

Peer Support in a Manufacturing Company



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Peer Support

- Builds on existing “natural helper” network
- Peers provide a source of support for those who have problems
- Peers are trained to refer co-workers to Employee and Family Assistance Professionals (EAP) when appropriate



Expected Peer Support Benefits

- Prevention of substance use/abuse by resolving problems in early stages (e.g., work stress)
- Intervention with substance users/abusers who need professional assistance
- Reduction of work-related injuries due to reduction in stress and substance use in the workplace



Predicted Effects

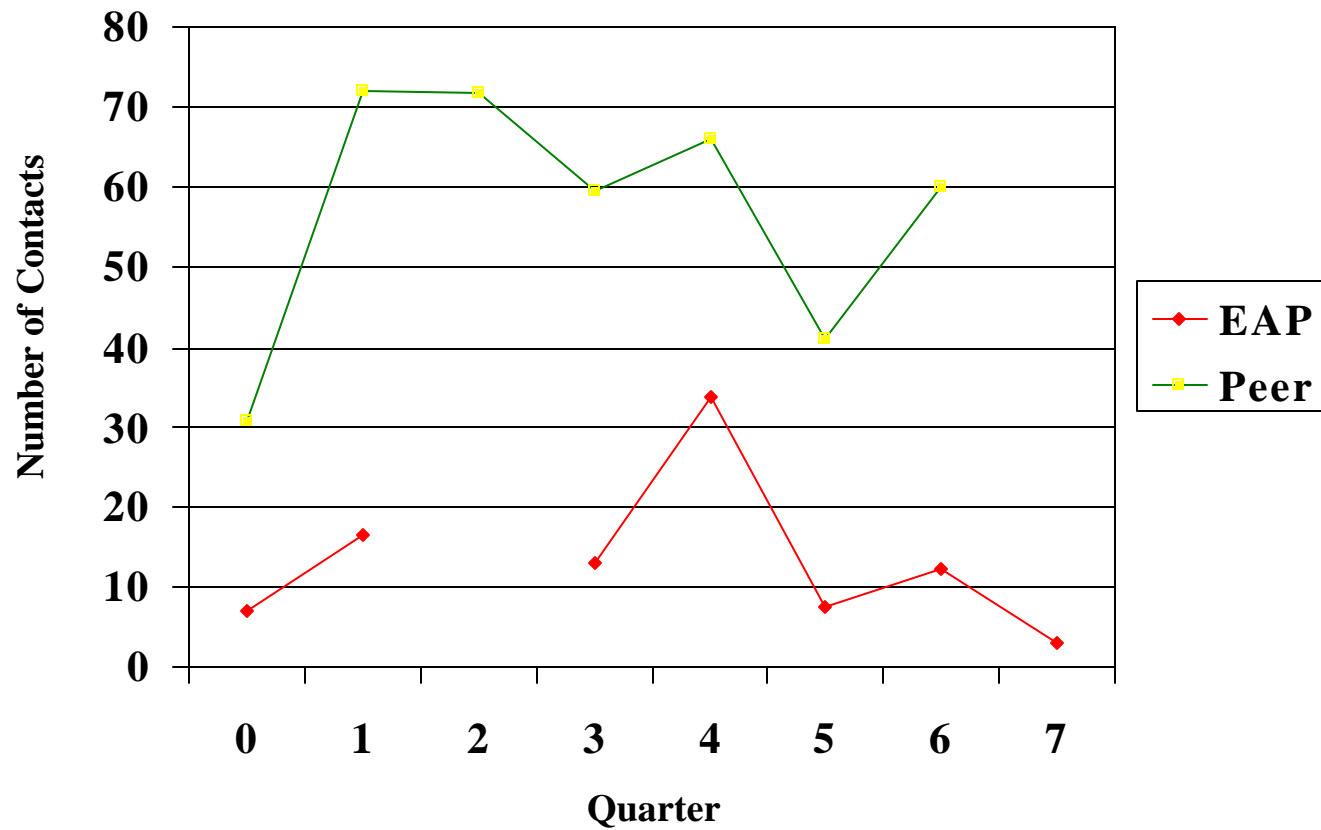
■ Peer Support

- Increased EAP use
- Increased substance abuse/mental health benefits use
- Decreased positive drug tests
- Decreased workers' comp incidents and costs

■ HMO Health Benefits

- Higher rate of outpatient use
- Lower rate of inpatient use
- Lower expenses for substance abuse/mental health services

Peer and EAP Contacts $r=.37$



APHA Nov, 1999



Preliminary Results: Health Benefits

- Mental health outpatient utilization increased over time
- Mental health outpatient utilization higher for peer support sites
- Mental health charges increased over time but payments did not.



Closing comments

- The results reported here are very preliminary and include only 3 intervention and their matched comparison sites
- We are encouraged that mental health outpatient utilization has increased and that the presence of an active peer support program is related to that increased utilization