



HELPS

(Health Enhancement for Lifelong Professional Students)

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HELPS: (813) 870-0184
Out-of-area: Call collect

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INTRODUCING THE HELPS (HEALTH ENHANCEMENT FOR LIFELONG PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS) PROGRAM

As a student, you are an important asset. For this reason, the USF College of Medicine takes a special interest in your well being. With this as an important consideration, the College of Medicine offers a Health Enhancement for Lifelong Professional Students Program (HELPS).

Most people at some point in our lives experience what is called a “major life stress”. Examples may include educational concerns, learning problems, financial worries, legal issues, substance problems, relationship difficulty etc. These may be problems that affect us directly or indirectly regardless of our age, gender or socioeconomic status. Generally, we can deal with our own problems and manage them successfully. When problems grow beyond our ability to deal with them, we may be affected emotionally, physically, socially and academically.

In recognition of these important concerns, we have established HELPS through the aid of Gary L. Wood & Associates, P.A. – an organization specializing in the design and administration of similar programs across the country. Wood & Associates is staffed with highly qualified professionals who are available to provide guidance and assistance.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your contact with HELPS is confidential as provided within the parameters of professional ethics, the USF College of Medicine contract, and applicable federal and state statute.

WHO MAY USE THE PROGRAM

The services of HELPS are available to you, any dependent eligible for insurance benefits and your significant other whether or not they are currently covered under your health care policy.

COSTS

The first three (3) visits by you and/or each of your dependents and significant other to HELPS are at no charge to you, your family member or significant other. Additional contacts may be covered by your behavioral health insurance plan. If any testing is recommended, the costs will be the expense of the student, family member or significant other or may be covered by your behavioral health insurance.

There probably will be charges for most of the professional resources to which you, your family member, or significant other may be referred by your HELPS representative.

Through experience, Wood & Associates has found that many people contacting similar programs want assessment and support from a program representative for personal, learning, relationship or other concerns. Behavioral health insurance benefits may provide coverage for concerns requiring treatment. In some cases, your HELPS representative may suggest clinics, as opposed to private practitioners as a further step toward the lowest possible costs. Every case, every problem, every budget is different. There may very well be low cost or no-cost ways to resolve your problem. One thing is certain, however; it won't cost you anything to find out.

HOW TO CONTACT HELPS

HELPS is easily accessed by dialing the designated HELPS line at (813) 870-0184. If you are out-of-area, call the HELPS line collect. During regular office hours you will be greeted with "HELPS line, this is _____, how may I assist you?" The phone is answered, "HELPS line – may I assist you?" by the after-hours service. During evening hours or holidays, a live answering service will take your call and a HELPS representative on-call will respond promptly. All you have to say is that you are calling HELPS.

Wood & Associates' corporate office is located at:

Habana Medical & Professional Building
4700 North Habana Avenue, Suite 300
Tampa, Florida 33614

(located north of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard/Habana Avenue intersection).

THE PROGRAM

Nearly everyone finds it difficult to begin talking about a problem. Most problems are not easy to define and have been around long enough to have become complicated. Making the first contact by calling HELPS can be a major step in resolving the largest of problems. Remember, the people you talk to will be warm, sympathetic, and understanding.

Your HELPS representative will help you identify your problem and find a qualified resource near your work or home to help you. **Remember, this is not a treatment program; rather, it is an assessment, support, and referral program.** After talking with you, a member of your family or your significant other about the problem that prompted your call, your HELPS representative will find the best source of help. HELPS is also a program that provides you with a qualified professional to talk to about your career and professional development

PROBLEMS THAT HELPS CAN ASSIST IN RESOLVING

- Problems that can be resolved by counseling or therapy:
 - Academic concerns
 - Learning disabilities
 - Vocational/aptitude testing
 - Career decisions
 - Interpersonal difficulties
 - Relationship problems
 - Troubled children/adolescents
 - Distress, anxiety, depression, other emotional concerns

- Alcohol/drug use/abuse/dependency of personal or family nature. When students present with a substance abuse problem, the student will be provided with referral information to the Professionals Resource Network (PRN).

- Problems that are typically resolved by the courts:
 - Divorce, child support
 - Property/lease suits
 - Court orders
 - Imprisonment

- Money or credit problems

- Other problem areas of concern:
 - Care for aged/infirm
 - Local social services
 - Battered spouse
 - Immigration
 - Sex counseling

- Individual or family crisis situations such as rape, assault, robbery, suicide or other life-threatening trauma.

Most of the above problems can be even more complicated because they tend to have a ripple effect, i.e., very often one's health/concentration is affected. This, in turn, can affect one's studies, work and relationships. While HELPS is neither a legal nor a loan agency, it can assist you in finding appropriate help in those areas. Even if you are not the one who directly has the problem, you may need help. Very often, an individual feels responsible (or actually is responsible) for another. If your relative or significant other seems to have a drinking problem, or a family member is experiencing difficulty, you may still experience distress.

SUMMING UP

HELPS is a voluntary, confidential program to assist in finding help with a variety of problems. There are no charges for you, your eligible dependents and significant other for the first three HELPS contacts. Additional contacts may be covered by your behavioral health insurance plan. Any testing that may be recommended is at the expense of the student, family member or significant other unless also covered by behavioral health insurance. The student, family member or significant other is responsible for any charges by professional resources to which he/she may be referred. Your HELPS representative will help you determine the best and most cost-effective means of dealing with your problem.

All information is kept confidential within the parameters of professional ethics, the USF College of Medicine contract, and applicable federal and state statute. Finally, the only thing you have to lose is the problem.

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