



U.S. COAST GUARD



Homeland Security

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SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION

Alcohol and substance abuse are two of the most devastating social issues that affect our service, its members and their families. Reluctance to seek professional help also contributes to an increased occurrence due to individuals not receiving the counseling and care they may need to prevent further alcohol or substance abuse. Good News! A new program called **Connect4Health** is now available to all Coast Guard military and civilian employees and their family members who are covered by the Federal Occupational Health (FOH) EAP. This service provides six sessions (in addition to the usual EAP sessions) of confidential web-based education, personal support, and relapse prevention. This is a pilot program available until April 2006.

Features of Connect4Health

- Live, licensed professional counselor-facilitated group discussions on alcohol and drug use with a focus on education, prevention, and early intervention.
- Discussions in a secure online environment with real-time audio and video.
- An interactive on-line alternative that supplements and strengthens traditional offerings in cases of substance misuse.
- A confidential, convenient, anonymous, and effective way for individuals to participate in a structured support program for substance misuse.

Who can benefit from Connect4Health?

Although any* adult beneficiary is eligible to receive these services, those people in the following categories are expected to benefit the most:

- With substance-misuse vulnerabilities.
- Who want more education on their use of substances and their effects.
- Looking for relapse prevention support.
- Who cannot participate in single-location substance education groups due to work or personal reasons.
- Who live in rural or remote U.S. locations without proximity to face-to-face services.
- Who are posted overseas without access to services.
- Who simply desire the convenience and confidentiality of online services.

*Connect4Health services are not appropriate for those who have been recommended for inpatient, detoxification, residential

treatment, or intensive outpatient programs or for those referred to treatment by governmental authorities due to positive drug tests, driving under the influence, or agency regulated policy requirements.

Connect4Health is safe and secure**

Connect4Health users are guaranteed secure access with confidentiality protections including:

- A toll-free number and a proprietary, internal Internet service provider.
- Privacy-protected participation using a pseudonym or “pen name” as screen name.
- No content or “cookies” stored on the participant’s computer hard drive.
- Only counselor is seen on screen, not participants.
- Secure data transmission during “live” sessions.

**The complete Privacy and Security Policy is provided on request.

Computer requirements***

All users of Connect4Health should have the following:

- A computer with a modem or connection to the Internet.
- Access to a secure physical space to facilitate participation in the program without being overheard.
- Windows 98SE/ME/2000/XP Operating system.

***CG Standard workstation shall not be used.

Easy Set up

- Typically takes five to ten minutes to complete.
- Program is user-friendly.
- A kit, including set up and content CDs, headset and microphone, is shipped to the participant’s home.

For more information contact your EAP at 1-800-222-0364 and tell the representative you would like to discuss Connect4Health.

ALCOAST 296/05 addressed the safety implications of alcohol use and provided some tools and resources in developing safety campaigns. ALCOAST 358/05 promoted the establishment of unit substance abuse prevention programs. Connect4Health is not a substance abuse treatment program and it is not intended to substitute any component of the Coast Guard Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program. It does however, provide yet another tool that can serve those who may otherwise not ask for help.

This pilot program is funded by the FOH EAP and will be available at least

until April 2006. Evaluation results will determine whether or not the program will be continued.

Regards,

RADM Kenneth T. Venuto
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