



Universal<sup>®</sup>

CORPORATE WELLNESS

2026

# Employee Wellness Programme Managerial Guide



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## Introduction

We at Universal Corporate Wellness understand that your workloads are ever increasing and the demands on you remain high in today's fast-paced world. We are aware that, in order to reach your company's goals and achieve your targets, you require a highly engaged workforce. We also realise that, due to a range of issues, your employees may at times become distracted, inattentive, careless, miss deadlines, and even become dismissive towards you, colleagues and customers. To address this, the Universal Employee Wellness Programme (EWP) offers a broad spectrum of confidential wellbeing services, available 24/7/365, providing employees with appropriate professional guidance. These services are geared towards supporting a happy, healthy and productive workforce, which is critical to the achievement of your organisation's goals.

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# The scope of Universal EWP services

The scope of the counselling services addresses the following:

## 2.1 Psychosocial counselling

Counselling for employees and their immediate eligible family members is provided by registered professionals who address a broad range of stressors. Some examples of the counselling issues that are addressed include:



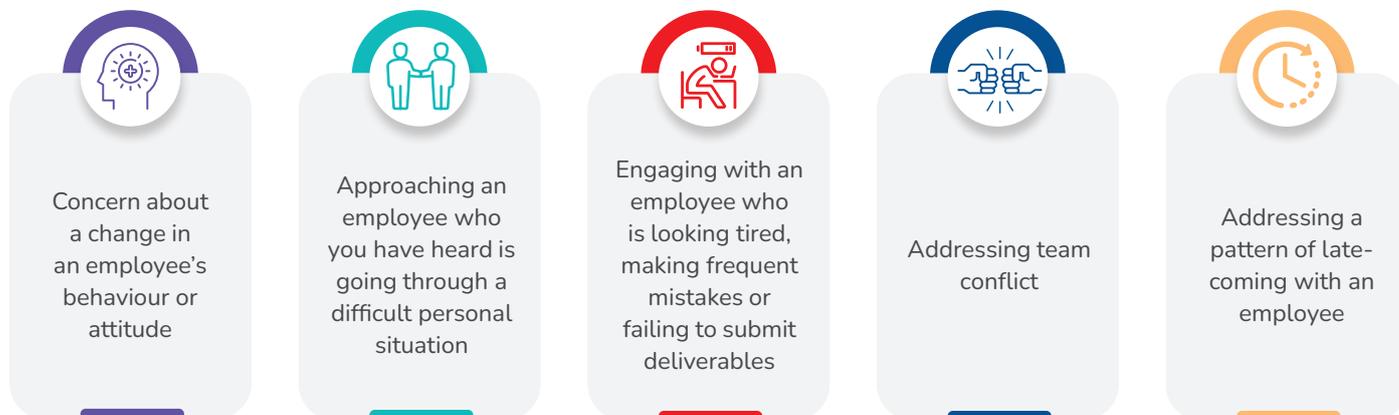
## 2.2 Family Care resource information service

Providing a reliable hub for the provision of resource information to address a wide range of needs geared towards assisting employees to care for and support their family members. Some examples of resource information provided include:



## 2.3 Managerial consultation

Providing managers with a professional sounding board and advisory service to empower them to effectively handle complicated, uncomfortable and difficult 'people management' issues. Managerial consultation can be sought to address issues including, but not limited to, the following:





# Types of referrals

There are various types of referrals available through the Universal EWP:

## 3.1 Self-referral

A self-referral happens when an eligible employee or eligible family member contacts the Universal EWP themselves to access psychosocial counselling, or the family care resource service. As a manager, you will make use of a self-referral when you want to use the service for yourself.

## 3.2 Managerial informal referral

An employee approaches a supervisor/manager for the assistance of their own accord. An informal referral is then made when a manager encourages an employee to contact Universal, or when the manager provides Universal with the details for an employee who wishes to access the service. Instances which may prompt an informal referral could include:

- The employee is affected by circumstances which, if left unaddressed, have the potential to negatively impact work.
- The employee's workplace attitude/behaviour indicates that they may need Universal EWP support.
- Work relationships appear strained.
- A noticed deterioration in the employee's health.

The following steps should be followed for a self-referral or managerial informal referral:



### Step 1 - Contact is made with the Universal EWP

Employee/eligible family member contacts the Universal Wellness Care Centre on **0800 390 003** or sends a 'Please call me' to **\*134\*952#**.



### Step 2 - Case is logged

The Universal EWP Consultant logs the call, opens a case and identifies the caller's support related needs.



### Step 3 - Intervention

The call will be managed by the appropriate professional, dependent on the need.

## 3.3 Managerial formal referral

A formal referral is made when an employee's work performance is significantly affected by their personal circumstances. Situations that may lead to a formal referral include:



The employee displays violent or inappropriate behaviour at work.



Instances of substance abuse.



The employee suffers from a disturbance in concentration.



Instances of excessive absenteeism.



Reduced levels of productivity or quality of work.



## The following steps need to be taken for a formal managerial referral:



### Step 1 - Manager to make contact with Universal EWP

The manager will contact the Universal EWP for a managerial consultation, which will allow a Universal EWP Consultant to support the manager through the initiation of the formal referral process.



### Step 2 - Referral form

The manager and employee jointly complete the Universal EWP Formal Referral Form and the manager sends it to the following e-mail address: [ewp@universal.co.za](mailto:ewp@universal.co.za). The case is then logged.



### Step 3 - Contact with referring manager

The Universal EWP Consultant contacts the manager who has logged the case, obtains additional information and provides further managerial guidance.



### Step 4 - Contact with referred employee

The Universal EWP Consultant contacts the referred employee to obtain additional information and provide telephonic psychosocial counselling support. Having agreed to the referral, the employee is referred to a counselling professional for face-to-face/virtual counselling. The employee is required to keep their initial appointment and comply with the formal referral process.



### Step 5 - Feedback and reporting

The Universal EWP Consultant keeps the manager who logged the case updated about the progress of the employee. At the conclusion of the face-to-face/virtual counselling, a process report is provided to the manager who lodged the case.

This report provides a summary of compliance with the support process, an indication of progress relating to the reason for the referral and recommendations for further support of the employee in the workplace. No confidential information discussed during the counselling process is included in this report.



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C O R P O R A T E W E L L N E S S

# FORMAL REFERRAL INTAKE AND CONSENT FORM

EWP@universal.co.za / www.universal.co.za/ewp

Please scan and email the completed form to ewp@universal.co.za

Referral date: 

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

	Referring manager details	Referred employee details
Name:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
ID number:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
Company:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
Site:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
Position:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
Work Number:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
Cell Number:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
Email address:	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>

## REFERRAL DETAILS

Agreed reason for referral (consented to by both the manager and employee)

---

---

---

Employee explanation of his/her issues

---

---

---

Provide detail about the employee's current performance issues

---

---

---

Indicate the employee's positive attributes when realising his/her potential at work

---

---

---

Referrer and employee to initial page here \_\_\_\_\_

Manager/supervisor expectation of the referral

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (full name, surname, employee number and identity number of referred employee) authorise the Universal Employee Wellness Programme to disclose relevant and appropriate information pertaining to the referral process and my reason(s) for referral, to \_\_\_\_\_ (full name(s) of referring organisation and referring manager) for the purposes of this formal referral.

I understand that:

- My personal information will be processed by Universal Corporate Wellness (Pty) Ltd in accordance with the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act no. 4 of 2013.
- I have the right to view any written information that is to be disclosed and that I can revoke this consent in writing at any time.
- I will be contacted to participate in supportive counselling to assist me with the reason for this referral and that it is part of an effort to improve my performance and/or attendance at work.
- My organisation encourages successful completion of the recommended treatment plan by the Universal Employee Wellness Programme and requires compliance with all other requirements of my organisation's policies and procedures.
- All information will be treated as strictly confidential and my personal circumstances will not be revealed to anyone outside of the Universal Wellness Programme, including the referring manager, except when:
  - I give consent in writing;
  - The life or safety of myself or someone else is seriously threatened due to my state of mind, or my stated or implied intent;
  - A child is considered at risk (as defined by the Children's Act); or
  - Disclosure is required by law, or court order.

I authorise the Universal Wellness Programme to process my personal information and to release the following information to the referring manager:

- A schedule of appointment dates and attendance.
- Information pertaining to progress, recommendations, referral compliance and other information regarding completion of treatment and education given whether written or telephonic.

This referral form has been explained to me, and I understand and agree, without duress, to the above conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of referred employee

Date: 

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of referring manager

Date: 

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

## 3.4 Critical incident stress management

### 3.4.1 What is a critical incident

A critical incident is an event that can cause an unusually intense stress reaction amongst the affected group of employees. The distress employees experience after a critical incident limits their ability to cope, impairs their ability to adjust and negatively impacts the work environment.

Examples of critical incidents that may affect a group of employees in the workplace include:



### 3.4.2 Services

Universal EWP can provide critical incident stress management services, which include onsite defusing and debriefing sessions for groups of employees affected by a critical incident in the workplace.

#### Defusing sessions

A small group session can be held directly following a critical incident. The purpose of this defusing is:

- Rapid reduction in the intense reactions to a traumatic event.
- “Normalise” the response so people can return to their routine duties as quickly as possible.
- Re-establish the group’s social network so people do not isolate themselves from each other. By recognising similarities in responses to a critical incident, people are often more willing to support each other during troubled times.
- Provide information on acute stress and a few reminders about how to reduce it.
- Assess the group’s response to determine if a full debriefing should be scheduled.

Defusing sessions are most effective when held within 8 hours after the incident.

A defusing session may be followed by a debriefing session if necessary.

#### Debriefing sessions

If necessary, Universal EWP can provide Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) sessions to groups of employees affected by a critical incident. CISDs are group sessions intended to:

- Acknowledge trauma-related reactions to the incident.
- Stabilise and mitigate the impact of acute signs/symptoms of distress.
- Assist individuals to evaluate their own responses in terms of the impact on their current occupational functioning and the possible need for ongoing referral/treatment.
- Encourage the mitigating effects of peer group support and interaction in the workplace.
- Facilitate participants’ use of the Universal EWP resources available to them.

CISDs are most effective when held within 48 to 72 hours after the incident.

### 3.4.3 Accessing the service

#### Information required to access the service

When calling the Universal Wellness Care Centre, referrers will be asked to provide written confirmation of the CISD approval and all of the following information:

- Location of the critical incident.
- Nature of the critical incident.
- The severity of the incident and whether any injuries have occurred.
- The date and time that the incident occurred.
- Number of people directly and indirectly affected.
- Whether people affected who are injured have been removed from the site (e.g. to medical facilities).
- Contact details of the organisation's representatives on site.
- Location for the defusing/debriefing session.
- Requested date and time for the session.
- Specific requirements such as language preference and site accessibility.

#### Steps to follow:



##### Step 1 - Call preparation

Referrer sources all the relevant critical incident information and completes the written CISD approval.



##### Step 2 - Referrer makes contact

Referrer contacts the Universal Employee Wellness Programme on 0800 390 003 and provides the written CISD approval.



##### Step 3 - Case is logged

A Universal EWP Consultant captures the details and logs the case.



##### Step 4 - Intervention

- The Universal EWP Consultant coordinates the on-site response.
- If necessary, a CISD can be scheduled after the defusing session has taken place.



##### Step 5 - Reporting

A feedback report is provided within 7 days following the defusing/debriefing.

## The benefits of accessing your EWP

The confidential counselling services strive towards achieving the following goals:

- Educating employees about their own personal health and wellness;
- Having a positive impact on the productivity levels of employees;
- Improving employee morale, engagement and motivation in the workplace;
- Reducing the amount of time and worry spent on people management activities for poor performers;
- Reducing discretionary absenteeism and presenteeism in your organisation;
- Shifting managers from a reactionary approach towards a proactive management style.

## Access

### 5.1 Eligibility

Eligibility applies to permanent employees, their spouse or partner, and their dependants (natural, legally adopted or stepchildren who are financially dependent on the employee and under the age of 21 years, as well as children over the age of 21 years who are mentally or physically disabled and financially dependent on the employee).

Children who are financially dependent on the employee and study full time are also covered up to the age of 25 years. Please ensure that only eligible family members have access to the Universal EWP contact details.

### 5.2 Confidentiality

You can rest assured that confidentiality is maintained on every level of the Universal EWP. Your personal information and that of your dependants is protected, and only anonymised statistical information is provided in utilisation reporting. UCW will only share confidential information in situations relating to a risk to a service user's safety or the safety of someone else, the abuse of children or vulnerable adults or when required to do so by a court.

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## Contact the Universal EWP in the following ways:

Call the Universal EWP on 0800 390 003 + Send a 'Please call me' to \*134\*952#

E-mail: [ewp@universal.co.za](mailto:ewp@universal.co.za)



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