**

The morale of the employees is rated as low overall. There is a notion that the morale of the employee is dependent on the way in which the employee is treated within the department. An employee's morale is also affected by the conditions of employment and the opportunities created within the organisation. . The way in which an employee is treated greatly affects the attitude of the employees towards their work and in essence towards the organisation. There are also those employees who are highly motivated and whose morale is high.

Employees experience a multitude of personal and work-related problems. The problems that are most known amongst respondents are financial problems, alcohol- and drug-related problems, family problems. With regards to problems experienced in the workplace, diversity-related problems are of great concern.

#### **4.4.3. Support through an EAP**

All participants identified the need for a more formal way of rendering support and assistance to employees. The EAP is viewed as an effective way to render this support. In fact, there is a great need for an EAP at CWDM.

Managers are of the opinion that they do not want to be involved in an employee's personal problems, but want the assurance that the employees get the help and support they need. Union representatives are of the opinion that preventative measures such as an EAP are needed to reduce the number of disciplinary hearings.

The reasons for the preference for an EAP include a holistic, integrated service that should include counselling services, awareness programmes, manager/supervisor support and training, educational workshops, stress debriefing, career planning, retirement planning, financial planning and a wellness programme. The service must be available 24 hours a day.

Most of the respondents choose the internal EAP or the combination of internal and external EAP, but emphasise the importance of confidentiality. The greatest motivation of the minority that chose the external EAP was the issue of confidentiality and the influence of management. An EAP office must be accessible and must bear in mind the wide distance the organisation covers. A 24-hour contact number should always be available.

In essence this study revealed that:

- The organisation CWDM conveys an image of being a caring organisation with great awareness of its social responsibility towards their employees;
- Employees of the organisation struggle with multiple personal problems that affect their work performance;
- There is clearly a need for an EAP at CWDM;
- A combination of an internal and external EAP is preferred when implementation is considered. Confidentiality should always be a high priority when rendering an EAP Service.
- EAP services for CWDM must have a holistic approach.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

This chapter gives affect to the research objective namely “**to determine the need for an EAP by means of an empirical study**”. This chapter commenced with a discussion on the stages in the empirical study and gave a short overview of the literature study and data-collection method. This was followed by a detailed presentation of the findings. Some organisational records were also analysed and interpreted. In conclusion, a short summary on findings was presented.

The empirical study revealed that there is a great need for an EAP at CWDM. The final chapter will conclude this study by presenting recommendations for the implementation of an EAP at CWDM. This chapter essentially gives effect to the research objective “**To develop guidelines for the implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme at Cape Winelands District Municipality**”.

## Chapter Five

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 5.1. Introduction

Chapter four focused on the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. This chapter formed the core of the research study, namely to determine the need for an EAP by means of an empirical study. The need for an EAP was tested from a management and union perspective. The union generally represents the employees at different levels of the organisation and therefore represents the view of employees at CWDM. Data collected from the interviews and focus group discussion provided a clear direction for CWDM on the need for an EAP. In essence the previous chapter provided the foundation for the final chapter of this study, namely to provide recommendations to the organisation.

The final chapter gives affect to the final research objective, namely ***“to develop practical guidelines for the implementation of an EAP at CWDM”***. This chapter will highlight the most significant findings, provide clear recommendations to the organisation for the implementation of an EAP and will finally recapitulate the research by presenting an overview of the chapters.

#### 5.2. Findings of Study

In short, the study revealed that:

- CWDM conveys the image of a caring organisation with great awareness of its social responsibility towards its employees;
- Employees of the organisation struggle with multiple personal problems that affect their work performance;
- There is a great need for an EAP at CWDM;
- A combination of an internal and external EAP model is preferred when implementation is considered;
- EAP services for CWDM must have a holistic approach.

#### 5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following section will provide guidelines for the implementation of an EAP at CWDM. The proposed guidelines stem from the essential components of an EAP as discussed in chapter two. The following guidelines are recommended for the implementation of an EAP.

### **5.3.1. Develop an internal EAP**

An EAP performs an organisational developmental function and should be positioned as a predominant part of the human resource management role in an organisation. It is recommended that an internal EA professional be appointed by the organisation. An EA professional must have formal training and must be able to assess, diagnose and provide an array of social and mental health recommendations. Membership of a professional association is also recommended. An EA professional must be flexible to work with employees, management and unions. Even though an internal EAP is recommended, some services such as rehabilitation, psychiatric and psychological, should be referred externally.

CWDM covers a huge service area and, with offices in Worcester, Robertson, Ceres, Paarl and Stellenbosch. EAP will give rise to establishment after studying the goal and function of new post. Sufficient professionals must be appointed to fulfil the role and functions of an EAP. The goal, function, tasks, job description and work area of the EA professional will give an indication of the exact number of staff required to be appointed. When appointing an EA professional, cognisance should be taken of the fact that employees should be able to receive counselling in their mother tongue.

An internal EAP must have a holistic approach. The main activities of an EAP include coordination of client activity from within the work environment, problem assessment, counselling and referral. It is further recommended that an EAP must provide the following services: counselling, supervisor/management support, educational workshops, training of supervisors and managers to deal effectively with a troubled employee, stress/trauma debriefing, referrals to other professional services, wellness programme, career planning and retirement planning, as well as financial management and planning, and HIV/AIDS management. Cognisance should be taken of the fact that an EA department has great development potential.

### **5.3.2. Develop clear, written policy and procedures**

Through drafting a written policy the organisation prepares itself for the new programme and ensures that members understand and utilise the programme (Googins and Godfrey, 1988: 125). The written policy must outline the purpose of the programme, the organisational and legal mandates, employee's rights and procedures, as well as the procedures and responsibilities of every role-player. In essence the EAP policy must develop basic standards and performance measures around timelines, availability, staffing requirements and other indicators to guarantee successful programme access. The EAP Policy must be congruent with performance appraisal systems and must ensure the protection of an employee's privacy through firm confidentiality mechanisms. It is also essential that the policy is endorsed by management and have the formal support of unions.

The policy should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the appropriateness of service. To ensure successful policy integration into the work community, constant interaction with all role-players is needed. This will preserve the integrity of the policy and procedures (Googins and Godfrey, 1987:125).

### **5.3.3. Specify the objectives of an EAP**

Objectives should be defined in concrete, specific and measurable statements, converting the goals of the EAP into operational steps in the everyday programme. They should be specific, achievable targets to quantify measures that reflect goal attainment. Objectives should be centred on ensuring a healthy, productive workforce. In essence the objectives assist with the evaluation of the programme outcomes.

### **5.3.4. Confidentiality**

To ensure the success of an EAP a high premium must be placed on confidentiality. Employees must experience the EAP as a reliable service and must have the reassurance that their information will be kept strictly confidential. Googins and Godfrey (1987:118) emphasise that the placement of the EAP is politically and symbolically powerful. The EAP must be located inconspicuously to enhance confidentiality and privacy.

No information regarding an employee must be made available to anyone without the consent of the employee concerned. Any breach of confidence in this regard is a violation of an employee's human rights, because everyone has the right to privacy.

The issue of confidentiality must be emphasised in the EAP Policy. Confidentiality must be maintained in all areas of the EAP service delivery. It is recommended that records are secured at all times and that the files are locked. Access to these records must be limited to the relevant staff only and be regulated in terms of statutory regulations governing confidentiality and client-professional privilege.

EA staff should be trained to understand the significance of confidentiality in their work environment. In cases where information concerning a client should be released, release forms should then be used.

### **5.3.5. Establish an EAP Forum**

An EAP forum will guarantee an inter-organisational outreach to relevant role-players. The absence of such an outreach will develop an EAP as an isolated appendage that will add little to the dynamics of the organisation (Googins and Godfrey, 1988:125). The EAP forum will also guarantee functional integration into the culture and operations of the organisation. The main aim of such a forum is to:

- Share information about EAP-related issues and determine the workforce needs;
- Ensure contributions from relevant role-players to the effective design and operation of the EAP;
- Re-assess statistics and trends on the utilisation of an EAP;
- Make recommendations on programme improvement.

An EAP forum can consist of relevant people dealing with human resource issues related to EAPs such as union representatives, occupational health and safety officer, performance management officer, human resource management representative, labour officer, and training and development representative.

### **5.3.6. EAP Marketing Plan**

EAP is a relatively new concept for the employees of CWDM. For this reason a rigorous marketing plan is needed to introduce the services to all employees. The aim of this marketing campaign is to ensure penetration of the service from the top to every division of the organisation and to ensure that these services are shared, supported and utilised. The marketing plan must create a positive image of the programme.

The following marketing methods can be utilised:

- Introduction of EAP as part of the induction of every new employee;

- Utilise the existing organisation newsletter, *The IMBIZO*,
- Pamphlets, posters and EAP brochures;
- Supervisor/management training.

### **5.3.7. Ensure Top Management Support**

Management commitment and leadership are essential for the success of an EAP. It is vitally important that the leadership of CWDM is committed and passionate about the development and implementation of an EAP. Leadership commitment can also be enforced through performance agreements. It is critical that management allocate adequate and appropriate budgets and resources to the EAP to ensure effective functioning.

### **5.3.8. Union Support**

Buy-in from unions is essential for the success of an EAP. The organisation will gain immensely when labour and management work out procedures for an EAP to unblock labour management channels and minimise appeals, grievances and arbitration. Employees could view the EAP as an arm or spy of management if there is not involvement by the unions as well. The role of the unions is to ensure that the rights of the employee are not in any way violated. Union support can be gained by including them in all aspects of the EAP Planning.

### **5.3.9. Accessibility**

Employees must be aware of how, for what problems and where they can obtain assistance. The physical location and the availability of an EAP must be ensured. People living with disabilities must have easy access to the location. Access contact numbers of the EAP must be available to all employees.

### **5.3.10. Programme Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

The monitoring and evaluation of any EAP is an integral part of the programme. EAP evaluation determines the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of EAP operational activities. The ultimate goal is to ensure a cost-effective service to employees as well as the organisation as a whole. Monitoring, review and evaluation processes will ensure that services will function effectively. Monitoring basic record data can assess client load, specific characteristics of an EAP and the alignment with programme objectives.

Programme monitoring, review and evaluation present a guesstimate of achievement, but also channel future programme development.

Some evaluation techniques include:

- Data analysis on utilisation and productivity of the EAP service
- Surveys that includes client feedback (evaluation), client progress questionnaires, and surveys on effectiveness of training;
- Interviews with clients.

The EAP Policy must be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect current research, and occupational and employments standards associated with an EAP. Good monitoring will assist in improving the image and credibility of the EAP among potential clients and management.

#### **5.4. Overview of Study**

This study was prompted by the absence of a formal structure at CWDM that could render support to a troubled employee. Today more organisations have a mounting sense of social responsibility or humanitarian approach towards their employees and therefore realise the importance of an EAP (Googins and Godfrey, 1987:12). It was evident that the employees' personal and work-related problems affected their productivity, the rate of absenteeism and the morale of the employee. Since the EAP has been touted as an effective method of prevention of these problems, the researcher opted to explore the need for an EAP at CWDM.

The study was presented in the following manner:

**Chapter one** was aimed at orientating the reader regarding the study. This chapter spelled out the motivation for the study and specifically highlighted the consequences of the absence of an EAP at CWDM. The aim and objectives of the study were then stipulated. This was followed by a description of the research design chosen, the data collection and data analysis method. This chapter also provided an outline of chapters to follow. In essence this chapter gave the reader a clear picture of what to expect as the study unfolds.

**Chapter two** forms the theoretical foundation of the study. It gives a detailed description on the topic of an EAP in an organisation. This chapter commenced with an overview of the historical developments of an EAP abroad and in South Africa. The nature, rationale and objectives of an EAP were then highlighted. Different EAP Models were described with reference to the advantages and disadvantages of each model. The benefits of an EAP for organisations were highlighted. Because of the broad, integrated approach of EAPs today, the Wellness Programme as part of an EAP was also described. This chapter also made reference to the legislation impacting on EAPs in the workplace. The term 'troubled employee' was discussed and reference was made to some problems that the troubled employee experienced, namely job stress and burnout, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, sexual harassment and domestic violence.

**Chapter three** gave a detailed introduction to the organisation (CWDM) where the empirical study has been conducted. CWDM is a local authority; therefore the chapter commenced with a description of local authority in relation to the three spheres of government to give the reader an understanding of the role and functions of the organisation within the public sector. A background to the organisation was then given with specific reference to its vision, mission and objectives. This chapter furthermore described the organisational structure, explaining the role of the political and administrative support structure. This chapter concluded with a detailed description on legislation impacting on the workplace as well as functional Human Resource Policies at CWDM. This detailed overview of the organisation highlighted the developmental focus of the organisation and indicates how a functional EAP could further extend the role of the organisation as a development agent.

**Chapter four** described the empirical study that was conducted. This chapter formed the root of the research study as it paved the way for developing guidelines or recommendations to the organisation for the implementation of an EAP. This chapter began with background of the research study and gave a short overview of the literature study and data collection method. A detailed account of the findings was presented. Some organisational records were also analysed and interpreted. In conclusion, a short summary on the findings was presented. The empirical study revealed the great need for an EAP at CWDM.

**Chapter Five** provides ten practical guidelines for the implementation of an EAP at CWDM. The guidelines stem from the findings of the empirical study and the theoretical framework.

### **5.5. Limitation of the Study**

The greatest limitation of this study was the general unfamiliarity with the topic EAP. Some participants who were approached for the workshops did not understand their role and function, and did not see participation as a high priority. There was a low attendance at workshops, which restricted the response rate instead of covering the whole spectrum of the organisation.

More organisational records such as the absenteeism record, annual leave record and sick leave record could have been used for interpretation but this information was not swiftly available.

The study limited itself to determining the needs of an EAP from management's and union representative's perspective and to a great extent excluded a representative sample of employees across the entire organisation.

### **5.6. Recommendation for further Research**

It is recommended that a needs assessment be conducted amongst employees at CWDM to align the specific needs of employees for an EAP to a detailed programme implementation plan.

### **5.7. Concluding Remarks**

An EAP is a valuable tool to address productivity problems and to develop a healthy workforce. It enhances an organisation's corporate image. The goal of the research was to determine the need for an EAP at CWDM. The researcher was motivated to undertake the study by the total absence of a formal EAP that could render support and assistance to the troubled employee. It is the opinion of the researcher that the increasing demands of balancing work/personal life, the increasing financial demands on an individual and the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic will continue to affect an employee's work performance.

There is no doubt that an Employee Assistance Programme can be a valuable mechanism to address these problems, increase work productivity and eventually save the organisation (CWDM) further financial losses. The study revealed that the organisation is serious about taking up its social responsibility role and treating its employees as its most valuable asset. An EAP surely fits into the organisation's objectives and developmental role and function.

In the light of the benefits an EAP have for organisation, the specific objectives of this research study were:

- 1) To describe the nature and advantages of an Employee Assistance Programme;
- 2) To explore the employees' need for an EAP by means of an empirical study; and
- 3) To develop guidelines for the practical implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme at CWDM.

Data collected revealed a definite need for an EAP at CWDM. The ten recommended guiding principles will give direction to CWDM for future implementation.

An EAP is a valuable tool for work organisations, but most of all for employees who experience problems, that can provide assistance through intervention strategies such as of counselling, development, training, referrals, etc. An EAP for CWDM will enhance the image of the organisation as a developmental agent and will ensure that the organisation remains at the leading edge.

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## Annexure. One

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire for interviews with the following employees of CWDM:

- Director Human Resource Management
- Head Labour Relations Officer
- Occupational Health & Safety Officer
- Performance Management Officer
- Director Engineering & Infrastructure

#### TOPIC: Exploring the need for an Employee Assistance Programme at CWDM

- ❖ *This questionnaire will be used in one-on- one interviews*
- ❖ *These interviews forms part of a research study for CWDM to determine the need for a support structure for employees, that can assist them to cope with personal and work related problems.*
- ❖ *The aim of the study is to make recommendations for the implementation of a support structure (such as an EAP) to CWDM, if there is a need.*
- ❖ *As an employee of CWDM, working closely with HR Department and dealing with employee related issues your knowledge, skills and expertise will add value to the study*

- 
- ❖ *Please answer all questions as honest as possible*
  - ❖ *This interview consists of **25** questions that are divided into four subsections.*
  - ❖ *This interview will take about **30 minutes** of your time*
  - ❖ *Note: There is no right or wrong answers*
  - ❖ *All information contained in this interview will be kept strictly confidential*
  - ❖ *If you have no objections, this interview will be recorded*

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. PERSONAL PARTICULARS**

1.1.	Gender	Male			Female	
1.2	Age	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+
	Religion	Christen	Muslim			Other (Specify)
1.3	Race	Black	White	Coloured	Indian	Other
1.4.	Your current position at the organisation (Job Title)					
1.5.	Your Current Rank	Director	Assistant Director	Manager	Supervisor	Senior Official
1.6.	Does your job demand you to work from more than one workstation of CWDM?	Yes			No	
1.7.	Number of years at CWDM	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
1.8.	What does your job entail?					
1.9.	Have you held a Management Position in any other organisation?	Yes			No	

**2. PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY EMPLOYEES**

2.1.	Does your job require that you deal with employees that experience work related problems?	Yes	No
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2.2.	Does your job require that you deal with employees that experience personal problems?	Yes	No	
2.3.	Are you aware (either in your personal capacity or as a senior official) of any employee that experience the following problems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marital Problems (Relationship Problems with spouse)</li> </ul>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Problems (Relationships problems with children)</li> </ul>		
		Financial Problems		
		Alcohol Related Problems		
		Drug Related Problems		
		Domestic Violence		
		Sexual Harassment		
		Stress/ Burnout		
		HIV/AIDS (whether infected or affected)		
		Depression		
		Other (Specify)		
2.4.	Are you of the opinion that these problems influence the employees productivity	Yes	No	Unsure
2.5.	Do the employees talk to you about their personal problems?	Yes		No
2.6.	If yes, what are the problems the employees talk to you about?			

2.7.	Would you describe the moral of employees you deal with as	High	Low	Uncertain	Other (Specify)
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3. CWDM, A SUPPORTIVE ORGANISATION?

3.1.	Are you of the opinion that CWDM have a social responsibility towards its employees? Give reasons	Yes		No
		Reasons:		
3.2.	Do you think that CWDM treat their employees as their most valuable assets	Yes	No	Uncertain
3.3.	How does CWDM, currently deal with an employee that experience personal problems?			
3.4.	How does CWDM, currently deal with employees that experience work related problems?			
3.5.	In your opinion does this method:  (Give Reasons)	(A) Help employees to deal with these problems		
		(B) Do nothing to help employees		
		(C) Unsure		
		Reasons:		
3.6.	How do you suggest, CWDM must go about in dealing with employee related			

	problems?	
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**4. SUPPORT STRUCTURE THROUGH AN EAP**

4.1.	Management is responsible for its employees emotional and physical health	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
4.2.	Are you aware of the concept: Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)?	Yes		No
4.3.	Do you know of any other organisation that is implementing an EAP?	Yes		No
4.4.	If Yes, how does the EAP work in this organisation?			
4.5	Do you think that a support structure such as an EAP will work at CWDM? Give Reasons	(A)Yes		
		(B) No		
		(C) Unsure		
		Reasons:		
4.6.	What do you think should form part of an EAP?	Counselling Services		
		Awareness Programmes		
		Supervisor/Manager Support (To identify early warning signs of an employee experiencing problems/ How to deal with the employee)		

		Educational Workshops	
		Training of Supervisors/Managers to deal effectively with the troubled employee	
		Stress Debriefing	
		Referrals (other Professional services such as psychiatric, psychology etc)	
		Wellness Programme	
		Career Planning	
		Retirement Planning	
		Other (Specify)	
4.7.	What would model would you prefer for CWDM	An internal EAP Department within the organisation, managed by a Professional employed by the organisation	
		The organisation contract an independent Service Provider to supply EAP functions to employees (Refer employees to outside professionals)	
		The Union is responsible for referrals of employees to professionals	
4.8.	Would you refer an employee to an EAP if there is one at CWDM?	Yes	No
4.9.	I would....	Support an EAP at CWDM	
		Not Support an EAP at CWDM	
		Reasons:	

4.10.	How do you think CWDM must go about in developing a strategy for implementing an EAP?	

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

**Annexure. Two: Workshop Questionnaire with line managers**

Questions	
1	<p><b><i>“The human resources of any organisation are the most valuable asset of any organisation”.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this statement true at CWDM?</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>Do you believe that any organisation, including CWDM, has a social responsibility towards its employees? Why?</b></p>
3	<p><b>CWDM currently does not have a formal structure that can render support to a troubled employee. Do you think there is a need for such a structure? Give reasons</b></p>
4	<p><b>An employee’s morale affects work productivity. How would you describe the moral of employees at CWDM and why?</b></p>
5	<p><b>A troubled employee struggles with multiple personal and work-related problems which can range from:</b></p> <p>Marital Problems (relationship problems with spouse)            Family Problems (relationships problems with children)            Financial problems, alcohol-related problems, drug-related problems            Domestic violence, sexual harassment, stress,            HIV/AIDS (whether infected or affected)            Depression</p> <p><b>c) As a line manager what are the problems that you are most aware of?</b></p> <p><b>d) How do these problems affect an employee's productivity?</b></p>
6	<p><b>How do you, as a line manager/supervisor currently deal with an employee who experiences work-related or personal problems?</b></p>
7	<p><b>Do you think that a support structure such as an EAP would work for CWDM? Give Reasons</b></p>
8	<p>An EAP is a <b>holistic service</b> to employees of the organisation. It can assist with the following: <b><i>Counselling Services Awareness, Programmes Supervisor/Manager Support (To identify early warning signs of an employee experiencing problems/ How to deal with the employee), and Training of Supervisors/Managers to deal effectively with the troubled employee, Referrals (other Professional services such as psychiatric, psychology etc), Stress Debriefing, Wellness Programme,</i></b></p>

Questions	
	<b><i>Career Planning, Retirement Planning, Educational Workshop, HIV/AIDS Programme.</i></b> What is essential for an EAP at CWDM?
9	<p>There are different approaches to implement an EAP, namely:</p> <p><b>a) Internal:</b> An internal EAP Department within the organisation, managed by a professional employed by the organisation</p> <p><b>b) External:</b> The organisation contracts an independent service provider to supply EAP functions to employees (Refer employees to outside professionals)</p> <p><b>c) Union Based</b> The union is responsible for referrals of employees to professionals</p> <p><b>In your opinion, what approach would best work for CWDM if they implement an EAP?</b></p>
10	<b>How do you think CWDM must about developing a strategy for implementing an EAP?</b>

**Annexure Three: Workshop Questionnaire with union representatives**

Questions	
1	<p><b><i>“The human resources of any organisation are the most valuable asset of any organisation”.</i></b></p> <p>Is this statement true of CWDM? What does this imply for the organisation?</p>
2	<p><b>Do you believe that any organisation, including CWDM, should have a social responsibility towards its employees? Why?</b></p>
3	<p><b>CWDM currently does not have a formal structure that can render support to a troubled employee. Do you think there is a need for such a structure? Give reasons</b></p>
4	<p><b>An employee’s morale affects work productivity. How would you describe the morale of employees at CWDM and why?</b></p>
5	<p><b>A troubled employee struggles with multiple personal and work-related problems which can range from:</b></p> <p>Marital Problems (Relationship Problems with spouse) Family Problems (Relationships problems with children) Financial Problems, Alcohol Related Problems, Drug Related Problems Domestic Violence, Sexual Harassment, Stress HIV/AIDS (whether infected or affected) Depression</p> <p><b>As a union representative what are the problems that you are most aware of? How do these problems do affect an employee’s productivity?</b></p>
6	<p><b>How do you, as a union representative, currently deal with an employee who experiences work-related or personal problems?</b></p>
7	<p><b>Do you think that a support structure such as an EAP would work for CWDM? Give Reasons</b></p>
8	<p>An EAP is a <b>holistic service</b> to employees of the organisation. It can assist with the following: <b><i>Counselling Services Awareness, Programmes Supervisor/Manager Support (To identify early warning signs of an employee experiencing problems/ How to deal with the employee), and Training of Supervisors/Managers to deal effectively with the troubled employee, Referrals (other Professional services such as psychiatric, psychology etc), Stress Debriefing, Wellness Programme,</i></b></p>

Questions	
	<b>Career Planning, Retirement Planning, Educational Workshop, HIV/AIDS Programme.</b> What is essential for an EAP at CWDM?
9	<p>There are different approaches in implementing an EAP, namely:</p> <p><b>a) Internal:</b> An internal EAP Department within the organisation, managed by a professional employed by the organisation</p> <p><b>b) External:</b> The organisation contracts an independent service provider to supply EAP functions to employees (Refer employees to outside professionals)</p> <p><b>c) Union Based</b> The union is responsible for referrals of employees to professionals</p> <p><b>In your opinion, what approach would best work for CWDM if they implement an EAP?</b></p>
10	<b>How do you think CWDM must go about developing a strategy for implementing an EAP?</b>